



The Flyer



January 2010 Issue, Vol. Eighteen, No. 1
High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force
On the Web at HighSkyWing.org
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 432-561-5581

Wing Awards Dinner, January 23rd at 6:30 p.m. in O'Brien Hall

From the Lead

by Col Randy Wilson

First let me wish all a Happy New Year. I personally think that this will be a great year for the High Sky Wing and our members. We start off with our annual **Wing Awards Dinner** this Saturday, January 23rd, in O'Brien Hall, with the social hour starting at 5:30 p.m. and then a steak dinner by Outback at 6:30 p.m. We will have a short program where we thank the outgoing Wing staff and welcome the incoming staff, then we present the Wing's two awards, the *Spirit of the Eagle* and *Colonel of the Year* to two HSW members for their services in 2009. To learn more about these awards, just look at the plaques on the east wall of the Ready Room for details and all the past recipients.

This year's HSW elected staff is listed on the last page of this newsletter but I would like you all to welcome the following new staff members, Col Chris Aycock (Operations Officer), Col Bill Coombes (Maintenance Officer) and Col Bobby Meroney (Safety Officer). I look forward to working with **your** Wing staff for another year.

Once again we are having a **Super Bowl party** on Sunday, February 7th. The game begins at 5:00 p.m. local time so you can show up anytime after 3:00 p.m. for some pre-game enjoyment. Once again, Col Bob Wray and his wife Cheryl will be setting up a kids gaming and play area in the Briefing Room (a.k.a. Romper Room), downstairs in the Commemorative Center. There we will have a number of TVs set up with various games to play and videos to watch. Bob's son Cristian is big into multiplayer Nintendo DS action and daughter Cassidy will also be there to help initiate various games. We should also have a Wii setup. So, have the kids bring their favorite games or videos and we'll let them entertain themselves.

To ensure everyone has fun, stays safe, and that we keep the messes cleaned up, we ask that parents

coordinate with each other during the party so that the Romper Room always has at least two parents supervising. Bring your favorite Super Bowl snacks and refreshments and we will have TVs set up both in our Ready Room and also upstairs in the Gunfighter Pub, as last year, thanks to Col James Martin and friends.

Our next regular Wing meeting will be on Thursday, February 25th, in the Commemorative Center hangar, with our usual pot luck dinner at 7:00 p.m. and the social hour before that. I'll have more news on a program in the next couple of weeks.

The CAF Wing Staff Conference will be held at the CAF HQ facilities in Midland on March 18th-21st. This is when unit leaders and staff members from all over come to CAF HQ to get training or updates of how to do their various staff jobs, plus have a chance to meet with the CAF and Museum staff face to face. I encourage all High Sky Wing staff members to attend as many of these meetings as possible and also get to know your opposite numbers in other units. Let's show them some good old HSW hospitality.

In other happenings, you probably have seen that two members of the CAF General Staff were removed at last Saturday's meeting. If you haven't yet read the explanation of what happened in a special issue of *On The Fly* today, you can go to the main CAF website at <http://commemorativeairforce.org> and scroll down to view CEO Steve Brown's blog for the information.

Col Charles Hutchins and I were asked to serve as interim GS members for this year. I feel that I need to do this for the good of the CAF and its members, and I will continue to serve as your HSW lead in the meantime unless there are any conflicts between the two positions.

I would also ask that you thank Col Bill Coombes for his last two years of very dedicated and hard work as the Chief of Staff of the CAF General Staff. Great job Bill. On to an even better 2010!

Membership News

by Col Lauri Skinner

It is that time again; time to pay your 2010 High Sky Wing dues. Notices are now in the mail. If you have any questions about your dues feel free to contact me at pyroblonde@grandecom.net or at 432-553-2316. Dues are due each year in January, however if you joined the Wing as a new member since Sept. 1st your dues are paid through 2010. By paying your dues each year, you remain an active member of our organization. This entitles you to participate in all of our activities as well as have a say in what our Wing does in support of our aircraft and the other resources under our management.

Besides supporting the mission of CAF to “Honor America’s Legacy of Freedom”, one of the best reasons for belonging to the High Sky Wing is the camaraderie. For me, this is a family of like-minded people, who not only enjoy the aspect of keeping history alive, but also enjoy the company of those same people. We have members from around the Permian Basin, members from around the state as well as members across the United States, and beyond. Our Wing has a history with CAF members, Wing members or not, who know they will receive a warm welcome when they drop into our Ready Room at AIRSHO or any time throughout the year. I hope that each of you continue to find the same fellowship and continue to support the mission of CAF and the High Sky Wing.

Operationally Speaking

by Col Chris Aycock

Happy New Year to everyone! This is my first article as your new Operations Officer and I am excited about 2010. I anticipate that we will have a busy flying year and I look forward to serving all the Wing members. One of my goals is to ensure that all of our pilots remain proficient and current in each of our planes. I also would like for us to have our pilot group adequately cross-trained in each of our aircraft so that we can ensure that we have pilots available for member rides, fly-overs, fly-ins, air shows, and our growing rides program.

In that regard, we are going to have an active Flight Evaluation Board to oversee that our pilots are flying enough every month to keep those skills from getting a bit rusty. We are also going to institute some specific training programs on formation flying. I am also excited to report that sometime this spring we

are going to have a T-6/SNJ school taught by a CAF Check/Instructor pilot from outside the Wing. This school will likely happen in two stages with the first stage being a completion of Lance Sommers’ CAF Instructor rating in the T-6. After this stage, Lance will join Randy Wilson as our second CAF rated T-6 instructor. We will then begin initial transition training in the SNJ for those Wing pilots that meet the minimum CAF qualifications to begin the process of becoming a CAF rated T-6/SNJ pilot. After some initial in-house training, a CAF Check/Instructor pilot from outside the Wing will return to complete the T-6 school. This process will provide an opportunity for the pilots to get excellent training from both inside and outside the Wing. It is also my intent, that this increased flying activity will provide more opportunities for Wing members to enjoy rides in our wonderful planes.

We have two new Wing pilots who have received authorization to transition into the PT-19 and the Stinson 105. Bob Keating and Brad Bond have been completing their training in these aircraft and should be taking check rides with Randy very soon. Please welcome Bob and Brad on board. Both are highly qualified pilots and will be great assets to the Wing.

I received word from Bob Stenevik that Chris Houghston should be arriving in Midland with the L-17 Navion in the very near future. Hopefully, by the time you read this article, this shiny silver plane will be sitting in the hangar at the Com. Center or HQ. Lance and Wayne Bissett made a trip to Florida several weeks ago in an attempt to get the plane to Midland so the Wing could decide whether to accept assignment of the Navion as our newest Wing aircraft. A maintenance issue prevented them from completing the trip. This issue has been sufficiently resolved to ferry the plane and we look forward to completing a pre-assignment inspection so the Wing staff can make an informed decision whether to take assignment.

Finally, please remember that you must sign a new Hold Harmless agreement each calendar year if you wish to ride in Wing aircraft. If you have not signed a Hold Harmless in 2010, you must do so before accepting a flight. Forms are on a blue clipboard in the Ready Room. Please complete the form and slide it under the door of the Operations Office before taking your ride.

Don't Forget!
Your 2010 Wing Dues Are Now Due

Safety's Edge

by Col Bobby Meroney

It is the beginning of a new year and I hope that everyone had a good Christmas. Over the past few years we have seen the High Sky Wing move into the Commemorative Center and begin a new chapter. I would like to start by giving a big thanks to David Linebarger for what he has accomplished during his tenure as Safety Officer. I hope to continue what he started.

Now lets start this year on as good of a track as we ended the last. One thing that I would like to emphasize is we are in the winter months. Which means cold weather and the need to stay warm. Always be aware of the temperature. If you need to warm up then get warm don't take chances. What ever you are doing will still be there when you come back to it and if you need help ask for it there is always someone who will help.

And finally I just want to say thanks for allowing me to be your Safety Officer. If you have any questions or suggestions I am always here to listen.

How did we get these photos?

Does anyone know how the HSW got these 1944-45 photos? See page 4 for some more information and possible clues to their source. Thanks.



During our last work and cleanup day, Cols David Linebarger, Randy Skinner, John Paul Cooper and Bobby Meroney worked together to rehang the large U. S. flag horizontally on the wall of the Commemorative Center hangar. Thanks go to our friends at Bosworth (and David) for the use of the lift.



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How did we get these photos?

by Col Randy Wilson

We discovered a stack of mostly 8"x10" B&W Signal Corps photos from 1944-45 (see some examples on page 3 of this issue) during the recent HSW cleanup. Some are stamped on the back with "AAF Servicing Detachment, Municipal Airport, Des Moines, Iowa - Robert E. Lee, Major, A. C. Commanding Officer." They were found in a box that probably came from our old hangar during the great move.

Some of the photos show planes that seem to have had accidents or incidents, like the P-39 and B-17 stuck in the mud. The tail of the B-17 may be that of a fatal accident that happened near Des Moines. There are some odd types like the R-6 helicopter, too.

If anyone knows how the HSW acquired these photos, please contact me, as we would like to know. The photos were found in an old Ivy Cottage sack, if that's any clue. Thanks for any help sorting out this little mystery. See you at the Awards Dinner.

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: Chris Aycock

Maintenance: Bill Coombes

Safety - Bobby Meroney

New Hangar Phone: (432) 561-5581

all numbers are Area Code 432 unless indicated

What's Happening & When

Jan 23 - Wing Awards Banquet (6:30 pm)

social hour at 5:30 pm in O'Brien Hall

Feb 6 - Wing Staff meeting (10 am)

Feb 7 - Super Bowl Party (3 pm)

Feb 25 - Wing meeting (7 pm)

Mar 18-21 - CAF Wing Staff Conference

Wing Awards Dinner, January 23rd at 6:30 p.m. in O'Brien Hall
