



The Flyer



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High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force
On the Web at HighSkyWing.org
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 432-561-5581

Awards Banquet, Saturday January 15th at 6:00 p.m. in O'Brien Hall

Loose Formation

by Col Mike Hedrick, HSW Leader

January 8th, 2011, 7:00 a.m.

Nomex fireproof flight suit? Check. Crash helmet? Check. Parachute? Check. Insurance paid-up? Check. Pre-flight? Check. Radio? Check. Are you ready for this? Can't dance. Clear Prop!

WHAT WAS I THINKING??? Distant ringing in the ears...Saturday morning alarm clock...just a dream? Not exactly...HSW Staff meeting at 10:00 a.m....LETS DO IT!

This is no dream, but it is a "dream job". Don't tell anyone, but I would do this job for free if I had to.

Just over three years ago I was a civilian looking in from the outside. I attended AIRSHO every year, usually solo, sat in the Fighter Squadron hospital-ity tent enthralled as the planes on the fighter ramp fired their cold engines and coughed and spat past us, American flags waving, real fighter pilots in real fighter planes waving to me and the (rest of the) eight-year-olds. I couldn't get enough. I came back again on Sunday. Then twelve months of waiting.

November, 2007. Debbie makes me a Colonel for my birthday. A very generous, innocent gesture. James Martin gives me a ride in the PT-19 on a cold, clear evening over Midland. Lance gives me a ride in the SNJ...hook set. Eight months later the HSW moves into the Commemorative Center. The family begins to wonder what I'm doing all day at the airport on Saturdays.

September, 2010. The High Sky Wing has 225 members and operates 6 airplanes. Blake Cowart, H.A. Tuck and Susie Day (the nominating committee) ask if I'll run for Wing Leader. I'm in, I say. In the deep end, I think.

Back to the Staff meeting. 2010 has been a resounding success. Retiring Wing Leader Randy Wilson and Staff have added over 50 members to the

ranks and the Wing has adopted two new airplanes; the L-17 Navion and the T-28. Financial and mechanical magic has occurred and all but the T-28 are flying (see Bill Coombes' article for a real perspective on this event in HSW history). Our members have once again demonstrated their generosity and optimism by donating the funds necessary to re-engine and refurbish the T-28. Can it possibly be ready for AIRSHO?

Events coming up:

Awards Banquet, this Saturday, January 15th, 6:00 p.m. This will double as our monthly Wing Meeting. The *Colonel of the Year* and the *Spirit of the Eagle* awards will be given to two very deserving members. See Gena Linebarger's article about the details of this catered supper upstairs in O'Brien Hall. If you haven't yet RSVP'ed, please call and tell her you are coming (even if it's after the Monday deadline). The self-serve bar will be open, and we are planning on having music and a continuous slide show of H.A. Tuck's HSW photography.

HSW Staff Meeting, Saturday, February 5th, 10:00 a.m. Set-up for Super Bowl Party.

Super Bowl Party, Sunday, February 6th, 5:00 p.m. We need volunteers to organize and manage this party. This has been a popular event the last few years, with viewing in the HSW Ready Room and upstairs in the Gunfighter Pub. Bob Wray has very graciously volunteered to set up a kids TV room, as before. We will all help to set up on Saturday, and everyone who attends is asked to bring their favorite party food or snacks. The self-serve bar will be open and non-alcoholic drinks will be available. If you can help out, please call or email me, or let us know at the Awards Banquet this Saturday.

Thanks for your support of the best unit in the CAF!

Don't Forget!
Your 2011 Wing Dues Are Now Due

Awards Banquet

by Col Gena Linebarger

It's that time again! Please make plans to attend our annual HSW Awards Banquet, at which time *Colonel of the Year* and *Spirit of the Eagle* awards will be presented. The Banquet is scheduled for Saturday, January 15th, 2011 in O'Brien Hall at the CAF Commemorative Center. Social time begins at 6:00 p.m. with dinner served at 7:00 p.m. This year's catered menu will be a fiesta of sizzling Mexico flair from "On The Border". You'll enjoy grilled fajitas, a taco bar, enchiladas, beans, rice, fresh flour tortillas, guacamole, pica de gallo, chips, salsa and more, along with dessert and tea! Of course, the camaraderie of fellow Wing members completes the evening.

Cost is \$20 per person and may be paid in advance or at the door. Make checks payable to HSW. RSVP is needed by January 10th to Gena Linebarger at 528-0997 cell or iblast4fun@grandecom.net. Dress is casual. Consider bringing a guest/prospective new member with you to the banquet.

If you forgot to RSVP before the deadline, please give me a call so I can make sure we have enough food. I hope to see everyone there!

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Seeking inspiration.

A new year dawns, with new opportunities, new challenges, and new leadership in the High Sky Wing. Before I progress any further, I must acknowledge the fine job that our out-going Wing leader Randy Wilson has done. This Wing has been blest with some outstanding leaders in its history, from Jim Moore to Gena Linebarger and the folks in between, and Randy continued in that tradition. On a very personal level, I've used Randy as my most trusted advisor during my time on the General Staff, as my cohort in crime with the Seminar Series programs, and as a fellow aviator whose opinions and views I value highly. Plus, I conned him into stepping onto the General Staff in the midst of all the turmoil and chaos. To his credit, he stepped in and helped move the General Staff and the CAF through all of that mess, and then volunteered to run again. I know you all will join me in thanking him at the dinner on Saturday.

In thinking about this article, to start a new year, I felt it might be interesting to go back five years and look at the issues we were dealing with in January of

2006, as a measure of how far we've come. From my column then, read on....

Wintertime is upon us, and we have some time to do some little maintenance items on our airplanes so that they will all be up and ready to go when Spring comes. Fortunately, both Fairchilds are in fine shape, with the latest maintenance item being a battery for the radio in the Tarbaby. Thanks to Steve Bolin, the nav side of the radio in the F-24 functions....

Thanks to new member Lance Summers, the flap problem we had on the PT-19 has been eliminated. (nice to be young, flexible, and a skilled A&P)...I imagine a new battery for the PT will be in the cards sometime this year, but, other than that, I see no problem with the airplane. Lance has also agreed to do some work on the wobble pump on the SNJ, and we did buy a new battery for it, which needs to be installed. I'm also pretty sure that we will have to do some work on the shock strut on the tailwheel on the SNJ, but that shouldn't be too costly or time-consuming. All in all, our fleet is in good shape.

The dirt work for the Commemorative Center, our new home, is done, and foundation cement should start to pour by the middle of the month. I hope you all get a chance to see it at this stage....

Well, we are now in the Commemorative Center, and we are enjoying being the envy of most of the rest of the CAF by living in such a beautiful facility. Sure, we have had some growing pains, and some adjustments in how we operate, but it has all worked out, and we are the better for it. Numbers don't lie, and our increased membership is due in no small part (in my opinion) to where we live. Also, Lance is still working on the airplanes, and he's still young and flexible, but now we have James Martin and Bob Keating joining Lance as the lead members of our maintenance team. The PT is back up and running, with an overhauled tailwheel assembly, and the Tarbaby continues to run like a top, as does the SNJ. The newest jewel in the Wing, the L-17, draws admirers like bees to honey, as I witnessed when some folks with the new A-26 squadron came up to work on their airplane. James' SNB has a bit of competition when it comes to shiny airplanes.

Of course I would be remiss if I didn't mention the Stinson 105, which is down for a few weeks while we replace an aileron torque tube, and the T-28, which is awaiting its newly overhauled engine. John Meyer did some leg-work and located a prop tool for us to buy in

order to remove the prop (this in case we can't borrow the right tool) and Bob Keating is eager to get back to the big white elephant airplane so we can fly it in the Spring. Thanks to the Blastards for putting a \$3,500 sponsorship into the T-28: the more the merrier! With our six airplanes to take care of, plus our privately owned fleet, the maintenance team is stretched, but we are managing to keep all of our birds in excellent repair and in the air.

Before I sign off, I'd like to take a run at a subject which I'm sure will get a rise out of even the most jaded of HSW members, and that is our Wing dues. As a school teacher who doesn't make a six figure income, I'm very aware of the rising costs we all face in our daily lives. But, as a CAF member since 1980, and one of the founding members of the High Sky Wing, I'm also aware that there has been only ONE dues increase in our national dues since 1980 and NO increase in our Wing dues, ever. Folks, we now operate SIX airplanes (when we started the Wing we had one non-flying B-23) and we face increased expenses in every aspect of Wing operations. Thankfully, we have income from bingo, but that is just allowing us to keep our noses above water. We have not been able to add any money to our Wing balance sheets in years. I believe it is time for us to consider a dues increase to \$75 per year, in order for us to continue doing what we have been doing so well, and that is being the BEST WING in the entire CAF. Of course it is not my decision to raise dues, but that of the Wing staff. I would appreciate it if you would give some thought to this, and then let your favorite Wing staff member know your views.

With that pearl of wisdom, remember lefty-loosey and righty-tighty.

Turn and Bank

by Col Steve Bolin

Thanks to all the members who have either joined or renewed their membership in the High Sky Wing this year. Without your support, whether it's financial, sweat equity, or moral support, we could not do the jobs we do in the CAF. Here is a recap of some of the major income and expense items from last year. Over \$5,000 was received in general donations to the wing, the Navion generated over \$11,200 in new donations. The T-28 has generated over \$27,000 in new donations, with another \$14,000 pledged and due this year. Your monthly Wing dinner donations, along with some

of the extra lunches we have provided, have raised \$4,556. That should keep us in plates and cups for a while. Our paid the rent club raised \$1,530 this year. Stand by for a revised way to help with the rent. More info to come at the Banquet. The aircraft rides program generated \$3,600, and your Wing dues received in 2010 came to \$9,825. Our special projects, (Cantina, Memorial Day, Volunteer Dinner) raised \$7,500. Bingo was down, but still brought in \$6,000 this year. Along with a few other income items, our total income for 2010 was \$62,999

Expenses for 2010 included; Rent \$14,200 with another \$2,700 being spent by the Wing on repairs and maintenance. We also spent \$888 repairing the equipment during the year. The biggest amount spent on repairs was \$28,740 repairing and maintaining the aircraft. Our expendable supplies, (everything from paper plates, to can liners, fertilizer for the yard) cost \$2,950. Insurance for the aircraft was \$16,677, this will increase next year because the T28 was in restoration. Our special projects also have related costs, \$5,000. We bought \$8,825 in aircraft fuel and oil, and paid \$6,804 in ANUAC (CAF HQ) expenses. Our total expenses for 2010 were \$95,098.

If you are asking how we are still alive with \$32,000 more in expense than income, we had pre-planned. Starting the year we had \$50,000 in the bank, and other monies in the aircraft accounts. 2010 was a growth and spending year. We acquired 2 new aircraft and are making them fly again. We ended the year with all the major expenses paid or funded, and our income time is now here. Bingo is also going to be bringing in another \$10,000 to the Wing, and \$6,000 to the Museum very shortly. Your \$50 membership renewal turns into \$10,000 when all of our 200 plus members renew. Remember, your dues and any other expenses related to the High Sky Wing or the CAF are tax deductible. We are a 501(c) 3 non profit organizations. I am privileged to take care of your accounts. Thank you for electing me to this position again. I look forward to another exciting and non profitable year.

Gone West

by Col Randy Wilson

I am sorry to report that charter HSW member Col Ray Sharp passed away last Thursday, January 11th, after a battle with cancer. Ray was very active and supportive in the founding years of the HSW and he will be missed by those that knew him.

HIGH SKY WING - CAF
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Executive Offerings

by Col Rick Peterson

Happy New Year from your Wing's XO and I hope everyone enjoyed the holiday season. As we start the new year, and after our awards for the January 2011 meeting, we will start back with our guest speaker program. Over the next few weeks, I'll be contacting potential speakers for our 2011 "Season".

I have a few people to contact for potential speakers already, and I'd like to thank the numerous HSW members who have given me other names to contact as well. Stay tuned for details as to our future speakers for this year.

I hope everyone enjoyed our informative and entertaining speakers from this past year, and I hope to bring you more of the same as we enter 2011. As your XO, I always gladly consider any suggestions for future speakers at upcoming Wing meetings. I hope to see you at the Awards Banquet in January, and then, join us at the February Wing meeting for our first speaker for 2011. See you then.

High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Mike Hedrick - 638-6552 cell
Executive Officer: Rick Peterson
Adjutant: Patti Reakes-Collins
Finance: Steve Bolin
Operations: Chris Aycock
Maintenance: Bill Coombes
Safety - Bobby Meroney

HSW Hangar Phone: (432) 561-5581

all numbers are Area Code 432 unless indicated

What's Happening & When

Jan 15 - HSW Awards Banquet (6pm)
Feb 5 - Wing Staff meeting (10am)
Feb 6 - Super Bowl Party (5pm)
Feb 24 - Wing Meeting (6pm)
Feb 24-27 CAF Wing Staff Conference
Mar 5 - Wing Staff Meeting (10am)

Awards Banquet, Saturday January 15th at 6:00 p.m. in O'Brien Hall
