



# The Flyer

June 2007  
Vol. Fifteen, No. 6

On the Web at  
[HighSkyWing.org](http://HighSkyWing.org)

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

## From the Back Office

by Col Gena Linebarger

What a busy time the Wing has had lately! The Memorial Day Events were a tremendous success. Our cooking efforts were well rewarded with a huge public attendance and profits from hamburger and hotdog sales. The EAA Fly-in Hondo, TX was a fun experience! Even though our planes are not familiar leaving the Midland airspace, we took the SNJ, Tarbaby, Stinson 105 and James & Sarah Martin's beautiful 195 on the venture. I felt we made an excellent show. Next, came the Fly-in/airshow in Snyder, TX. This venture took 6 aircraft! Three from the HSW, SNJ flown by Lance Sommers with David Linebarger, PT-19 flown by Randy Wilson with HA Tuck, Tarbaby flown by Bill Coombes with Tom Kingon, along with Wing members Robin Donnelly, son and friend in the Cessna 180, the 195 flown by James & Sarah Martin with Sam Strahan & son Andrew, and Eric Van Hoff with Gena Linebarger in the Diamond. We certainly made an impression landing on the field.

It's almost like I skipped entirely the TRARON Clinic that was held on June 8, 9, 10. What a great weekend that was. The HSW hosted 14 pilots for the Clinic along with 5 check pilots and 3 Marshalls. The Cook Team of David Linebarger and Randy Skinner, aka the Skinbarger Team, did an excellent job of providing food for the participants. Thank you to the rest of the HSW members that came out to lend a hand, Ted, Tom, Lyle, Jim, HA, Ralph, Ed, Steve H., Chris, Patrick, Rhonda, Lauri & Gena. Eric & Mark were of course there to handle the airplane side of the Clinic. Our own HSW members that partook in the Clinic were Bill Coombes, Lance Sommers, Steve Bolin, James Martin and as check pilot, Randy Wilson. It was a very successful Clinic and one that I hope we repeat again next year.

Please gear yourselves up for AIRSHO 2007. As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary, I hope you will step forward and be a strong volunteer at the AIRSHO. It takes so many people to put a productive

and successful show together. The HSW is such a valuable player in the overall success of the AIRSHO. If you have never helped out, or want a more predominant role at the AIRSHO, please don't hesitate to step forward and ask. After all, it takes all of us to make the CAF shine! There is so much satisfaction in knowing that, we, the High Sky Wing, makes the AIRSHO all it can be. In the up coming Wing meetings we will be discussing the opportunities you have to volunteer for the AIRSHO.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Thursday, June 28<sup>th</sup> Wing meeting!

## Executive Views

by Col Ted Claussen

The program for the June 28<sup>th</sup> Wing meeting will be a presentation by our own Col Gary Austin, who will talk about safety equipment for flying and share a few stories about their use or perhaps misuse. Don't forget to bring a covered dish and join us at the hangar next Thursday evening.



Sarah and James Martin have been very supportive in offering HSW members rides to various fly-ins and shows recently in their classic Cessna 195. Imagine their surprise when at the Snyder air show, their plane won the award for the best/favorite plane at the show! [Gena Linebarger]

## From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Busy, busy, busy, that has been the key word so far this summer. As the pictures that Randy has included show, we have been out and about with the Wing's airplanes, displaying them as we are supposed to do. Hondo and the "big" EAA fly-in was quite an adventure, and the Snyder and Hobbs fly-ins have been full of great stories as well. The Midland TRARON was a story in itself, one that I hope Randy will tell! From my perspective the Wing did itself proud with all the fine food and hospitality we provided for that event.

I'd like to thank the members of the Wing and the Wing staff in understanding the need to get our airplanes out for the public to see, and I'd like to thank the pilots and crew who went along on these adventures. *These are CAF airplanes, and we must display them.* Hondo cost some bucks: double thank you's to those who went there. I was hoping the EAA people would fall all over themselves in admiration of our planes, but that didn't exactly happen. I believe we did win "Best Fairchild 24" and "Best Stinson 105" mainly because we were the only ones like that on the field! We had a great dinner Friday night in Kerrville, with Lance, James and Sarah, Eric, Steve, Mark Baxter, me, my lovely bride, David and Gena, and Steve's partners in the Baron, Lynn and Doug, all of us in one big sorta obnoxious CAF group. They didn't exactly put us in a room by ourselves, but it was close! I recruited a substitute "Christy" for the group pix, because Lance's real "Christy" didn't go. She was missed.

We have annuals to do on the two Fairchilds, but Eric and Lance have the time-frame and the plan of attack well in-hand so I'm not worried. For those of you who don't know, Eric is flying once again, and is working hard to get his tailwheel endorsement. Wayne Bissett has generously let Lance instruct both Eric and Sam Strahan in his Bellanca Scout, and both guys are about ready to move into the PT-19 and Stinson 105. It will be nice having more pilots to add to the pool so that we can always take the maximum number of airplanes on these little trips.

Deb and Miles Magness will keep me informed of the dates for other fly-ins so we can take some more Wing members on these adventures. Come out on Saturday's and do a little work around the Wing and get on the list to go: it is a lot of fun (if you like

airplanes) and it helps the whole CAF.

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

## As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

As others have said, we have been busy flying these last few weeks and have recently been joined by Col Eric Van Hoff in a borrowed Diamond DA-20.

The first Midland TraRon formation clinic brought out nine "new guys" who needed initial formation training in a rather wide variety of aircraft types. The weather was a problem both days but we did fly as many two and four-ship flights as possible and got some valuable training done.

Steve Bolin flew our PT-19 in his first TraRon clinic and Lance Sommers flew in his second clinic and would have gotten a Wingman card if the weather had allowed a couple of more flights. Bill Coombes worked on his Lead skills and also provided a "target" for the new guys to practice with. I ended up in the back seat of a couple of PTs, an RV-8 and the front seat of a Pitts S-2B, as a check pilot. I can tell you it is not easy to mix different types of aircraft into a formation, especially for training, and make it all work safely.

I want to thank all the HSW members who worked so hard to make this TraRon a success and we will probably do it again next year. Thanks also to the TraRon staff and checkpilots who came to Midland to put on the clinic. The next formation clinic this year will be just before AIRSHO and be hosted by our friends in the Desert Squadron over at Schlemeyer field, Odessa.



We flew the Stinson 105 and J2K to the fly-in at Hobbs, NM last Saturday along with the Desert Squadron PT-26, flown by Ray Pierson. Among other Wing members flying were James Martin in his C-195, Robin Donnelly in his C-180 and Eric in the Diamond DA-20. [Pat Wilson]

We have a number of photos from these last few events but rather than try and publish them all in the newsletter, I plan to post some on our website for everyone to enjoy in color. Go to our website at <http://highskywing.org> and look for a link to some new photo galleries and maybe even slideshows. I may have to host these on another web server until I can find time to revamp our rather old and stale website.

As you probably know, it costs money to both print and mail our newsletter each month. We do publish it in color as an Adobe Reader (.pdf) document, available to download from our website but the printed version is only black & white. We could save money and offer more in our newsletter if we could e-mail all members with an e-mail address and Internet access when the newsletter is online, and not have to mail those members a printed copy. Please let me know if you would be willing to help do this or if you have any comments or concerns about it at the Wing meeting.

## Being Safe!

by Col Lyle Thornton

Hello everyone, I'm glad to say that the extra work that our Wing members did for the B-24A project and the TRARON formation school was well worth it. We can all be proud of our contribution to these efforts.

There have been a couple of incidents that have raised my concern for the safety of our Wing members that work alone in the hangar during the week or at night. Both of these incidents occurred in or by the main CAF hangar. One of these happened while working on the B-24A alone and the other accident happened just outside the hangar and caused injury to one of our Wing members.

I realize that some people just prefer to work alone or at odd hours, but I am concerned that this could happen again maybe in our own hangar. I brought up this concern to the staff at the last staff meeting and we are all thinking about ways to make the hangar safe regardless of when someone is there. One idea that was brought up was to set up a "buddy system" for those who want to work during the week or at night. If anyone has an idea of how to implement this idea, please contact me or one of the staff.

I am not proposing that we impose a lot of rules on when Wing members can work in our hangar, but I feel that it is my responsibility to make the hangar a safe place to be at anytime. Thanks for listening and PLEASE be SAFE.

## Turn & Bank

by Col Steve Bolin

The Wing's finances haven't had a lot to report during the last couple of month's time. Bills come in and checks go out. May had a couple of special projects that brought us together and put a little more in the Kitty. First, the B-24A unveiling netted \$160, and then Memorial Day wowed us with almost \$1500.

Thanks to those who put in the time and effort cooking, wrapping, serving, and cleaning up. I really believe this type of fund raising is as important as Bingo. It brings us together as a Wing, and sweat equity yields fellowship and a sense of ownership that can't be gained by cashing a check. With that bit of preaching done, we will continue to cash the checks from Bingo to pay some of the big ticket bills that come around. Fellowship and ownership should come with a little reward also. Along that line, your Wing has been keeping 'em flying with trips to Hondo, Snyder, and Hobbs. We will operate the aircraft and take along as many that want to go on these outings as possible.

As we anticipate the upcoming move across the street, the High Sky Wing bank balance is comfortably positioned to take care of the transition. However, the work never ends. Come on out, get involved, and invest yourself in this great group of people known as the High Sky Wing.



Above, Lance flew the SNJ to the EAA fly-in while below, Randy belts into the back of an RV-8 at TraRon. [Mark Baxter]



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## Last Month's Mysteries

by Col Randy Wilson

I'm sorry that family matters prevented me from revealing the identities of the two mystery planes at last month's meeting but here are the answers.

The single-engine biplane in last month's newsletter was the Stearman Model X-85, designated the XOSS-1 a prototype for a new observation aircraft for the U. S. Navy in 1938. The XOSS-1 was powered by a 600hp P&W R-1340 engine and could mount bombs under the lower wings. However, the Navy selected the Vought OS2U monoplane as its new observation design on both wheels and floats.

In late 1941, Stearman Aircraft became the Wichita Division of Boeing Aircraft. The twin-engine aircraft is the Model X-120, designated the XAT-15 by the Army Air Corps in 1942. It was designed as a bomber crew trainer and powered by two 550hp P&W R-1340 engines. Orders were placed for over 1,000 AT-15s but these were cancelled in favor of the Fairchild AT-21 bomber trainer.

## High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Gena Linebarger - 528-0997 cell

Executive Officer: Ted Claussen

Adjutant: Lauri Skinner - 553-2316 cell

Finance: Steve Bolin

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

June 28 - Wing meeting (7pm)

July 5 - Wing Staff meeting (7pm)

July 9-11 - CAF Rally in Las Vegas

July 26 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Aug 2 - Wing Staff meeting (7pm)

Aug 23 - Wing meeting (7pm)

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**Next Wing Meeting is Thursday June 28<sup>th</sup> 7:00 pm at the Hangar**

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