



The Flyer



May 2010 Issue, Vol. Eighteen, No. 5
High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force
On the Web at HighSkyWing.org
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 432-561-5581

Next Wing Meeting, Thursday May 27th at 7:00 p.m. in the Hangar

From the Lead

by Col Randy Wilson

Hopefully, this month's newsletter will reach you on time and get me back on schedule for the future. There is a lot going on in the next few weeks, beginning with Dinner Out at Carino's Italian restaurant in Midland on Wednesday, May 26th, where 15% of your check will be donated to the CAF Airpower Museum, with the presentation of a voucher. You can print a voucher from a link on the front page of the CAF web site. Pat and I hope to see you there.

Our next Wing meeting is next Thursday, with the social hour starting at 6:00 p.m. followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m. in the ComCtr hangar. Please bring a covered dish or favorite deli item to share for dinner. Our speaker will be Charlie West, a WWII B-24 bombardier who trained in West Texas.

A few weeks ago, the HSW hosted the folks attending the B-24/B-29 Squadron ground school for lunch in our Ready Room. Thanks again for a team led by Col Mike Hedrick, helped by Gena & David Linebarger, Susie and Bruce Day, Tresa Bolin, Lauri Skinner and others for making this happen. With rather cool, blustery weather, and the rest of the ComCtr rented, we had to expand our seating and eating area inside our own space, as shown in these photos taken by Steve Bolin. A very good time was had by all and an anonymous member of both our and their units made a very generous donation to the High Sky Wing for all of its support of the B-24/29 Squadron. Y'all done good!

Last Saturday we flew the SNJ, J2K (Tar-Baby), Bill's Swift and James' SNB (Twin Beech) to the Odessa fly-in, taking along several of our Cadet Crew. Thanks to H. A. Tuck for some of these photos of that trip elsewhere in this issue.

Next Saturday, May 29th, we plan to fly at least the SNJ and SNB to the WASP Museum fly-in in Sweetwa-

ter and then we may also attend the fly-in and air show in Ranger, Tx, just a bit further east. James Martin is helping coordinate the planes and pilots and you can contact me to reserve a seat to fly along as air crew that day.

Memorial Day is Monday, May 31st, and the HSW is helping put on a fly-in, lunch, fly-overs and other events in and around the Commemorative Center and CAF ramp area. Look for details on help still needed from HSW members elsewhere in this issue. As always, if you have a question about the HSW or our events, please drop me an email or give me a call.



We had a full house for lunch with the B-24/29 Squadron ground school last month. As you can see, we had to get creative with seating and tables.



Memorial Day Plans & Tasks

by Col Randy Wilson

Memorial Day is next Monday, May 31st, and starts out at 10:00 a.m. with a fly-in on the CAF taxiway plus a classic car drive-in in front of the HSW patio and lawn area and one of Jim Hall's Chaparrals in the hangar, followed at 11:15 a.m. by the induction of new members to the Texas Medal of Honor Memorial and memorial day program, with a four-ship missing man fly-over. From 12:15 p.m., the High Sky Wing will serve lunch to our guests in the Commemorative Center hangar and there will be several planes available for open cockpit tours, plus clowns, face painting and other activities until 3:30 p.m. At 4:00 p.m., the Rockhounds baseball game starts (only \$2 with a voucher available at our event) with a fly over-by CAF aircraft.

Whew! That's a lot going on and the HSW is once again a key player in the day's events. First, we need to **clean up our hangar on Saturday!** All hands need to pitch in to make the hangar ready for Memorial Day.

Here are some of the other jobs and tasks for which you can volunteer. We need folks to help register those who fly-in or bring a classic car to display and give them their free lunch tickets. Help is needed with lunch set up and serving, plus clean up, with lunch being provided by the Linebarger and Skinner crew. Note that all volunteers and workers will have a free hamburger lunch provided before the public lunch. We will be providing a chopped beef sandwich plate with drink for \$10.00 to those who purchase lunch, and the proceeds will go to the High Sky Wing.

We need folks to drive three four-seater golf carts to help those requiring help getting from parking to the Commemorative Center. Disabled and elderly will park in front of the ComCtr but regular parking will go in the museum parking lot with overflow onto Wright Drive. Planes open for cockpit tours include the C-46, Ju 52, T-28A, O-2 and perhaps others, and guides to help with the tours are needed.

Inside the hangar we need to man a table selling lunch tickets (which may be combined with the plane/car registration), a HSW recruiting table (Mike Hedrick?), provide information on our Cadet Crew program and man an Aircraft Rides table to sell rides.

We will have a couple of CAF Marshalls on hand, Mike Reed and Kathy Mizell, plus the CAF Public Safety crew. At 3:30 p.m. we will encourage all guests to depart to attend the Rockhounds game at 4:00 p.m. We will need some volunteers to help stack tables and chairs so we can get our HSW planes back into our hangar once they return from the 4:00 p.m. fly-over of the game. I hope to see you for a great Memorial Day at the CAF!

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

A short article from the maintenance department this month, one I'm going to devote to giving big "Atta-Boys" to the folks who have worked so hard to keep our birds airworthy.

One measure of a military airplane's utility could be found in the "flight hours – maintenance hours" ratio. One of the reasons my dad's favorite airplane, the Grumman F6F Hellcat, was so successful during the war was its ease of maintenance, high "in service" rate (at or above 90%) and low maintenance hours to flight hours (less than ten man hours for every flight hour). By comparison, the vaunted P-51 Mustang required twice the maintenance hours and rarely had an "in service" rate above 80%. One of the problems with today's modern military airplanes is the incredibly high ratio of work to flight. The F-4 Phantom during Vietnam had a 40 to 1 ratio, and I'm told that the F-117 was on the order of 80 to 1, and the F-22 Raptor is double that!

We aren't keeping front-line fighters flying at the High Sky Wing, but our airplanes do require hours of work for us to operate them less than forty hours per year. The four airplanes in our care flew (roughly) 120 hours last year, and we worked on them (focused effort) somewhere on the order of 650 hours. By implementing the Monday and Wednesday work nights, an idea pushed by Col. James Martin, we have been able to bring even that number down while taking on the Navion project and in repair of the Stinson. Soon we will embark on the repair of the PT-19 engine, something that will require the dedicated effort of our talented group of wrench-twisters, so our maintenance hours are going to go up. And up some more when the T-28A appears in our midst.

Why am I passing this on? Simply so you all will have even more reason to join me in saying THANK YOU to Col. James Martin, (real) Col. Bob Keating, Col. Paul Cooper, Col. John Meyer, Col. Drew Diggins, Col. Bruce Day, Col. Garrett Donnelly, Col. Doug Givhan, Col. Bobby Meroney, Col. Steve Bolin, Col. Randy Wilson, Col. Chris Aycock, Col. John Echols, Col. Sam Strahan, Col. Lance Sommers, Col. Blake Cowart, newest member Col. Chris Rutter, Col. Jerrett Vick, Col. H.A. Tuck, Col. Brad Bond, Col. Phillip Goforth, Col. David Linebarger, Col. Jim Moore, Col. Richard Cotte, Col. Bob Wray, Col. Mark Russell, Col. Tom Kingon, Col. Lyle Thornton, and

whomever else I've missed who have come out and twisted wrenches on our fleet. I'm just the monitor of an outstanding effort, and my hat is off to all of you. It literally takes this team effort to do what we do, and I'm very proud of the condition of our airplanes, the professionalism our maintenance team exhibits (although they do a good job of having fun while working), and the leadership of our "head honchos" Martin, Keating, Sommers, and Meyers.

Hope to see some of the rest of you out helping us *Keep 'em flying*.

Some Key CAF Dates

by Col Randy Wilson

Here is a reminder of some key dates, which are also mentioned in *On the Fly*, the biweekly email update to all CAF Members.

The CAF Museum Board will host an open question and answer session on Friday, June 4th, at 8:00 a.m. probably in O'Brien Hall. This meeting is expected to have a number of visitors who have questions about the recent actions regarding the CAF and museum, and you are encouraged to be part of the group to ensure a good cross section of views is available to the members of the board and the audience. Following this session, the museum board will hold a working lunch and regular board meeting starting at noon. I hope some of you can attend one or both and help support your museum and its board.

A nominating committee has been appointed for the next CAF General Staff elections in October. The members are Cols H. D. Butler (Chair), David Peeler and Doug Jeanes. Nominations for individuals should be sent to CAF HQ, attention Keith Lawrence, to be received no later than June 30th, 2010.

Beginning in 2011, two living and two deceased CAF members will be inducted into the new CAF Hall of Fame. A guide for these nominations is available online or from HQ. The deadline for nomination packets to be submitted to the President is June 30th, 2010.

If you are not getting *On the Fly* by email, please contact CAF HQ to ensure that they have a current, correct email address for you.

As we get closer to AIRSHO and the CAF elections, we will have forms available at our Wing meetings and in the newsletter to request an absentee ballot. Remember, if you don't request an absentee ballot, you can only vote by being present at the annual membership meeting on Friday before AIRSHO. If you care how your CAF is governed, please be informed and then vote.



Cadets Chris Barrow, Eli Meissner, Zeb Donner and Nick Flores pose by the Martin family's shiny SNB



Above, James Martin and Doug Givhan in the cockpit of James' SNB. Below, Cadets Maigen and Zach White, Nick Flores and Eli Meissner enjoy the SNB's cabin.



Randy was #2 in the SNJ with Bill #3 in his Swift.

HIGH SKY WING - CAF
Post Office Box 61064
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Car Club Lunch Help Needed

Col Mike Hedrick

On Monday, June 21st, the HSW will be cooking a fajita lunch for an estimated 100+ participants in a Vintage Car Tour that will be visiting the CAF Airpower Museum. Because of the large number of hungry people involved, we will begin cooking at about 9:00 a.m. for a lunch that will be served beginning at 11:30. This is an important event for the Wing, not only because we can show off and recruit potential members from all over the State of Texas, but also because we have the opportunity to raise over \$500 (after expenses) for the Wing.

This should be a fun event and give us the chance to see these "touring" show cars that actually travel across the state. If you can help out, please email Mike Hedrick at mhedrick@patriot-resources.com or call 638-6552 to volunteer.

Lest We Forget

Next Wing Meeting, Thursday May 27th at 7:00 p.m. in the Hangar

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

May 26 - Carino's Night Out

May 27 - Wing meeting (7 pm)

May 29 - WASP Museum & Ranger Fly-Ins

May 31 - CAF Memorial Day & Fly-In

Jun 3 - Wing Staff meeting (6 pm)

Jun 24 - Wing Meeting (6 pm)

Work Parties every Monday and Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m. until done