



The Flyer

November 2003
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On the Web at
HighSkyWing.org

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

Commemorative Center Update

Fund raising for the new Commemorative Center is going well, with about \$450,000 in grants and donations committed so far. The contract with the architects is being reviewed and should be signed by Headquarters in the next few days.

The Commemorative Center Committee has been formalized by the General Staff and our own Col Bill Coombes has been asked to act as chairman. Plans are for each of the four groups involved in funding and occupying the build, ACAHOF, Officers' Club, B-29/24 and the High Sky Wing, to each have two representatives on the committee.

At meetings in December and January, the committee will review the architect's proposed plans and it is hoped that the final design can be submitted to TxDOT in July of next year. As soon as we have new plans, we will share them with you.

Wing Elections Reminder

Elections for High Sky Wing staff positions will be held at the November 20th Wing meeting. As a reminder, these four Colonels have been nominated for the following positions:

Executive Officer — Ted Claussen
Operations Officer — Randy Wilson
Maintenance Officer — Bill Coombes
Safety Officer — Don McCracken

Don't forget that you must be a current member of both the CAF and the High Sky Wing to vote. Please try and join us next Thursday for the meeting and elections.

Motor Pool Hard at Work

Last Saturday, after careful planning and preparation by Cols McCracken, Meroney and others, the bed of the Wing's newest vehicle project was removed with great care and a little bit of luck. See the photos at the right for a few more details.



After all bolts and attachments were removed, it came time to lift the bed onto the support rails, after which the plan was to drive the truck out from under the bed.



Next the left side is lifted, which is when it was noted that the front mud flaps were going to be a problem.



However, in typical High Sky Wing fashion, the problem was solved and the plan a success. The chassis is now ready for the next step in its restoration.

From the Back Office

by Col Ralph Gillette

Another year has come and almost gone. Our November Wing meeting will be the last business meeting of the year and we have several major items to take care of at that time.

First is the election of new officers. I think the nominating committee did a good job and I want to thank the “volunteers” for stepping up to and offering their names as candidates. Remember, you can still nominate from the floor at the meeting, but most important is to be there to vote.

The second item is the election of the “Colonel of the Year” and the “Spirit of the Eagle” awards to be given out at our December banquet. We will have forms for voting at the November meeting and need everyone’s input for the worthy wing members to receive the awards. As a help, I offer the following information:

Past “Colonel of the Year” winners were: Bob Hansen, Mary Alice Tidewell, Ted Clausen, Bill Coombes, Billy & Betty Barnhill, Blake Cowart, David Linebarger, Roy Green, Gena Linebarger and Jim Moore. The “Colonel of the Year” is awarded for Service, Enthusiasm, and Dedication to the principles of the CAF.

Past “Spirit of the Eagle” winners were: Ernie Webb, Jim Moore, Ray Sharp, Dan Secker, Peggy Vaught, Chuck Haynie, Frank Bass, Bruce Wallace, Bill Coombes and Bob Stine. This award is for consistently demonstrating the spirit of the High Sky Wing and the CAF.

The awards banquet will be held Saturday, January 24th. We are checking on the availability of La Bodega again. We will let you know for sure as the time grows nearer.

David Linebarger presented a check for \$250.00 to the High Sky Wing from the Blastards for the use of the hangar and area for their staging and de-staging during the air show. Thanks Blastards and you are always welcome back.

We had a good showing at the Desert Squadron hangar ribbon cutting the other Saturday. Nice to see the participation. We did have the PT-19 and the J2K on display, thanks to Danny and Bill.



Remember, our next wing meeting is Thursday, November 20th. Gena tells me we have an interesting program that night. Hope you all have a good November and we will see all of you at the wing meeting. Be careful out there and remember, wear something CAF.

Executive Views

by Col Gena Linebarger

This month’s featured speaker for the Thursday, November 20th meeting will be none other than our own renowned Col Bruce Wallace. Col Wallace will be providing some new information on the German atomic weapons projects in World War II and the raid on their rocket test and development site at Peenemunde. The pentagon has just recently given permission for the release of such information and details. This will be an exciting meeting you won’t want to miss!

We are in the process of updating your personal information on the HSW roster. Please check your info. Any corrections may be given to Jim Moore or myself. We are planning on printing a HSW directory the first of the year with the help of Col. Bruce Wallace and Col. Don Luttrell.

Be sure and bring your favorite dish for the pot luck dinner at wing meeting. Thank you Cols Danny and Penny Duewall for taking care of the kitchen detail for November. Let’s get a few more volunteers signed up for next year.

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Fall has arrived, and with it comes time to catch up on some little nagging maintenance items on the three airplanes assigned to the Wing. I’m pleased to report that all three are still very airworthy, yet each can stand some “tweaking” that we shall accomplish as the weather gets colder. Saturdays are still “the day” for working on the planes, and also flying them, so don’t be shy about coming out. At the very least we can clean the dust off of them.

The SNJ has been remarkably trouble-free for the last six months, if you discount the flat tire that Randy suffered. Danny and Randy still need some additional time together in the airplane before Danny can be signed off, and so we won’t start working on 101X until after the New Year. We have some instruments that need replacing, and that seems to be the major

maintenance squawk. At some point we might once again discuss putting the steerable tailwheel mod on the airplane. However, that is a very distant project.

The PT-19 needs some attention to the rear seat rudder pedals. One side has a broken spring, which makes adjusting the position of the pedal (other than in its current position) rather difficult. We'll need a contortionist to fix it, as it is rather inaccessible. Also, the airplane still flies a bit sideways, and we've talked about fitting tab to the rudder. Again, both of these are projects for the winter, as neither keeps the airplane from being perfectly safe and very flyable.

The Tarbaby is running like a top! It also can, on occasion, handle on takeoff and landing rollout like a top! So far I've mastered about one out of every three landings. We need to finish detail work on the interior (basically cleaning up glue residue and repairing areas where the trim has loosened), but, beyond that, there are no big items that need attention. Credit here must go to Rudy, Jim, Rodney, and all the other HSW members who turned a wrench on the Tarbaby. It is a neat attention to the fleet.

Finally, a word about the program on December 12th. I hope that all HSW members come to hear Dick Rutan talk about his life as a fighter pilot, test pilot, and pilot of the airplane that flew around the world non-stop and non-refueled. This is a Museum Seminar Series program, with Fazoli's doing the catering, and we hope to have another large crowd. Remember that all of those "strangers" are potential HSW members! We need to recruit new blood, to help with the airplanes of course, but also to jump in the middle of the "motor pool" and help "Wrench" McCracken and "Bilko Bobby" Meroney with the truck project. The CAF and the Wing are there waiting for volunteers to take the initiative on a multitude of projects: will you be one of them?

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

As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

On Saturday, November 8th, we held our flight safety review and training session, with all three of our local active pilots, Bill, Danny and myself, there, plus several other Wing members. We all need to be aware of the need for safety not only in the air but on the ground, anywhere around the planes.

Something we have talked about is a ramp safety

training day, sometime next spring before the beginning of the air show season. Training would include how and where to fight an engine fire in one of the planes, as well as the basic marshalling and safety hand signals that help us pilots know if there is a fire or other problem out of our sight. We could also train a few more folks to safely operate our tugs and also how to move the *Tar-Baby* and PT-19 by hand without having to wrestle with them too much.

It would be nice if more of our members who are out and around our ramp when we are cranking up and flying were trained in the basics of ramp safety and marshalling. We might be able to get a CAF Marshaller representative out for the training and have a short ramp safety ground school, in addition to the other training.

As Bill has reported, all of our aircraft are "up" and flying as of now. Please be sure to make the November meeting and elections — hope to see you there.

Keep 'em flying and fly safe!

For Members Only

by Col Randy Wilson

Discussions about printing a new Wing roster, elsewhere in this edition cause me to remind everyone that you can print an up to date roster at anytime from our Members Only section of our web site. You can also look up any other member's contact information, including their address, phone numbers and e-mail at any time.

If you haven't tried this yet, just connect to the Internet in your web browser and go to our web site at <http://highskywing.org> and click on the Members Only button on the bottom left of the home page. To gain access to this section, you must enter your CAF Colonel number as your User Login (the top box) and your last name as your User Password (the lower box). If you have already access the Members Only area and changed your password to something else, enter that instead of your last name. I do encourage you to change your password once you gain access.

Once logged in, you will find options to change your own contact information, look up other members' info, print a roster and more. If you have any problems logging into the Members Only section, please send an e-mail to info@highskywing.org or give me a call (570-5914 home, 352-4258 cellular) and I'll be happy to help you get logged in. Happy browsing!

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As we begin to restore our 1943 GMC 2-1/2 ton 6x6 vehicle, it seems time to think about a simpler nickname for it, much as we did with the *Tar-Baby*. In its current condition, *The Beast II* comes to mind but how about an informal **Name The Truck contest** over the next few weeks? Maybe even some nose (or door) art? Bring any suggestions to the next Wing meeting.

High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Ralph Gillette - 570-8093 ofc
 Executive Officer: Gena Linebarger
 Adjutant: Mary Alice Tidwell
 Finance: Bob Stine
 Operations: Randy Wilson - 352-4258 cell
 Maintenance: Bill Coombes - 689-8359 home
 Safety - David Linebarger
 Hangar Phone: (432) 563-5112
 all numbers are Area Code 432 unless indicated

What's Happening & When

Nov 20 - Wing meeting
 Dec 6 - Wing staff meeting
 Dec 12 - Wing meeting and dinner
 with Dick Rutan
 Jan 3 - Wing staff meeting
 Jan 22 - Wing meeting

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday, November 20th at 7:00pm in the Hangar