



# The Flyer

September 2002  
Vol. Ten, No. 9

High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force  
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 915-563-5112

On the Web at  
HighSkyWing.org

## AIRSHO 2002 Is Here! Where will you be?



**HSW** needs **YOU . . . .**

Come help arm and man the

### Cantina

Wed., Thurs., & Fri. ONLY 11:00 to 2:00

**Needed:**

Troops on the front line – to man BBQ pit  
Ground Troops – for serving line  
Support personnel – to help prep food

**&**

### Friday Night Mixer

**Needed:**

Donations to help fund the Mixer  
Ground Troops & Support personnel  
to help set up and sell Raffle tickets

for **AIRSHO 2002**

**ENLIST NOW!!**

**Please report for duty**

**Contact David @ 894-2852**

**Or Gena @ 528-0997**



## From the Back Office

by Col Blake Cowart

As another AIRSHO quickly approaches, I wish to point out a few dates and request a few favors. As usual, we need many volunteers working together and we will need to begin well in advance of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of October.

Requests for absentee ballots for the General Staff elections must be received at HQ by September 30, 2002. Many of us are so busy during the AIRSHO that we miss the General Membership meeting. Send your request to the attention of Keith Lawrence, Director of Administration.

Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup> has been dedicated as hangar cleanup and preparation day. The Staff requests that the membership set that day aside to help get the hangar and equipment ready for the AIRSHO. We will serve a BBQ lunch at noon, so bring an appetite. The October Staff meeting time and date has been changed as it falls during the week of AIRSHO. The next staff meeting will be held Saturday, September 28 at 10:00 a.m. Hope to see you there!

## Executive Views

by Col Ralph Gillette

It's that time of the year again. The kids are back in school, golf tournaments abound, trick or treat candy is moving off the store shelves and the biggest treat of all, "The AIRSHO" is just around the corner. Our September meeting will follow our usual format and take some time to talk about the needs of the Wing for the AIRSHO. We will not have a speaker, though I am sure there will be plenty of talk.

One thing we covered in our staff meeting this week was the need to spruce up the hangar before AIRSHO. **We will have a special hangar cleaning on Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>.** Everybody is invited, David Linebarger said he will cook hamburgers and hot dogs for the troops, so don't miss it.

I hope everybody remembers the visit we had from Ron Buccarelli back in July. He was on his way to Reno for the races. Well, it is post time and the races will get underway this weekend, September 12 thru 15th. If you can find any results in our local papers, assuming you don't use the internet, look for *Precious Metal*. That's Ron's plane and it is carrying the High Sky Wing logo on its tail.

We are planning something special for the October meeting, so keep watching this space. November

will feature Pastor William Clardy, Associate Pastor at Crestview Baptist Church. He was a B-52 driver and has some strong opinions about which airplane is the best ever designed.

Hope to see all of you at the hangar on Saturday the 21<sup>st</sup>.

## As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

The CAF was requested to help celebrate the kickoff of football season in the new Midland sports complex, and the mission was flown by the High Sky Wing. On Friday night, I flew our SNJ 101X over the opening ceremonies and Saturday, we flew both SNJs, as Col Bill Coombes was not occupied with his own school's game that evening. The flyover was well received and helped to get a lot of publicity for AIRSHO but there was some major confusion as to the name of our Wing in the announcements, as reported by a number of our members who were there.

This brings up a point that we need to do a better job of promoting the High Sky Wing within our own community, so that more folks realize that the CAF has an active, local unit right here in Midland. After AIRSHO is past, I suggest that we talk about ways to better advertise ourselves to potential members and others right here at home. I've suggested that we print a simple fact sheet on the Wing, with info on what we do, when we meet, who to call to get involved, and then make that hand out available to any and all who visit us or request our help with fly overs or other local events. We can also make it available as part of our web site. If you have any suggestions on things to add to such a hand out, please let me know.

Both SNJs were back in the air again after this month's museum symposium session, as Bill and I gave rides to speaker Burt Ballentine and his father. Both enjoyed the ride as we once again patrolled the skies over Midland. You may have also noticed the Helldiver in our hangar for a few days, as its carburetor was removed for repair after the Beast didn't want to start and run correctly. It is over in the main hangar for now but will hopefully be back to have the carb and cowlings reinstalled in time to be airworthy at AIRSHO. Thanks to both Rodney and Rudy for switching hats (and bosses) for a few hours to help the West Texas Wing out with the SB2C.

Bill Coombes has had his hands full both with school (his real job?) and as the AIRSHO chairman and



asked me to report briefly on the status of the *Tar-Baby*, aka Fairchild 24. If you have been out to the hangar in the last few weeks, you will know that thanks to Rodney and Rudy, the left wing and the tail surfaces have all been repaired and recovered, and are now being sprayed with the silver paint that will protect the fabric and serve as the primer for the final colors and markings. Right now, we are planning to paint the plane as a Coast Guard J2K, but the final scheme has not been decided or approved. We will keep you advised.

Another aircraft matter that has been under discussion for several months has been what type of aircraft to purchase for the CAF to replace the aircraft we lost last year. There is insurance money that we can use to help replace the aircraft. After a lot of research and discussion, Bill Coombes presented a group of Focke Wolf 149s which were for sale, and Col Charlotte Larson had a chance to inspect and photograph one of the planes while at Oshkosh this year. Her photos have been on display on the table in the hangar for the last few weeks.

The FW 149 is a 4 to 5 place aerobatic military trainer which was developed and originally built by Piaggio in Italy, and the design was picked ahead of the Beech T-34 trainer by the West German Luftwaffe in the 1950s. Focke Wulf built 190 of the planes, under contract, in Germany. The plane has a retractable tricycle landing gear and is powered by a Lycoming GO-480, six-cylinder engine of about 270hp. Not being a taildragger, the FW 149 would allow pilots to get active with the CAF and HSW who currently don't qualify to fly our existing tailwheel planes. In addition, the design is both relatively fast and economical on

fuel, making it perfect for carrying Wing members to air shows plus being available to transport air crews and/or parts, fuel samples, etc. as needed by CAF HQ.

The Wing staff voted to send either Eric Van Hoff or if he can't go, our own Rodney Jackson, to make a pre-sale inspection of the aircraft and then, when we have that report, we will make a final decision whether to buy the plane or not. We'll keep you informed as soon as we know anything further.

I hope to see you out at the hangar Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup> for our big clean up.



The Piaggio/Focke Wulf 149 trainer. Note that his image is just to give you an idea of what the aircraft looks like and is not an image of one of the planes currently for sale. In fact, the aircraft available are in Swiss markings.

## Thank You!

by Col David Linebarger

Thanks to our note in the last newsletter, we have had two household refrigerators donated to the Wing. One was donated by Col Frank Hawk and the other from Colortyme Rentals, through Blastard Col Mike Moore.

I'd like to thank both of these gentlemen for their timely donations. The refrigerators will be put to very good use during the Cantina and Mixer food preparation for AIRSHO 2002.

We still need help on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday for the Cantina, where we will be serving lunch to the visiting Colonels and other air show guests and visitors. We also need help on Friday afternoon and early evening for the High Sky Wing Mixer and party, which will be our way of offering some local West Texas and Midland hospitality to our friends and guests at AIRSHO.

Come on out and have some fun at the hangar any of these days. **Contact me at 894-2852 or Gena at 528-0997 if you can help or have any questions.** Thanks and see you there!

## It's NOT a Navion!

by Col Randy Wilson

Although the FW 149 does generally resemble an L-17 Navion, it is actually a larger aircraft and is fully stressed for aerobatics (6 positive and 3 negative Gs). The cockpit is fitted with dual control sticks and a central control quadrant, handy to either pilot in the front side-by-side seats. Two passengers (three in some versions) can be carried in the rear seats.

I had a chance to fly right-seat in an FW 149 a few years ago at the TraRon formation clinic right before AIRSHO and was impressed with the performance, visibility and general comfort level of the plane. The plane's 270hp engine and constant-speed prop allowed it to fly with AT-6/SNJ's easily.

Top speed is about 170 knots (195 mph) while cruise is 140 knots (161 mph) burning only about 15 gallons of fuel per hour. That compares to the 30+ gallons burned by the SNJ's R-1340 engine each hour! Range, with a VFR reserve is about 680 miles. More later as we continue to look at this plane.

### High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Blake Cowart - 528-1344 cell

Executive Officer: Ralph Gillette

Adjutant: Mary Alice Tidwell

Finance: Bob Stine

Operations: Randy Wilson - 352-4258 cell

Maintenance: Bill Coombes - 689-8359 home

Safety - David Linebarger

**Hangar Phone: (915) 563-5112**

all numbers are Area Code 915 unless indicated

### What's Happening & When

Sep 19 - Wing meeting

Sep 28 - Staff meeting

Oct 2-4 - HSW Cantina (11a - 2p)

Oct 4 - HSW Mixer

Oct 5-6 - AIRSHO 2002

Oct 17 - Wing meeting

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**Next Wing Meeting is Thursday, September 19th at 7:00pm in the Hangar**

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