



The Flyer



September 2009 Issue, Vol. Seventeen, No. 9
High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force
On the Web at HighSkyWing.org
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 432-561-5581

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday September 24th 7:00 p.m. in the Hangar

From the Lead

by Col Randy Wilson

AIRSHO 2009 is less than three weeks out and if you don't yet have a job for AIRSHO, please be sure to come out to our next Wing meeting, this Thursday in the Commemorative Center Hangar, to find out how you can help put on another great AIRSHO. As usual, the social hour starts at 6:00 p.m. with dinner at 7:00 p.m. Please bring a covered dish or favorite deli item to share with our members and guests. After dinner will be further information and discussion about AIRSHO, so if you have questions or are looking for help in your own area at the show, that's the time to step up.

One area that we always need help with is the HSW Cantina, which provides lunch for AIRSHO workers and visiting Colonels from Wednesday through Friday of AIRSHO week, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This year Theresa Thornton and Blake Cowart have stepped forward to run the Cantina, so check with them if you can help one or more days.

Also, this Tuesday is the AIRSHO Volunteer Dinner in our hangar starting at 6:00 p.m. The HSW crew lead by David Linebarger is cooking and as always we need help with setup, serving and cleanup. Don't forget that this is a fund raiser for the Wing!

Looking back over the last few weeks, I am happy to report that the High Sky Wing has been assigned the L-17 Navion, contingent on our inspection of the aircraft when it arrives in Midland. We are currently working with HQ on getting the plane here as soon as we can, perhaps with help for some of our own pilots.

The big clean-up day went very well and I received a very nice email from Keith Lawrence, CAF VP of Administration thanking us for all the hard work and the help we provided. We also had a couple of sad events that we helped with, first the celebration of life for Alice Coombes and then the military funeral

and gathering for the family of a local fallen Marine Captain. Thanks to all the HSW members who helped with these events. I am also sorry to say that long-time HSW member Col Bill Stella's wife Sally passed away last Friday, so please keep Bill and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Back to happier events, unfortunately our Breakfast Fly-In was held on a Saturday that featured very low ceilings and poor weather, and only a couple of planes flew in and another taxied over! Fortunately the local weather improved enough for us to give some new and some not so new members rides in the PT-19. We also recruited at least three and perhaps more members for the CAF and, I think, the High Sky Wing. I'll have some names of those that joined at the fly-in for you at the Wing meeting. I would like to welcome new HSW members (whose names I do have) Cols Mark Pace, Matt Catalano and Doug Givhan and thank them for joining.

I'm sorry this newsletter is running a bit late but I had to travel to Dallas these last few days on family business and am just now getting time to put the wraps on this edition. I hope to see you next Thursday at the Wing meeting. Fly safe!

Turn and Bank

by Col Steve Bolin

As this month rolls on by, we continue to pay the bills. Even though it's September, the Summer fly-ing season invoices continue to become payable Fuel, MCRP, maintenance, repairs to vehicles/aircraft/buildings all have had my check printer going. However, even if Bingo is in the slow season, (Good times are just around the corner.) we still have income rolling in. Blake Cowart, Ed McElrath, and Bill Stella are the newest Paid the Rent club members. Your Wing Leader, Randy Wilson, leads not only in name; but by example also, as he put up \$500.00 for the inspec-

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tion cost of the T-28. One of our lesser known Wing couples, Steve and Terri Brown, donated \$100.00 for the flyover for Alice Coombes' memorial service at Midland College.

Since I am the Finance officer, it's hard not to talk numbers. However, not any less important were the members that showed up to clean for the Fly-In and AIRSHO. The Pilots who came down to earth for a couple of days to get their hands dirty helping inspect the T-28. Or the people that showed up to celebrate the Coombes' Family life.

While our inaugural attempt at hosting a Fly-In breakfast may have been attended by more clouds than aircraft, it had many intangible benefits. Good Times visiting with Wing members. We signed up several new CAF and Wing members. James Martin and I got to give some rides in the PT-19 to several new and not so new members. One that I flew was Gary Harmon. To put it simply, he had a blast. We just went out west of the airport and I gave him the stick. Gary put it in a turn and just climbed and dived for several 360s. I finally took the controls back and gave him a pilot's eye view of where he plays with the rest of the Bastards blowing things up. We got out of the plane and Gary said that was the best thing he had ever done. It reminded me of why we come out and do what we do. Yes, we "Keep Em Flying", but not just to bore holes in the sky, to educate and pass on the passion of those that made it possible. To remember and Commemorate those from Alice's generation, to Myles' generation, and those to come.

The High Sky Wing is financially stable, and truly rich with members new and old.

Modern Military Liaison Help

by Col Mike Hedrick

Volunteers Wanted! If you haven't found your ideal volunteer spot yet for AIRSHO 2009, consider joining our group as a **Liaison Officer** assisting the Modern Military demonstration and static display teams, the private aerobatic performers and Tora.

Your job, should you accept it, will be to provide the best possible ground assistance to these groups in the form of communication with the AIRSHO Staff, transportation on the grounds in golf carts, calling in fuel and smoke oil, and providing food and drinks in their ready room and cold drinks as requested on the ramp.

As a Liaison Officer, you will be the face of Midland, the CAF and AIRSHO to these performers and will provide hospitality that they do not routinely receive. It is our hope that this will raise their level of enthusiasm and performance and encourage them to return next year.

If you would like to be on the "front lines" in the thick of the action, please call Mike Hedrick at 553-2774, or send an email to mhedrick@patriot-resources.com. Full and part time jobs are available from Thursday thru Sunday evening. Thank you.

Keep 'Em Flying!

HSW Cadet Crew News

We continue to recruit for the CAF High Sky Wing Cadet Crew, and the next meeting will be Saturday, October 3rd at 10:00 p.m. in the Commemorative Center hangar. A copy of the flyer is included.

If you have family or friends with boys or girls that are interested in aviation, invite them to join us for the next meeting, which will include lunch with High Sky Wing members and other AIRSHO staff and volunteers.

For more information, please call Bob Wray at 432-617-1394 or Jeff Wickham at 432-230-3284.



What's an L-17A Navion?

by Col Randy Wilson

Well, that's one above! On VJ day in 1945, the orders for 8000 military aircraft from North American were cut to just 24, so with little civil aircraft experience, this four-place, all-metal low-wing design was born. The new plane was named the Navion, a combination of NA and *avion* (French for airplane), and its first flight took place on January 15, 1946. With a

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NEW!

CAF High Sky Wing Cadet Crew

NEW!



Be part of CAF AIRSHO
Oct. 10th & 11th



Join our new Venturing Crew, sponsored by the High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force, located at CAF Headquarters in the new Commemorative Center building on the Midland International Airport grounds. Just follow the many CAF Museum signs to the CAF parking lot and then drive through the black iron gate and park in front of the Commemorative Center.

The CAF High Sky Wing Cadet Crew will have special "backstage" access to the planes, pilots, aircrews and performers at the CAF AIRSHO, Saturday & Sunday, October 10th & 11th, 2009, and Cadet Crew members will be trained to help with the safe operation of the AIRSHO.

Venturing is a youth development program of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women who are 14 (and have completed the eighth grade) through 20 years of age. The annual cost to be part of the CAF High Sky Wing Cadet Crew is \$65.00, which includes a Cadet Membership in the Commemorative Air Force, the High Sky Wing, and the BSA Venturing fee.

Crew meetings will be held on Saturday, Sept. 19th and Oct. 3rd both starting at 10:00 a.m. and will include lunch with members of the High Sky Wing and other AIRSHO staff and volunteers.

For more information please contact Bob Wray at 432-617-1394
or Jeff Wickham at 432-230-3284.

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fly-away price of \$6100 plus tax, it was advertised to cruise at 150 m.p.h. for 500 miles with a useful load of just over 1000 pounds.

With a Continental E-185 six-cylinder engine of 185 h.p. (higher in later versions), hydraulic landing gear and flaps, steerable nosewheel and variable-pitch propeller, the Navion faced major competition from the new Beechcraft Bonanza. Unfortunately, the advertised price for the Navion was significantly less than what it cost North American to build the plane.

In June, 1947 the U. S. Air Force ordered 83 of the design, with minor changes, to be designated L-17A. Price to the USAF was closer to the real cost of about \$10,000. Once military contracts picked up again for North American, the Navion design was sold to Ryan Aeronautical Corp. in San Diego, CA, who began to produce the design in 1948. Ryan produced 1077 civil Navions plus an additional 163 L-17B models for the Air Force. In 1951, the design was bought by the Tusco Corp. of Galveston, TX.

L-17s saw service in Korea and elsewhere.

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: Ronnie Jones
 Maintenance: Lance Sommers
 Safety - David Linebarger

New Hangar Phone: (432) 561-5581

all numbers are Area Code 432 unless indicated

What's Happening & When

Sep 22 - AIRSHO Volunteer dinner (6pm)
 Sep 24 - Wing meeting (7pm)
 Sep 26 - HSW AIRSHO meeting (9am)
 Oct 2 - First Friday & Gear up for AIRSHO (5pm)
 Oct 3 - HSW Cadet Crew meeting (10pm)
 Oct 7-9 HSW Cantina (11am-2pm)
 Oct 9 - 11 AIRSHO 2009
 Oct 22 - Wing meeting (7pm)

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