



*A Semi-Annual Publication of the High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force*

## From the Wing Leader

The High Sky Wing has the BEST members around. That was the reason for the special “**Dinner and a Movie**” on Saturday, July 12th. We know you enjoyed the beef and chicken fajitas, tacos, beans, queso, chips and cold drinks. Hopefully the movie was worth the trip as well.

Remember the email request for donations to purchase **600 chairs** from the Symphony? I am pleased to report that the project was fully funded! Thank you all for your generous donations. This unique purchase gives the Wing the opportunity to generate revenue in the future as we rent the chairs to the many events that rent the hangars. Again, thank you!

If you haven't been in the main hangar lately, you'll want to make a special trip and see the Wing's newest aircraft assignment, the **C-45 (pictured above)**. A plan is in place and work has begun to bring her up to flying status, which will also include placing the plane into the “Rides Program.” This program is exciting for the Wing and also a bonus for our community who will be able to purchase rides. The experience of

**Continued on page 2**

## The Spirit of Midland

After some significant thought and planning, the High Sky Wing staff voted to apply for assignment of the former New Mexico Wing C-45, with the idea that this aircraft, similar to those flown at Midland Army Airfield, would become our “Flagship” airplane. Further, by putting it in the rides program, the “Spirit of Midland” would become a revenue generator, something sorely missing at this time in the Wing's finances.

After an adventure worthy of its own TV documentary, an intrepid crew from the Wing retrieved the airplane from Hobbs, New Mexico. Now, under the leadership of James Martin, the C-45 is **being annualed and readied for flight status**. Paul “Buffy” Cooper and your editor have been sweating, polishing, applying markings, sweating and polishing some more so that our newest acquisition will sparkle as much as the Martin SNB.

**Our plan is to make a maximum effort at AIRSHO** this year and out-hustle the C-45 Bucket of Bolts which currently is the single most successful revenue generating airplane in the entire CAF. If you would like to join the “Spirit Support Crew” please talk to James Martin or Steve Clinton.



## We Need You!

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Many times in volunteer organizations members come out all enthusiastic about getting involved, only to discover that “**involvement**” is sometimes difficult to attain. I’m afraid the High Sky Wing is typical, in that I know we have members who want to help but don’t know where their help is needed or what their skill level will allow them to do.

Obviously the care and feeding of the Wing’s airplanes is an obvious place to start. We have an excellent maintenance crew, led by **Wing Maintenance Officer Michael Clinton, IA’s Bob Keating and Mark Haskin, and supported by A&Ps John Meyer and Bill Lipham.** However, these guys can’t do it alone! If you wish to devote the time and effort to learn from the crew out there now, we will be more than happy to teach and guide you.

Not all jobs are glamorous, and safety is paramount, so many things are left to the professionals, but trust me when I say there are lots of things that a shade-tree mechanic can so to help us out. **Tuesdays and Thursday evenings from 5:30 until 9** or so is our usual maintenance nights, with Saturdays being both a “flyin’ and fixin” day.

And speaking of shade tree mechanics, **Col.**



**WE NEED  
YOU**

**Jerry Perales has been our practically one-man Vehicle Support Mechanic.** We have three tugs, four golf carts, a command car and a German Kuglewagon that he sort of volunteered to keep running, but he needs lots of help.

Seeing that there is air in the tires, batteries are

charged, and vehicles run every week is not rocket science, but it does take some commitment

Maintaining our facility is another critical area. From basic housekeeping chores (**remember Col. Gutting the lawnboy?**) like vacuuming, emptying the trash, keeping the kitchen cleaned up, the refrigerators stocked, these are jobs that we are in need of filling. **Col Tuck, our official Wing photographer,** does wonders vacuuming, but he could use help, and ditto all the folks who help in the kitchen at Wing meeting night. **I’m sure that the ladies Bolin, Gillette, and Thornton would love some help.**

In short, there are TONS of jobs to be done. and I haven’t even mentioned AIRSHO, Memorial Day, Mustang Stampede, Hops and Props, and various hangar rentals that now become OUR responsibility. For us to succeed, (to borrow from a famous poster) **“WE NEED YOU!”**

## From the Wing Leader

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Continued from page 1

flight in a WWII aircraft brings history to life! Thank you to the members that stepped up as Sponsors to make this beautiful aircraft a reality.

**Mustang Stampede** is scheduled for Saturday, August 23. See more information and details in the attached flyer. This event will be a fundraiser for the Wing as we cook and serve lunch to the participants. Come out and help.

**AIRSHO is just around the corner, October 11-12.** Find your special place to volunteer for duty before, during and after the show. It takes all of us to make a successful AIRSHO. You can also help by selling AIRSHO to our community in the form of tickets,

chalets, specialty seating and sponsorships. Information can found on the web at [www.airsho.org](http://www.airsho.org) or pick up flyers in the HSW Ready Room.

The next **Wing meeting is Thursday, July 24.** Our guest speaker will be Jimmy Patterson. Mr. Patterson will enlighten us on some history about Sloan Field/Midland Army Airfield/Midland International Airport aka Spaceport. Social hour begins at 5:30, dinner at 6:30, meeting at 7:00, followed by our speaker. Please bring a covered dish to share, cost is \$5.

**Come out, get involved and  
“Let’s Keep ‘em Flying”!  
Gena Linebarger**

From the Editor's Perch -- by Bill Coombes

## Our challenge, our existence: 'For granted' won't work any more

**"Now is the time that tries men's souls"** wrote Thomas Paine in his essay "The Crisis" way back in 1776. I believe the same could be said for the High Sky Wing, as we now must come to grips with the realization that business as usual at the Wing can no longer work. A crisis not of our making exists.

The move of the HQ personnel and the change in our status from National Headquarters to Airbase West Texas means that we are now facing our biggest challenge to date: our very existence hinges on how **WE, you, me, every occasional member**, every person who gives a damn about the CAF in Midland, rise to the challenge before us.

I don't want to sound alarmist, but without everyone putting forth a greater effort, as I said in my guest editorial in the local paper, the CAF in Midland will become just a footnote in the history of the Tall City. **It isn't a question of money necessarily, but of commitment.** Like every volunteer outfit, this Wing functions because a core group take on responsibility for the key areas.

Your Wing Leader and her Staff are handling the administrative requirements of the Wing: kudos to them. The Maintenance teams have the assigned airplanes in good repair, and the pilot pool is growing. A few stalwart members (thank the Lord) always take the time to clean up the Ready Room and kitchen, mow the grass, run the floor machine, re-stock the bar, bring food to the meetings, cook at special events, volunteer at Airsho, **talk to visitors, and on and on, doing those things other members take for granted.**

**"For granted" won't work any more.**

I'm going to risk some friendships here and call each of you out. Pilots, simply flying the airplanes isn't enough. We must do more to raise the money we basically get to spend by flying the fleet. Each of us know people of means: I challenge you to sell a Chalet



for Airsho.

There are about fifteen active Wing pilots, times \$4,000 per Chalet gives Airsho a profit of \$40,000. **That is money that comes back to us, toward operating our home.** My first call is going to be on David Fields.

**Who are you going to ask?**

Ditto to the EOD/Blastards: you guys and gals do a great job, and you all have been exceedingly generous with donations to the Wing. But, as the saying goes, **"what have you done for us lately?"** I've given lots of money, my family has given lots of money, both to the Wing, the Museum, and the CAF, but I can't simply say I've done my part, not if I want the Wing to continue.

I think the key will be not tapping our own wallets, **but in selling our most visible product, the Airsho**, to others. I'm not in the service industry, but many of our members are. Can't Halliburton or Concho, or Pioneer, or ??? be approached? Your hard working Wing Leader and Airsho Chair will call anyone whom you suggest.

Folks, it just can't be the other guy's responsibility.

**Our next Wing meeting is July 24th.** Show your support and commitment to what we do by coming out and asking "what can I do to help?" We should have artist renditions of what the newly configured Museum in OUR hangar will look like, and we can begin organizing construction crews to help with the building of the exhibits.

As always, **the camaraderie and fellowship is another reason to come out**, and I believe we will be giving rides in some of the Wing's aircraft. Bring a covered dish, a main course, even a \$5 Domino's pizza and join the party.

Stepping off of the soapbox now.

## Look, up in the air, it's a bird, It's us . . .

Yep, it is the Wing's airplanes that you've seen flying recently. We started the airshow season with an appearance at the **Burnet Airshow in April**. Much fun was had by all who attended, as no vans with water in the headlights were used as crew vehicles, and no opposing passes in the landing pattern were done.

It was the Hondo Airshow in May when we launched the SNB (with a full load of passengers), both T-28s, three SNJs, the Tarbaby, the LC-126, and the PT-19 (with the Haskin boys as crew: I bet that was an entertaining trip!) with our **RON at Kerrville instead of the Hangar Hotel at Fredericksburg**.



The wives have a good time shopping (and getting massages!) while the boys were off to the airshow, shooting their wristwatches off their wrists and making machine gun noises.

**We were set to launch the fleet again in June for**

## Scattershots . . .

**Kudos to Greg Gutting for all his work for the Wing.** Our "lawn boy" has faithfully tended our front yard at the Wing. Most recently he's been invited to speak at the Rotary Club luncheon about the CAF, the Wing and of course the move. Hopefully his silver hair will match his a silver tongue and he can woo the crowd in supporting us.

**A special shout-out to John Meyer,** for all his work in doing the annual on the Stinson, and doing so much work on the C-45. We have an excellent maintenance team led by **Maintenance Officer Michael Clinton and IA's Bob Keating and Mark Haskin.** Finally, a special doff of the cap to **Randy Wilson, John Echols, HA Tuck, Jason Cooper, and Steve Clinton** for taking the time to approach visitors to the hangar and show them around. It is that personal touch that really makes a difference in their experience.

**"Word of mouth" is the best advertising.** FYI, kids (of all ages) love getting inside an airplane. The C-47 is a good one to show, and the PT-19 is as well. If you aren't confident about doing cockpit tours, hollar for one of the maintenance guys or even those lazy pilots . . .

**the Snyder airshow, organized by Wing members John Rogatski and Jay Burns.** However, amazingly it rained, and only Steve **"Jet Boy" Bolin and Doug "the Shadow" Givhan** were able to show our flag in the L-39. The rest of us watched it rain. Those folks in Snyder and the Texas Air Museum are good people and they treat us wonderfully.

Most recently we've participated in the July 4th celebrations in Big Spring and in Midland. **Sam "Dodo" Strahan joined me, Randy Wilson, and new friend Brian Frerich** in a SNJ four-ship over the Pops in the Park event in Big Spring. Over Midland we put up a "high CAP" of the L-39 and a T-28 (a "Nordo" #2 for half the adventure) in a north-south orbit, while the "Low CAP" of two SNJs, the LC-126 and the PT-19 rolled in on an east to west pass. Our hope was that the cross-over would be timed with the National Anthem, and lo and behold that is exactly what happened. Greg Gutting has video evidence of our prowess!

Get involved. More flying adventures await.

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High Sky Wing-CAF  
Post Office Box 61064  
Midland, TX 79711-1064