



# The Flyer



## WING STAFF CONFERENCE

*Largest Turnout in Recent Memory*

More than 160 staff members of wings, squadrons and detachments from all over the country came to CAF Headquarters February 23-26 for the annual Wing Staff Conference. This conference allows units to interact, share experiences, and be brought up-to-date on new policies and procedures.

Breakout sessions included Finance for Beginners (don't know if Bolin attended that one or not!); 1st Time Unit Leaders; Fortress 101; Membership Recruiting/Retention;

Working with Youth; Using Video as a Marketing Tool; Steps to Effective Planning; Advanced Finance, Aircraft Accounts and Taxes; Safety, Insurance, Operations and Maintenance, and others.

Dinner was hosted by Steve Brown on Friday night, and on Saturday night the CAF Hall of Fame and Awards Banquet was held. (See **Patti Collins'** column on page 4 for more)

One highlight enjoyed by all was the CAF Jeopardy! game hosted by President Steve Brown. (see pg 5)

### **LOOSE FORMATION: WING LEADER REPORT BY MIKE HEDRICK**



Can you feel it? Do you have a sense that something is happening? Our world is changing... and accelerating the rate of change... what do we do to keep up?

The High Sky Wing and the CAF occupy an interesting place in the world. We are an educational organization that teaches history by maintaining and operating obsolete flying machines. These flying machines were designed and built at a time when there had to be a direct mechanical or hydraulic connection between the pilot and the engine and control surfaces. There were no electronic navigation systems, and many flew out of grass airstrips and

into unknown weather conditions... with skill...and on a wing and a prayer.

The HSW flying machines are the same now as then. We actually go to great pains to keep them that way. Modern restorations of WWII military aircraft go so far as to duplicate the haphazard painting of interior panels that characterized the mass produced emergency war machine. What is different is the supply of warbirds. We can no longer take one up and wear it out practicing, or limp home from a brutal combat mission, and pull a new one out of the parking lot for tomorrow's mission. We are in permanent preservation mode.

So how is our world changing? As the HSW grows its fleet, and moves to bigger, more complex machines, the changes are coming from operational logistics. Today, because of a vast array of issues like

governmental regulation, insurance and legal compliance, availability of fuel and parts, and competition for the time, money and attention of volunteers and charitable organizations, we are in a period analogous to Moore's Law of the computing world: the complexity of operations is doubling every couple of years.

As we enter the 2012 flying season, the Wing will be wrestling with the usual issues common to keeping old airplanes flying, and with new events that will require our ability to understand and adapt. This spring will be challenging with the closure of our taxiway for repaving, potentially curtailing HSW attendance at out of town airshows. Innovative fund raising will be a priority as we move the T-28 project to completion and operational status. (see **Hedrick, page two**)

### Newsletter Information



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**OPERATIONS REPORT BY DREW DIGGINS**



The High Sky Wing Pilots met last weekend in the ready room and completed the annual required CAF regulation training. Headquarters requires each pilot to complete a five page “multiple guess” test. In addition, the pilots had a open discussion of emergency procedures for flying. Although the agenda was pretty dry the pilots kept the discussions interesting and completed the training in two hours. Congratulations to **Sam Strahan** and **Chris Aycock** who received their pilot rating in the wing’s *L-17*. Both Sam and Chris commented on how much fun the *L-17* is to fly and how easy it is to land.

New pilots **Mark Haskin** and **Steve Clinton** caught a break in the weather last weekend and got some training in the *Stinson* and the *L-17*. Both are hoping to receive their ratings and represent the wing at air shows this season. All wing aircraft data has been updated in Fortress.

Thanks to the pilots who have committed to the airshows the Wing is attending:

**Burnett**, April 14

**Dyess**, April 28

**Temple**, May 5

**Hondo**, May 19

**Ranger**, May 26

**Waco**, June 2

**Denton**, June 16

**Snyder**, June 16

If you are interested in attending any of these air shows, please contact me about signing on.

**SIGN UP SOON!**  
Crew slots will fill up fast. Get your name on the list now.

*(Hedrick, from page one)* And of course serving the membership with value through activities and programs is a high priority.

I am confident that the High Sky Wing and the staff with its newly elected officers will rise to the challenges of 2012 with their fresh ideas and enthusiasm. We are already seeing results with the newsletter and our new website. Let’s get this machine airborne... with skill...and on a wing and a prayer!

STEVE MILLER BAND TO PERFORM AT AIRVENTURE 2012

“The Steve Miller Band, which has been rocking audiences for two generations, will bring its high-energy show to EAA AirVenture Oshkosh on Monday, July 23, for the popular opening night concert, presented by Ford Motor Company.”

“Steve Miller, a Wisconsin native, founded the band in San Francisco in the mid-1960’s and first hit the charts big time in 1973 with the No. 1 hit “The Joker.” Since then, his group has sold more than 39 million records featuring such unforgettable hits as “Fly Like an Eagle”, the No. 1 hit “Rock’n Me,” and “Jet Airliner.” The band’s songs remain staples on classic rock radio, even as Miller has continued to expand his musical horizons with highly regarded blues and jazz albums.”

Source: [www.airventure.org/news/2012/120308\\_stevemillerband.html](http://www.airventure.org/news/2012/120308_stevemillerband.html)



ENJOYING THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE WING STAFF CONFERENCE

**Jay Burns**(L in left photo) and **Brent Collins** with their “fair share” of the Pizza. **Brent** (L in right photo), **Patti Collins** and **Paul Cooper** enjoy a laugh at the Wing Staff Conference.



Photos by Greg Gutting

**THE KNUCKLEBUSTERS CORNER BY STEVE CLINTON**



Maintenance, as defined by Webster is “the act of maintaining or to be maintained” or, as defined by the HSW “ a whole lot of work and fun”. The High Sky Wing’s definition will start to be tested to it’s fullest starting in March. The airshow and fly in season are rapidly approaching and with the aircraft we have committed to maintain, it will be all hands on deck. HSW is planning full squadron flights beginning in mid April and the prep work starts now.

I had the opportunity to visit with many out of area Colonels during Wing Staff Conference and received many complimentary comments about the hangar facility and the commitment the HSW has made in supporting the number of aircraft we have. It was nice to know that so many folks understand what it takes to maintain a fleet of historical assets.

One last comment: it was a beautiful sight to see the twin SNJ’s in formation on Sunday after the Wing Staff Conference concluded. I invite all to come out and enjoy the hangar flying as well as some great real flying that you as members help make possible. “Keep Um Flyin”

Without teamwork, the job doesn’t get done. (L to R) **James Martin, Bob Keating, Bill Coombs and Steve Clinton** work on the *PT-19*.



Photo by Greg Gutting

In addition to the two SNJ’s, the following aircraft are fully flight ready: *F-24 Tar Baby, L-17, Twin Beech* and the *Swift*. The others have minor issues that are being addressed.

**SAFETY REPORT BY PAUL COOPER**



**AIRCRAFT EMERGENCY SAFETY**

Just the other day, I had an opportunity to ride in a DPS helicopter for a funeral flyover and be the contact person to let our guys follow us with the CAF flyover of the grave site service. The ride was an experience to remember.

Now, let’s talk about safety. During a preflight check on the helicopter ride, the pilot gave me a detailed briefing on the standard emergency procedures during flight or a crash landing. He showed me how to escape if something happens. Thinking about that made me realize we as pilots or crew members need to know our standard emergency procedures and need to brief our passengers, whether they are new members or experienced riders, on how to exit the planes in case of emergency, and on any other emergency procedures.

With the onset of warm weather, we need to be aware of our

surroundings. It is time for the critters, spiders, snakes, etc. to be coming out of hiding, SO WATCH YOUR STEP!

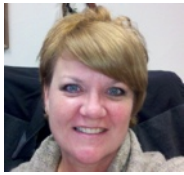


**Snake Bite Statistics**

- About 7,000 people are bitten by venomous snakes in the U.S. annually.
- Only 0.2% (1 out of 500) venomous snake bites result in death
- On average, 1 to 2 people in Texas die each year from venomous snake bites in Texas.
- Roughly half of all venomous snake bites are "dry." That is, the snake does not inject venom into the victim.

Information from: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/health/zoonosis/animal/bites/information/venom/snake/](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/health/zoonosis/animal/bites/information/venom/snake/)



**ADJUTANT REPORT BY PATTI COLLINS**

My goodness, this year is flying by quickly. I feel like I say that same statement every month. Wing Staff Conference was held the last week of February and per usual form of the High Sky Wing, we had a huge membership showing. All of the High Sky Wing Staff attended this year and one of our own, **Steve Bolin** was honored with the Distinguished President's Award. As seen in the photo, Neils Agather presented him a beautiful plaque on Saturday evening, February 25, 2012. Join me in congratulating Steve on this well-deserved honor!

Now, we cannot forget the efforts of all of our membership as a whole! The High Sky Wing was honored with the Distinguished Unit Award. On hand for the presentation by Steve Brown were (see page five for photo) **John Echols, Drew Diggins, John Paul Cooper** (a.k.a. 1.0 and "Buffy"), **Steve Bolin, Brent Collins, Mike Hedrick, Randy Wilson, and I.**

Congratulations! This is only possible with the camaraderie and work of the entire membership base. So give yourself a pat on the back! Together, we all make the High Sky Wing the best!

Help recruit new members and let's share the fun that takes place here among our friends. And as always: Keep 'em Flyin'

**XO REPORT BY GREG GUTTING**

Since our last issue of *The Flyer*, I have stayed busy with a couple of things.

**James Martin**, our Webmaster, asked me to update the aircraft section of our webpage ([highskywing.org](http://highskywing.org)). I've pretty much accomplished that, but I am still in need of specific information about our aircraft; for example stories about how and when we acquired them, and any interesting or amusing anecdotes. Send your stories/information to me at [ggutting@earthlink.net](mailto:ggutting@earthlink.net).

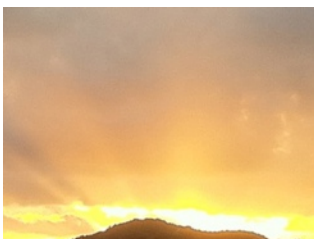
I was honored recently by being appointed to the Policy Governing Board of the American Airpower Heritage Museum. I am looking forward to being involved in that aspect of the CAF. By the way, the museum has a constant need for volunteers. If you are interested, contact Museum Director **Autumn Hicks**, at [ahicks@cafhq.org](mailto:ahicks@cafhq.org).

I attended my first Wing Staff Conference in February and was very impressed, especially by the Sunday morning session. This was dedicated to questions and answers and resulted in a great exchange of information between Headquarters

and Wing Staff, and among all the units in attendance. It is this type of forum with open communications that benefits us all. Recruiting and retaining members was a big topic, and one that we should all pursue.



We hope to get the Speaker's Bureau up and running soon, to speak to civic groups, schools, churches, etc. to enlighten them about our mission and encourage their support through membership and/or donations. If you are interested in participating, let me know.

**MEMBERS OF THE HSW FAMILY WHO HAVE GONE WEST**

**James M. Davis**, February 20, 2012. Combat Airmen Hall of Fame pilot with thirty-three B-24 missions.

**Robert B. Holt**, February 25, 2012. Rancher, oilman, equestrian, politician and pilot were among his accomplishments. He was instrumental in moving the CAF to Midland.

**TURN AND BANK BY STEVE BOLIN**



February was a short, but successful month for the High Sky Wing Finances. Thanks to **Bob Keating, Walt and Sandy Thompson, Richard Erwin, Bruce and Susie Day, Jerry Perales, Buddy Cooksey, and James Martin** as they stepped up to help Pay the Rent. This is \$3000 of the \$7000 pledged at the Wing Awards Banquet. If you need help remembering if you pledged, I'll be in touch soon.

**Sam Strahan** has joined a few others in prepaying for some gas for training in the T28. Another \$2200 in Wing dues came in during the month, bringing our total this year to just over \$10,000. **Patti Collins** and I will get together to send out second notices, but all of you can help with retention and recruiting. If you like what we're doing, some of your friends might too.

Bingo rounds out the income statement with \$9000 to the Wing in Feb. This brings our checking account back to \$30,000.

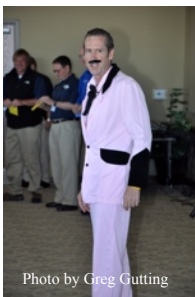
No unusual expenses; the PT19 prop will be back by the next report. This is a \$2,300 expense.

Thanks to all who surprised me last month as I retired from the FAA. We have a great group of people who enjoy sharing with each other. Keep up the good work.



Sign up a new member today!

**MISCELLANEOUS MISCHIEF**



*Wing Staff Conference*  
President **Steve Brown** hosting a rowdy episode of CAF Jeopardy!

Photo by Greg Gutting

*Sun 'n Fun*

USAF Thunderbirds will perform at Sun 'n Fun this year, probably only on Saturday, 3/31 and Sunday, 4/1.



High Sky Wing receives Distinguished Unit Award

(L to R) **John Echols, Neils Agather, Drew Diggins, John Paul Cooper (a.k.a. 1.0 and "Buffy"), Steve Bolin, Brent Collins, Mike Hedrick, Randy Wilson, Patti Collins, and Steve Brown.**

Photo Courtesy of Patti Collins

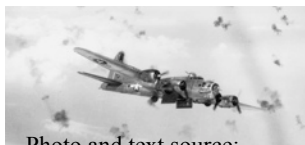


Photo and text source: [www.zenithpresstheblog.com/2011\\_06\\_01\\_archive.html](http://www.zenithpresstheblog.com/2011_06_01_archive.html)

**WORLD WAR II HISTORY**

On March 4, 1944 the USAAF launched and then cancelled the first daylight bomber raid on Berlin. Twenty-nine of the aircraft launched did not receive the cancellation and carried out their original orders. Two days later, 730 bombers and 796 fighters flew against Berlin, commencing a series of air attacks against the German capital.

# High Sky Wing Newsletter

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## *UPCOMING EVENTS*

March 22

Wing Meeting/Potluck

March 27-April 1

Sun 'n Fun  
Lakeland, FL

April 7

Museum Fly Day

April 14

Bluebonnet Airshow

Burnet

May 4-6

Central Texas Air Show

Temple

NEED A RIDE TO THE WING  
MEETING?

Drop us a line at:

[comments@highskywing.org](mailto:comments@highskywing.org)

Visit our updated web page:  
<http://highskywing.org>

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