



COWL FLAPS

For Members of the Gulf Coast Wing — CAF



IMPORTANT DATES:

- JAN 29, 1800hrs—Work night at the hangar
- FEB 02. 0900hrs—Work Day at the hangar
- FEB 16. 0900hrs—Wing Staff meeting at hangar
1030hrs—General membership meeting at hangar and Work Day
- FEB16. 1800hrs—Hobby Marriott Hotel, Annual GCW Awards Banquet

Inside this issue:

Maintenance Report from Col Aronson	2
Make the Wing Leader CRY !	2
Donations ! and Buster Knuckles	2
Steve Brown Visit	3
Wing Leader Report from Col Price	3
Wings Over Houston 2008	3
GCW Banquet, Newsletter, and Important Dates	4

NEW

See **Back Page** for more Info

Volume 1 Issue 5

January 27, 2008

YOUR NEW WING STAFF OFFICERS

HOUSTON, TX

January 12, 2008 the new elected staff of the Gulf Coast Wing took office smoothly in what appeared to be a motivated and organized fashion.

This staff has several challenges which lie ahead, none of which are easily solved. Although TEXAS RAIDERS has a hangar and shelter, the lease (which expires in 2008) requires a monthly \$3,350 payment, more parts must be secured, more manpower is needed to complete the restoration and repairs, and once flyable, the B-17 will need oil and gas money just to certify the crews.



2008 Gulf Coast Wing Staff Officers: Bottom Left to Right and Top Left to Right Craig Freeland, Ky Putnam, Don Price, Mark Allen, Bud Bearce, Craig Aronson, Walt Thompson, Wayne Kennedy and Jim Ryan

So where do we go from here? An organized project plan is being drafted, a new appointed non-voting staff has been charged with various tasks and projects and recruitment of new members is on the horizon. See the following pages for staff reports and information regarding what you can do to help.

Appointed Wing Staff Members for 2008

One of the first tasks to be undertaken by the new Gulf Coast Wing Staff, was the review, analysis and adjustment of existing officer appointments serving in non-voting positions. The new appointments are listed here, and future appointments may be made by the wing staff as the need arises:



From Left to Right: Mike Daly, Webmaster; Sandy Thompson, Public Information Officer & Newsletter Editor; Don Outler, Development Officer; Suzie Bredlau, Morale Officer; and Marsha Daly, PX Officer



Col Bill Steffel and Col Stan Turner working on metal fittings at the tail gunner position of TEXAS RAIDERS, December, 2007



B-17 Maintenance

Col Craig Aronson assumed a formidable task when the Wing Maintenance Office was vacated late last year in 2007. Craig is no stranger to aircraft overhaul and maintenance as he has over 25 years of experience in this field.

"We have some reorganization due on our part. In our team-leads meeting (Saturday, January 12) we'll emphasize security

and communication. We have some missing items, so we need to communicate more effectively: who has what and where are these items. There are qualified members on our teams who know what they're doing, and our plan will be to utilize those strengths. We tried some outside services, but ended up spending money we couldn't afford, so we stopped and will reconsider

again once we can afford it. We estimate that it will take another \$200,000 to complete this task."

"We're inviting anyone and all to attend our (maintenance) team-meetings. It helps when all of us have the same line of communication, to better understand the needs of maintenance on this Fortress."

Col Craig Aronson, Maintenance Ofcr

Our fearless Wing Leader, Col Don Price, is sticking his wallet out on a limb and is waging a "match" up to \$2,500 for donations made to the B-17 account

Great People • Great Donations

Unexpected donations make our hard work worthwhile. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their generous donations:

- Col Houston Williams \$800
in memory of Platt Thompson
- Cols Walt & Sandy Thompson
\$50 Home Depot Gift Card

Ray Moore

Case of 6-cans of Paint
(Aluminum Primer)

Col Gen Bob Pursell

\$750 Printer Purchase for GCW

Anonymous Donor

\$3,000 in honor of Floyd Walls
(More info on BACK PAGE)

Cols Kennedy, Foltz, Thomas and Daly who gave items for the GIVING TREE

Col Richard Kettering

\$40 for N7227C B-17

Your donations are tax-deductible and can be mailed to either CAF HQs or to the GCW Finance Officer, Col Mark Allen at 18042 CR 127 Pearland, TX 77581

Make the Wing Leader CRY so Texas Raiders can FLY !

What's This? You ask. It's all about money and how you can become involved even if it's just the donation of a few dollars.

Our fearless Wing Leader, Col Don Price, is sticking his wallet out on a limb and is waging a "match" up to \$2,500 for donations made to the B-17 account in Midland, TX at CAF Headquarters for N7227C.

You heard it....make him cry!

It's rather simple. Just write a check or provide a credit card with the amount to be charged, and mail to CAF Headquarters to the attention of Susan Branum. Col Price will match the amount up to \$2,500. Deadline: March 31, 2008 to:

Susan Branum Acct Receivable
CAF Headquarters.
PO Box 6200
Midland, TX 79711-2000

Phone 432 563-1000 X2237

Meet Buster K. Knuckles

Buster K. Knuckles Reporting...



We survived our "Special Assistance Visit" from Gary Austin, the Director of Maintenance and Quality Assurance from CAF HQs. The long and the short of it is, the progress on the airplane and the work of our new *continued page 4*



Col Robin takes his job VERY seriously



*To the members of the
Commemorative Air
Force—Gulf Coast Wing.*

It is an honor to be elected
to lead this Wing

Come ALL Ye Faithful

By that I mean all of you who love the Commemorative Air Force, The TEXAS RAIDERS B-17, and ALL of the aircraft that comprise one of the most BELOVED AERIAL DEMONSTRATION team in America, The TORA GROUP. I know you do love these planes. I can see it in how hard you work, how hard you sometimes fight not only each other, but also how hard you are fighting some of the more stubborn projects.

But I also recognize in YOU the fraternal feelings that ALL GREAT organizations must have, if they are to succeed. So forgive me while I repeat myself and say I am honored to be the Wing Leader of the Gulf Coast Wing.

For the next two years I am the person who has to answer to national Headquarters, to the Gulf Coast Wing Staff, and MOST IMPORTANTLY to you, the membership.

I am the most approachable person you will met. I have a very thick skin; I like to talk and joke (too much, some would say...) and I like to write. If at anytime you are worried about what you see happening with our Wing please call, write, or talk to me in person. I make mistakes and am willing to correct them when someone points them out to me. You may have to wait for me to verify facts, because there is much to learn and I am still in listening and learning mode.

You will find me MOST Saturdays at the Hangar after 10am because I work an evening shift, but I will be working on the B-17 until around 5pm.

My management style is Open Book and Honest Broker of Information. The books will be maintained to CAF Standards and open for inspection. As for the B-17 restoration, there is going to be a Plan and it will be available for all to see. The Plan is subject to modification due to the dictates of reality and the airplane is ours to keep or lose.

Will everything go smoothly? I doubt it!

But let me now solemnly swear and affirm that over the course of the next two years, I will do my best to meet the Mission and Goals of the Commemorative Air Force by working with the TORA Group, returning the Texas Raiders to flying status in 2008 (which will only come to pass with your hard work and cooperation) and I will encourage ALL GCW members to come participate with me at Wings Over Houston and AIRSHO. It will be a lot easier, quicker and fun if we work together.

Don Price—Wing Leader

Commemorative Air Force—Gulf Coast Wing

CAF President, Steve Brown Visits Houston

HOUSTON, TX CAF President & CEO, Steve Brown, addressed Houston based CAF units on JANUARY 26, at the West Houston Squadron's Hangar and the Nelms Street GCW Hangar. Photos and story will appear in an upcoming COWL FLAPS issue. Approximately 50 attendees were present in the upstairs meeting room at the GCW Hangar.



Steve Brown Jan 26, 2008

WINGS OVER HOUSTON—OCTOBER 25-26, 2008

We are pleased to announce the return of the U.S.A.F. Thunderbirds to this year's Wings Over Houston Airshow to be held October 25-26, 2008. The Thunderbirds have a faithful following, so we're looking forward to another excellent show!

Also returning to WOH is Sean D. Tucker Sponsored

by Team Oracle, David Martin Aerobatics presented by Breitling, Disabled American Veterans Outreach B-25 "Doolittle Raider", and Flash Fire Jet Truck...just to name a few! New in 2008 is Julie Clark's Chevron Mentor T-34, Dan Buchanan Airshows, and John McGillis Airshows; three exciting additions to this year's line-up. Also for

the first time WOH will present a Korea/Vietnam Air Power Demonstration! We will also have the usual generous support from the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Texas Air National Guard, and NASA.

We would like to encourage you to help support Wings Over Houston Air-

Show by volunteering. It's not too early to start making plans to be a part of this year's show. Check out

wingsoverhouston.com

for future updates. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Bill or Janis Roach at 281-579-1942

Thanks, Bill & Janis Roach



THE CLEANER GOES ON THE PLANE, Don... not on your TEETH !

Col Jim Bradford will Speak at the Awards Banquet and provide insights into TORA history. BE THERE to experience a bit of TORA Life!



Col Kevin Hong following Gary Austin's instructions....Gotta Get 'er CLEAN !

Buster K. Knuckles

continued from page 2

Interior Restoration Team, led by Rick Robin and the people helping him, like Chuck Conway, went a long way towards getting GCW high marks.

Eagle-Eye Austin found a list of new Squawks. There are about four or five stringers that are "blossoming" but it's not the kind of blooming that a blighter like me likes to see. What this all means is there are more reinforcing brackets that have corrosion, but it is not a show-stopper. There were other small problems that we will tell anybody who asks ALL ABOUT.

For those inclined to worry,

Gary says he would strongly recommend AGAINST re-assignment of the Aircraft to another unit IF it ever came up.

This was because of the number of volunteers and the morale he saw at work (on a Holiday, no less) and the quality of the work he saw.

As long as we are making progress he is more than comfortable with TEXAS RAIDERS staying right where she is.

That being said, our Maintenance Officer, Craig Aronson had a "See, I told you so!" grin on his face, because Gary wanted to see the entire plane cleaned. Much cleaner.

So now the Order of the Day is TOOTH BRUSH CLEAN inside

and out. All Dirt and Oil and flaking paint chips need to be removed. Even if they are ORIGINAL DIRT from the good old days!

Gary finished with advice on the engines and hanging ANY Heavy parts like wing extensions or engines on the airframe. You should have seen the Bomber Maintenance Workers walking on air! And there was nary a Flak "Blossom" to step on!

That's all until next time, and if you see the other knuckle busters at the Awards Dinner, just give 'em a hand-shake and a Job-Well-Done !

Buster

2008 GCW AWARDS BANQUET

The Date: **16 FEB, 2008**

The Place: Hobby Marriott

The Time: 1800 HRS (6pm)

The Price: \$32/person

The RSVP: Deadline 12 FEB

The Result: PRICELESS

This year's Awards Banquet will be one you won't want to miss. Our speaker will be TORA Pilot, Col Jim Bradford, author of an

upcoming book on the History of TORA.

The Silent Auction is also one you need to experience to believe. The items are not only unique but quite valuable:

- **2 Continental AL Tickets**
- **2 W.O.H VIP Eagle Squadron tickets**
- **Framed Print of Glacier Girl in Flight**

The above items retail over \$1500 ! If you are not able to attend the banquet but wish to bid...call either 713-448-0830 or 817-304-0393 between 1930-2030 (730pm to 830pm) CENTRAL TIME on the night of 16FEB to enter your bid along with the rest of us.

To RSVP contact Col Don Outler at doutler@earthlink.net or call him at 281 486 1830.

HAVE YOU NOTICED A CHANGE?

Yes, there is a difference in the publication known as the Gulf Coast Wing Newsletter! In case you haven't noticed, this communication tool is being transmitted electronically as well as in printed format to those who do not have access to electronic tools.

For many years the *REBEL LEADER* was our the newsletter....and still might be. It's up

to you, the membership to make the call. On January 12th the staff elected me to serve as the newsletter editor. I follow many FINE editors preceding me....Carl Schwobel, Art & Barbara Johnston, Margaret Sanders and Dave Morgan. But costs for paper-printing the wing newsletter exceeded \$3,000 last year, and we can no longer afford this expense. I'm volunteering to provide this at

no expense to the wing. Your help is needed in a couple of ways: (1) Provide feedback—let me know what you want/need in the way of news (2) If you want to contribute, send money to the finance officer, not me. (3) Support your wing by volunteering. My email is thompsonb17@peoplepc.com and phone is 817 341 1541

Sandy Thompson



COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE
GULF COAST WING

Gulf Coast Wing—CAF
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Weatherford, TX 76088-6402

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E-mail:
someone@example.com@people
pc.com

This publication is printed and
distributed at NO COST to the

www.gulfcoastwing.org

\$3000 Donation

An "Anonymous" donation has been given to the GCW on behalf of 90-year old WWII veteran, **Floyd Walls** who served as an armaments crew chief from 1942-1945 in the 303rd Bomber Wing, 427th SQ in Molesworth, England. We are contacting Mr Walls to wish him a Happy Birthday and hear more from him.



Commemorative Air Force

Your business tag line here.

Gulf Coast Wing Elected Staff

Wing Leader.....	Col Don Price.....	don_price56@hotmail.com	713 988 2765
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Gulf Coast Wing Hangar is located at 8411 Nelms Road, Houston, TX 77061 ph:713 649 7227

Volunteers and wing members are dedicated to the preservation in flying status of WWII aircraft which include the TORA fleet and the B-17, TEXAS RAIDERS. Interested parties are encouraged to visit, volunteer and, of course, join our organization. CAF memberships with full-voting privileges are \$200/year. Supporting/Associate memberships provide benefits without voting privileges and are \$55/year (effective 03/01/08). Cadet memberships for ages 13-23 are \$45/year. Membership forms are found on our website at www.gulfcoastwing.org A current wing membership form is enclosed.

TORA • TORA • TORA

BRAZORIA COUNTY AIR-
PORT, Lake Jackson, TX

With \$10,000 in sponsorship money invested into a "ground-up" restoration, Col Mark Allen is nearing the final recognition of flight. His AI118 0118 Zero Replica should be ready to fly in the next 4-6 weeks. The aircraft has currently received FAA & CAF approval for flight.

If you are interested in taking a look at the TORA aircraft, and watch them fly, come to the Brazoria County Airport the last weekend in March (29 & 30th) to see the TORA crew conduct their annual practice. In the

past the weather has cooperated and photographers have been present to capture the TORA fleet in action.



Photo by Richard. Seaman

Col Allen, a CPA by profession, serves as the GCW Fi-



Col Mark Allen has been "building a Zero Replica for TORA

nance Officer. You can see, he is mechanically inclined as well. Thanks Col Allen.

Help is Needed:

Volunteers are needed, as well as money. If you have some time to come work on TEXAS RAIDERS, we meet at 1800 hrs on Tuesday evenings and 0900 hrs on Saturdays. If you're not able to volunteer time with hands, muscle and sweat, your money is always welcome. But if (like a lot of us) you don't have the time or money, put your thinking cap on. Contact any staff member (above) and let us hear from you. We need your thoughts on (1) increasing membership (2) raising money and (3) improving communication. Your staff is here for YOU.