



COWL FLAPS

For Members of the Gulf Coast Wing—CAF



IMPORTANT DATES

- TUE-and-Thur each week 1830hrs to closing, work at WR-5 on TR and ALL DAY on SATURDAYS
- SATURDAY, DEC 12 0900hrs—Staff Meeting 1100hrs—Wing Meeting 1145hrs—Potluck & Lunch 1230hrs—Work on TR at WR-5 Hangar
- SATURDAY, DEC 19 Static Display at 1940 Air Terminal Museum. Tours through TR and PX Sales 1000hrs—1700hrs
- SATURDAY, JAN 09 0900hrs—Staff Meeting 1100hrs—Wing Meeting 1145hrs—Potluck & Lunch

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Volume II, Issue XXIV

DECEMBER 08, 2009

AN UNFORGETTABLE YEAR

After 2008, it would have been easy to expect the Gulf Coast Wing to crawl into a cave and hide. After all, we had just lost our hangar lease at Hobby Airport where existing structures were being torn-down instead of being renovated or built, our B-17 Bomber could not fly, our membership numbers were being challenged, the U.S. economy was drowning in the toilet and our relocation-hangar still bore the remnants of Hurricane Ike (broken windows and torn sheet metal). Yep...it was less than rosy! But with resilience and strength, our wing members picked up the pieces (and after 5 moves across Hobby there were LOTS of pieces), then continued forward with the mission to fly in 2009. On October 14, 2009 Texas Raiders took to the sky and made a successful first flight. With a few glitches along the way, and adjustments, repairs and replacements of a few items, this B-17 was on its way to a more complete restoration. Work is still underway, and our Maintenance Team still needs your help on Tuesday and Thursday evenings along with Saturday Work Days as well.

The success of 2009 would be merely a figment in our imagination had it not been for the undying support (both physically and financially) of our membership. It is time we send a giant THANK YOU to the members who have worked tirelessly, and donated both time and money in these efforts!



First Engine Test JAN 17



TORA Sets World Record MAR 14



High-Speed Taxi Success MAY 24



Reassembly Continues JUL 11



First Flight—OCT 14

Col Sandy Thompson, Editor



Wing Leader's Report

“HOME” For the Holidays and into the Future !

Happy Holidays everybody! I hope yours are safe and full of Love and well-being. Things at the B17 are a little less hectic compared to October and early November. If you are like me, you probably needed to catch your breath from what can rightly be described as a Maximum Effort that has been a way of life for quite some time now. But neither Maximum Efforts, nor breathers from them, can go on too long. 2009 has been an historic year and the Gulf Coast Wing has much to be proud of.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to all aspects of getting TEXAS RAIDERS back in the air. This includes helping move, donating and raising money, and working at Wings Over Houston.

So now the question is... what it will take to create a proper home base for the B17?
Air Base- What a concept!

If you have been reading your *DISPATCH* magazine from HQs you know that the vision is to create a number of Air Bases around the country that are home to a number of Aircraft, a museum, and the operations associated with running an Air Show and supporting one or more of the acts associated with that. It is similar to what the GCW has wanted to do for itself since long before I ever found my way here, ONLY bigger.

All the Units in the Houston area would have to be behind such an endeavor. Where is the money going to come from? It will take a White Night providing funding, a gift or a grant from some source, or the willingness to take on some debt, or all three. An Air Base will change the way the Commemorative Air Force is viewed in our region and I can guarantee it will change how we see ourselves.

In a recent brainstorming session over funding this grand goal of the notion that we could or should get money from HQs was put forth. My humble opinion was that it wasn't going to happen, because they get their money from the units, not the other way around. Someone referred to HQs as “The Mothership” and it was pointed out that WE (the units, members and Air Craft) are the Mothership. So essentially if we are going to make something like an Air Base happen in Houston, WE ARE going to have to make it happen.

I am game for it if you are.

Col Don Price, Wing Leader Gulf Coast Wing

“...it was pointed out that WE (the units, members and Air Craft) are the Mothership. “

Col Don Price, on where money would come from for the Air Base Concept



Wing Executive Officer's Report

As everyone knows, Wings Over Houston 09 was extremely successful. To give you a better picture of how successful it was, over \$1,000,000 in ticket sales occurred. Total official attendance came to 88,151. This does not count the 6 year old and under crowd. There are a lot of things that will come from this – most that will help fine tune the event to help make it better next year.

Through attending the Wings Over Houston Executive Committee Meeting on Tuesday, December 1st, I am extremely happy to report that initial monetary disbursements to Gulf Coast Wing and West Houston Squadron will be in the amount of \$75,000 to each unit. Payments to each unit will occur later this month. This could not have been possible without the hard work of our air show volunteers, great attendance, great performers to include the Blue Angels (OOH-RAH!!!) and certainly the grace of our God to grant us perfect weather for the weekend. This certainly give us another reason for Thanksgiving.

As we approach the holiday season, I would like to wish each and everyone of you a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous 2010. May 2010 bring the Gulf Coast Wing the much needed health and prosperity, smooth clear skies and good flying.

Semper Fi

Col Wayne Kennedy, Wing Executive Officer



Maintenance Report

MAINTENANCE WORK IS ONGOING

The Maintenance folks have been working on a permanent repair for the exhaust problem that has plagued us since our first flight. Hopefully it will be resolved in the next few weeks if not sooner. TR is looking good and preparation is being made to paint her tail before too long, maybe this winter. We are still hunting for the cause of the static in the Pilots and Co-Pilots headsets but are making progress.

It seems that the Holidays have taken their toll on the attendance on Tuesdays and Thursdays not to mention Saturdays, as this last Saturday had a ground total of five or six members helping us.

No one wants to get sick this time of the year and the hangar is COLD so if you are coming out to help, please dress warm with old jackets etc.

If I don't see you before Christmas, here's wishing you the best Christmas ever !!!!

Col Chuck Conway, Maintenance Officer

"..the hangar is COLD so if you are coming out to help, please dress warm.."

Col Conway

On TR's continuing maintenance and the cold temperatures in the hangar.

PX REPORT

It's that time again!

Time to do year-end inventory for the PX. I have scheduled the inventory for Saturday, December 12, after the Wing Meeting. If you are able to help, please meet at my house at 3:00 pm. For those of you who don't know where I live, please email me at vthomas4@comcast.net and I'll send you the address. Our PX did so well at W.O.H. that there is not much inventory to count this year! That being said, we are looking at probably less than 2 hours to get it done! The more help, the merrier! (liquid refreshments will be available) Thanks and, as always, I appreciate everyone's help with the PX



Thanks — Col Vicki Thomas, PX Officer
281.620.5639 (cell) 281.303-8008 (home)



MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW

For the 2010 Wings Over Houston
26th Annual Air Show Featuring
The Thunderbirds



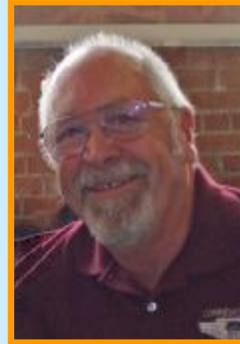
OCT 23–24 2010

CAF National Awards



LETTERS of COMMENDATION
Col Kathy Doucette Col Bill Steffel

UNIT SERVICE AWARDS



Col Larry Doucette Col Don Outler



Col Vicki Thomas

INDIVIDUAL MAINTENANCE AWARDS



Col Ken Hyman



Col Bud Bearce



Col Ron Dietes



Col Chuck Conway



DISTINGUISHED MAINTENANCE AWARD

Col David Carr

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Col Don Price





B-17 Tour Tips

Col Walt Thompson, Bomber Operations

It's our intention to fly "Revenue" Rides at the first opportunity, however the FAA has not provided us with the authority to do this yet. The last advisement was that the agency would not be processing additions to the exemption (#6802) until after the first of the upcoming new year. Until that time when our tail-number has been added to the exemption, we will continue to conduct tours for donations through Texas Raiders, and appear at venues where we can produce some revenue. As always, your volunteer efforts at these events will be greatly appreciated.

Operations Update 8 DEC 09

Wings and Wheels Static Tour—NOV 21: The weather was a challenge however we were able to collect \$380 in Tours revenue. Thanks to Cols Bob Brooks, Bud Bearce, Rick Baker, Michael Laschet, Bob Linguiti, Kara Hueni, Matthew Fiedler, Chuck Conway, Bill Siros, Larry and Kathy Doucette, John Alkire and Al Feltis who made this event fun though the wind-chill was a challenge.

Thanks to ALL who helped move the aircraft over to the 1940 Air Terminal, and pitched in to work tours and PX. We signed up two new CAF members along the way! A lot of very hard work by all concerned to make it happen.

Upcoming Events:

19 DEC: Static display, 1940's Air Museum, Hobby Airport (Tours, PX, and Recruiting)
1000hrs to 1700hrs. Be available to help move TR at 0900 hours.

Uniforms: Request that all crewmembers working "TR" at public events be in the proper uniform, as per the GCW Operations Manual. Our personal appearance should reflect the pride and respect that we all share for this historic aircraft. NOTE: the attire of working Maintenance Colonels is as per the GCW Maintenance Officer.

Revenue Rides: We are still awaiting approval from the FAA and CAF HQs. Will advise when we are cleared to begin operations.

TOUR VOLUNTEERS: If you are able to volunteer for the above, 19DEC Static Tour event, we will need at least five (5) crew members to station themselves in and around the Aircraft. Send an email to thompsonb17@uwmail.com or phone 817 304 0393 cell or 817 341 1541 home.

Annual Awards Banquet

We have completed the arrangements for our Annual Awards Banquet for **Saturday, February 13th, 2010** to coordinate with our monthly staff meeting. The Banquet will be held at the **Houston Hobby Airport Marriott**, 9100 Gulf Freeway, Houston, Texas 77017 and be located in the **PASADENA ROOM**. Sign in will start at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and invocation will start just before 7:00 and our meal will start serving at 7:00 p.m.

MENU

Mixed Green Salad with dressings Roasted Crusted Sirloin with Pepper and topped with a Brandy Cream Sauce, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Chefs Choice of Seasonal Vegetables, Rolls and Butter, with the Chef's choice of a dessert. We will also have a cake for dessert.

Water, Ice tea, and Coffee. PRICE: \$26.00 per person and that amount includes the gratuity.

SPEAKER

Ms. Kathryn Black-Morrow, Noted Historian and Researcher (see bio next page)

The Marriott has made arrangements for rooms on Friday night, 2/12 and Saturday night 2/13 at the rate of \$69.00 per night. Rooms have to be booked before the close of business February 6th, 2010 in order to receive the discounted rate. Check in time is 3:00pm and check-out time is 12:00 noon. Room reservations can be made by calling the hotel direct at 713-943-7979 or Marriott Reservations at 1-800-236-2427. You will need to identify yourself as Commemorative Air Force in order to get the room rates. We have provided the Marriott with our Federal Tax Exemption Certificate, and consequently there should be no taxes added to your individual room billing.

If you have any items for the Silent Auction, please contact Col Suzie Bredlau at 281-398-6977. This is your chance to provide a Silent Auction Item that will help raise funds for the Wing. If you have something suitable for a door prize, please let Col Bredlau know.

Please make a reservation for your place(s) with Col. Don Outler. You can either call him at 281-486-1830 or e-mail your reservation to djoutler@comcast.net. His mailing address is 16520 Space Center Blvd. Houston, TX 77058-2046

Please reserve your places at the banquet by February 6th so we can make sure there is sufficient food for everyone attending the banquet. To speed checking in for the banquet, it would be appreciated if you can go ahead and send your checks for the banquet to Col Don Outler before Feb 1st in order for him to get it in time for the banquet. You can pay at the door, however prepayment is preferred since we have a significant number of people to check in within 30 minutes. We will be accepting cash, checks, and credit cards at the door.

Col Don Outler, Wing Development Officer

FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT

Col Don Outler, Development Officer



I am continuing my efforts to raise funds for the Gulf Coast Wing and am happy to announce another substantial donation. On the 31st of October at our Annual Wings Over Houston Air Show, a donor who wishes to remain anonymous, provided a \$1,940 donation to our unit. The number 1940 has special meaning for this donor and we were happy to receive this generous gift.

Col Van Skiles and I continue to speak at various organizational meetings and clubs. Although we have received small donations we have raised the awareness of the CAF and our unit to the community, as I continue to communicate with these organizations. Should you have an interest in inviting us to speak at your club, school or organization, please let me hear from you.

By now you have been alerted to our upcoming ANNUAL WING AWARDS BANQUET (on page 6). Let me provide some insight into our featured speaker, Ms. Kathryn Black Morrow. Ms Morrow will speak on the history of Ellington Field from 1917 to the present. Kathryn is a working historian and researcher with specialties in Texas History and Military History. Her father, Col. K.K. Black, was Base Commander at Ellington in the 1950's. She is the author of *DEFENDER OF AMERICA'S GULF COAST*, which is a history of Ellington Field. With forty years of experience in academic research, family research and historical documentation, she has served as an historical consultant for the French Consulate, Texas Southern University, and the Texas Department of Parks and Wild Life. She holds a B.A. in Modern Languages from Oklahoma City University and an M.A. in History from the University of Houston, Clear Lake. She will have her book available, and a portion of the proceeds from the sale of her book will be given to the Gulf Coast Wing as a part of our Fund Raising.

There are opportunities everywhere, even with a rough economy, to help our unit raise monies. We continue to work on our second "Restoration Grant" request through the CAF and should have more information on that coming up soon. Some of our members have succeeded in raising money through their employer (ex: Exxon-Mobil and Saint Gobain Corp). If your company participates in a "matching" grant for volunteer time with 501-c-3 organizations, you may also be eligible to convert your donated volunteer time with the CAF- Gulf Coast Wing into funds for our organization. I am here to help you in these efforts. Contact me via email at djoutler@comcast.net or via phone at [281-486-1830](tel:281-486-1830).

Wings Over Houston 2009



Kevin Hong

Many thanks to our resident photographers, Col Kevin Hong and Col Chris Ebdon for these great photos.



Kevin Hong



Kevin Hong



Chris Ebdon



Kevin Hong



OCT 23-24, 2010
Mark Your Calendars
Now

Col Sandy Thompson
Gulf Coast Wing—CAF
Public Information Officer
113 Coldwater Creek Lane
Weatherford, TX 76088-6402

Phone 817 341 1541



If you've received this newsletter by mistake, but you are happy with what you see, please feel free to contact any one of us listed in this document, to join our group. The Commemorative Air Force is dedicated to the educational preservation in flying condition of WWII and combat aircraft. Our mission extols the sacrifice made by veterans from all wars who have helped us live in freedom.



Gulf Coast Wing
Of The
Commemorative Air Force

Gulf Coast Wing Elected Staff

Wing Leader.....Col Don Price.....	don_price56@hotmail.com	713 988 2765
Adjutant.....Col Craig Freeland.....	craig@swtrgroup.com	281 298 1818
Finance Officer.....Col Mark Allen.....	mallen@triconex.com	832 493 1368
Bomber Opns.....Col Walt Thompson.....	txraiders@uwmail.com	817 341 1541
Executive Officer.....Col Wayne Kennedy.....	wfkennedy@swbell.net	281 855 2520
Fighter Opns.....Col Jim Ryan.....	tora113@yahoo.com	979 233 5919
Safety Officer.....Col Ky Putnam.....	713 683 8930
Supply Officer.....Col Bud Bearce.....	budk5jgu@hal-pc.org	713 864 7435
Maintenance Ofcr....Col Chuck Conway.....	chucksautoelectric@sbcglobal.net	281-482-8980

Gulf Coast Wing Appointed Staff

Webmaster.....Col Herb Duncan.....	duncanenterprises@gmail.com	
Public Info Officer...Col Sandy Thompson...	thompsonb17@uwmail.com	817 341 1541
PX Officer.....Col Vicki Thomas.....	vthomas4@comcast.net	281 807 7765
Morale Officer.....Col Suzie Bredlau.....	rikkysue@aol.com	281 398 6977
Development Ofcr...Col Don Outler.....	djoutler@comcast.net	281 486 1830

Gulf Coast Wing Hangar is located at 8249 Travelair, 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



Col Sandy Thompson
Gulf Coast Wing CAF
113 Coldwater Creek Lane
Weatherford, TX 76088-6402

