



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VINTAGE WWII BOMBER TO APPEAR at HONDO ARMY AIRFIELD'S ARMED FORCES DAY

SPRING, TEXAS – *Texas Raiders*, an authentically restored B-17 Bomber, celebrated its forty years of historic preservation in 2011 with flights honoring the veterans who served during World War Two and introducing this segment of history to the visiting public. This previously award-winning Flying Fortress will participate in the festivities of Hondo Armed Forces Day May 19th, 2012 with a flyover, walk-through tours and rides at the historic Hondo Army Air Force Base as the community celebrates seventy years of activity at this World War Two pilot training facility. *Texas Raiders* was delivered to the U.S. Army Air Force July 12, 1945, just four months after Hondo Army Airfield received authorization to commence construction of what today is known as Hondo Municipal Airport.

After nearly eight years of extensive restoration this B-17 Bomber became airworthy in 2009 and has flown in air shows throughout the central Midwestern United States, conducted sports-event flyovers and reunited remaining World War Two veterans with their link to the aircraft flown in the European and Pacific theatres of this historic period. To date there are just nine (9) remaining flyable B-17s left in the United States. Although the non-profit 501-(c)-3 organization, the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) is the owner of this vintage Bomber, the maintenance, restoration and operation is assigned to the Gulf Coast Wing, an all volunteer CAF membership group. It is estimated that the cost to operate this vintage Bomber is \$3,000 per flying hour.

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To support the flying operation of *Texas Raiders*, the volunteer members of the Gulf Coast Wing will be offering rides and tours at Hondo Municipal Airport, Saturday, May 19, 2012. All donations for tours and rides are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Texas Raiders became a member of the Commemorative Air Force's *Ghost Squadron* in September of 1967 and was thereby assigned to the Gulf Coast Wing in 1971. This unique B-17 Bomber is currently featured in *WARBIRDS INTERNATIONAL* and *FLYPAST* magazines. She has appeared in two movies, *Ike The War Years* and *Brady's Escape*, one PBS Documentary *Honor Squadrons* and two television commercials.

Collecting, restoring and flying warbirds for more than half a century, the Commemorative Air Force ranks as one of the largest private air forces in the world. The CAF is dedicated to honoring American Military Aviation through flight, exhibition and remembrance with a flying museum of classic military aircraft. A non-profit educational association, the CAF has approximately 9,000 members and a fleet of almost 160 airplanes representing more than 60 different types – including planes from several foreign countries and military conflicts since WWII. For more CAF information, visit www.commemorativeairforce.org or call (432) 563-1000. For more information on tours and rides on *Texas Raiders*, contact Sandy Thompson, Public Information Officer at 817 304 0393 or info@gulfcoastwing.org