



COWL FLAPS

For Members of the Gulf Coast Wing-CAF



DATES to KNOW

- Every TUESDAY evening at 1800 hrs and Every SATURDAY morning at 0900 hours work parties at the hangar
- SATURDAY, 12 APR, 0900 hrs Staff Meeting and 1030 hrs General Wing Meeting . POTLUCK at the HANGAR
- SATURDAY, 19APR & 20APR West Houston Sqd Open House. PX Event. Chuck Conway's Car event in Friendswood. 0800 hrs
- SAT/SUN 26APR & 27APR TORA Jackson, MS

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VICTORY LAP for B-17 MAINTENANCE

The criteria for this award is that a unit must have consistently demonstrated extraordinary, meritorious and exceptional service to the Commemorative Air Force. The Gulf Coast Wing has a record that fulfills all of the criteria.

For the past five and one-half years, members of the Gulf Coast Wing have spent hours and hours working on the B-17G, "TEXAS RAIDERS." This dedicated group of people known as the "B-17 Maintenance Crew" has done everything from keeping the engines turned, to pulling rivets and restoring radios to fighting corrosion. The outstanding thing about this group is that half of them have never flown on the B-17. They simply believe in the mission of the CAF and believe the B-17G, "TEXAS RAIDERS" must be back flying. The dedication of this maintenance crew can only be rewarded by the sound of four round engines coming to life, and the B-17 taxiing on our runway. The Gulf Coast Wing will be successful and that will happen due to their dedicated members. Members who proudly display the very fabric of the men these planes were built to serve.

The Gulf Coast Wing is hereby presented the *Commemorative Air Force Distinguished Unit Maintenance Award for 2007* in recognition of their outstanding dedication and en-



Gulf Coast Wing members gather in front of TEXAS RAIDERS, after presentation of the award March 15, 2008

thusiasm toward supporting the goals and objectives of the Commemorative Air Force.

The above citation and award were presented at the CAF Wing Staff Conference, March 08th Midland, TX

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TORA TAKES TO THE SKIES



LAKE JACKSON, TX In preparation for the 2008 air show season, TORA conducted their annual practice complete with pyro effects. The weather was cooperative, the crew was enthusiastic and the annual TORA

practice, clinic and crawfish boil held at Brazoria County Airport March 29th and 30th was once again a successful venture. If you missed it, two of our own Gulf Coast Wing members, Col Chris Ebdon and Col Kevin

Hong were on hand and share few memorable photos.

From Col Ebdon... "Jim Ryan, Tora Lead, had a vision for the new publicity art for his TORA Gang. As usual, it included the

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Col Price and Col Outler accepting the CAF Distinguished Maintenance Award at the Wing Staff Conference.

Photo by Col Kevin Hong

"In some respects the (TORA) practice is more fun than the air show..."

Col Price on attendance at TORA practice



Col David Carr explains the PROJECT PLAN at the March Wing Meeting; the PLAN is a required element of the Matching Grant Program.

Photo by Col S. Thompson



From the Wing Leader

Marching on... And starting backwards...

We finished off March with a bang. TORA Practice was March 29th and 30th; Don Outler and I worked the GCW-PX at Brazoria Airport for that event. In some respects the Practice is more fun than the air show, because the planes are closer, the pyrotechnics are warmer and the car alarms going off after every KABOOOOM adds the humorous touch.

The next BIG Event is the West Houston Squadron Open House on April 19-20th. We need volunteers to help with the PX for this two day event now that the stock is fine tuned there is a lot of good fund-raising for the airplane to be done.

Our Maintenance Crew and the Volunteers from Lone Star Flight Museum are making some good headway on the B17. The front four wing attachment brackets have been removed from the Wing Extensions. They and the spars they fit into are being cleaned and prepped for Non-Destructive-Testing. David Carr is continuing to flesh out the Project Management Plan with the help of anybody who will explain what they are working on and what it will take to finish their part of the BIG PICTURE. The TROLL is working on his next project. The hydraulic system needs re-plumbing and he is getting ready to bend some tubing and move the manifold back where it belongs.

The most worrisome part of the Wing Leader's job is the health and well being of our members and their loved ones. Our hearts go out to the Williams, as they lost their daughter Brandy in the aftermath of a car accident. Lana Freeland is fighting the Big C. Judy Outler gave Don a scare, but is on the mend. There are other members with ongoing health issues and we should all send up a prayer for their continued improvement.

That reminds me about Religion and Politics. It being an election year, with hotly contested races, I would like to caution our members from getting too strident in expressing their beliefs around the hangar. Likewise we have members of many different faiths, NOT just denominations, and every CAF member deserves the freedom of religion that is one of the hallmarks of our great country. Let us all respect that First Amendment right of our Constitution that so many of our servicemen gave their lives to insure.

Back to March... The month started with the Winter Staff Conference at Midland and there is a new Grant Program being developed. The details are not final, but the essence is that it is a Matching Grant program up to \$50,000.00 per project.

And finally, I was proud to accept the 2007 Wing Maintenance Award on behalf of GCW and during the announcement of the award by CAF Chief of Staff, Bill Coombes, it was noted that ALL the CAF views TEXAS RAIDERS as the Flagship B-17 and look forward to the day it is flying again.

Don Price, Wing Leader

The State of the Gulf Coast Wing Budget—April 2008

It would be wise for us to be aware of what has happened and what is happening with the Gulf Coast Wing Budget. Obviously a debt of \$100,000.00 was incurred with TORA in the recent past. And a couple of things have "turned up" as they say.

It seems that not ALL the 2007 ANUAC- Annual Administrative Aircraft fee was paid. We were presented with a bill for \$5,655.00 this month for that unpaid amount. Additionally, somehow a months rent in 2006 was not paid and when it was discovered we had to pay an additional \$3,350. So right off the bat, 2008 was just shy of being \$9,000.00 behind.

Additionally, the total ANUAC fees were raised for this year so that we could get the discount for paying in one payment. So while we started out the year looking pretty good, \$21,K went away for the good of the cause.

There is an upcoming CAF Restoration "Matching Grant" Program. This means they (the CAF) will only match what we raise ourselves. AND there is a limit of \$50,000.00. That is nothing to sneeze at, but it will take some serious fund-raising on our part. The criteria for awarding the grant program are still being worked out, but it is known that it will take a Project Plan, which we are well on our way to having. The plan has to have some milestones and a timeline. If we raise \$50,000.00 and are matched \$50,000.00 that will put us about halfway to where we thought we needed to be. I say THOUGHT, because that number was based on a rough estimate before an accurate Aircraft Survey took into account some problems

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Budget, continued from page 2

that were not known. This amount can be impacted by how much OR HOW LITTLE we are able to do for ourselves. If some people with sheet-metal skills and expertise in other fields step up we can keep the cost to get the airplane flying lower than if we have to pay contractors to do the essential work.

This situation also points out the importance of continuing ALL levels of financial support to the Wing. That includes working the PX, fund-raising and donations, as well as considering Sponsoring the airplane at whatever level you can afford. I would ask that people prepare for that AFTER the details of the Grant Program are known, so they can be applied towards the matching grant. (If I had known about the program I would not have issued my challenge grant as early as I did this year.)

Until the B-17 is flying, our major source of Income is Wings Over Houston. That has been the case for quite awhile, but now more than ever. It is imperative that our volunteers work the Air-Show in positions that allow WOH to save money. Our Development Officer, Col Don Outler, our Maintenance Officer, Col Craig Aronson and I have various feelers out for major donations from different sources, but we cannot count on those until the money is in the bank.

Until the chickens hatch, we are operating under the proverb that the Lord helps those who help themselves.

Col Don Price, Wing Leader



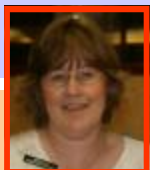
Join Chuck and Cindy Conway, SATURDAY the 19th of April in Friendswood, TX at 0800 hrs for the annual Classic Car event. Chuck and Cindy will be hosting a GCW Recruitment and Donation Table. Contact them at 281-482-8980 or 281-910-0339 (cell) for info.

VICTORY LAP for B-17 MAINTENANCE

Continued from front page The award was presented during the annual Wing Staff Conference held at CAF Headquarters, Midland, Texas. Wing attendees (from left to right and back to front) on hand were Ken English, Richard McLelland, Don Price, Don Outler, Walt Thompson, Ole Nygren, Kevin Hong and Sandy Thompson. When you consider the condition of TEXAS RAIDERS (see photo "A" below) in 2003 and the progress made today, (see photo "B" below), you can easily understand the meaning of this award. TEXAS RAIDERS was once an award-winning Flying Fortress and when she returns to flying status, will again be a model for historical preservation in a winning fashion. Your help is needed, regardless of the time or money you choose to provide. Work parties meet at 1800 hours on each Tuesday night and at 0900 hours each Saturday morning. Help is needed working the PX as well...the next event is APRIL 19 & 20 at the West Houston Squadron Open House.



Col Sandy Thompson, PIO



PX : Post Exchange Sales

The PX event at Brazoria County's TORA practice was manned by Cols Outler and Price. Though we were unable to accept credit cards, our income wasn't too bad. We brought in \$567 for the weekend in cash/checks. The upcoming West Houston Squadron Open House on April 19th and 20th is an event where we virtually need as many volunteers as possible, as this is usually well-attended and we need you to "help folks spend their money!"

On another note, I have to advise that my husband, Mike, has been transferred in his job to Georgia, and that means my PX officer's term will be cut short. I'm sure you are aware of the importance PX sales mean to the wing revenue, so I encourage you to volunteer whenever possible and if you are interested in applying for the PX officer vacancy that will occur mid-term this year, please contact any wing staff member or me at mnmcalf@comcast.net

Col Marsha Daly, PX Officer



TORA Takes to the Skies, continued from front page

TORA aircraft and a "wall of fire." Instead of setting up a single camera angle, he decided to set up four separate walls of fire to be blown in four separate passes. In addition to securing camera shots from Aeromarketing photographer, Scott Slocum, Jim asked Gulf Coast Wing members, Chris Ebdon and Kevin Hong to get shots from different angles. The day started off with a pilot briefing and safety lecture with flying to begin at 1100 hours. When it was time to brief for the pyro runs, Jim explained his vision and where he would like the photo angles to be shot from. Kevin was set up for a head-on shot which was premium for



Photo by Col Chris Ebdon



Photo by Scott Slocum, Aeromarketing



Photo by Col Kevin Hong

"Instead of setting up a single camera angle, he decided to set up four separate walls of fire to be blown in four separate passes."

Col Chris Ebdon

the first three blasts. Chris was set up for the final pass with the Zeke, Val and Kate breaking right which put him in the best place for this shot.

On Sunday morning Kevin returned to take a few more shots, andas it's been said..."(CAF) membership has its privileges"...Kevin was invited to ride along with TORA lead, Jim Ryan (see photo at right)."

The rewards of volunteering your skills with the Gulf Coast Wing and the CAF are priceless. Honoring the veterans who flew these airplanes can be as simple as the photos you see here, or offering your time to work the PX or to write a column in the newsletter as we do here. Volunteer an hour or two of your time and you will be surprised at the rewards. Thanks to Col Ebdon, Col Hong, Col Ryan and the TORA crew members for their work in reporting the details from this annual event.

For more information regarding TORA, visit www.gulfcoastwing.org or www.toratoratora.com



TROLL TALK



Troll work is not all chasing 20 year old dust bunnies and drinking Troll Juice. Sometimes I get to tear things out of TR..... just kidding - All items removed from TR are done so with great care whether they are going to be retained or not (well I did throw a couple of old ducts out of an access door 2 months ago but they were being rowdy). All items are handled carefully for several reasons:

1. I don't know what condition the item is in. I NEVER assume anything is in prime shape.
2. If an item is in bad shape it is critical that it comes out as intact as possible so it can be identified and restored accurately.
3. If the item is in good shape it is important that it STAYS THAT WAY ! This is not just a 63 year old aircraft, it is a national treasure and everything in it is treated that way whether it belongs in TR or not.
4. Corrosion hides behind, inside, under and around every dark corner of the aircraft and its important that corroded areas remain as intact as possible so Craig Aronson can inspect them and plan proper repairs. I could list more reasons but I hope you get the idea.... It's just the right thing to do.

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TROLL TALK, continued

Recently I started removing the hydraulic system tubing from the fuselage (don't worry, I know we need that particular system and its going to be reinstalled as soon as I clean the tubing so Craig can inspect it).

To bring you all up to date on the system, I have been servicing and rebuilding the entire hydraulic system for about three months now. All of individual components needed to be disassembled for inspection and replacement of packing, O-rings and washers. However, another reason surfaced when the first parts were inspected—our hydraulic system had been contaminated from the introduction of multiple types of hydraulic fluid. When different hydraulic fluids mix, a solid precipitates out. This solid ranges from a thick goo to a crystalline substance that looks like table salt. Obviously solids have no place in a functioning hydraulic system and the only way to assure that TR's system performs the way it needs to is to take the entire system apart and scrub, flush, purge and otherwise chase every bit of contaminants out. Even for a troll this is a MAJOR pain in the butt but I love this airplane !

Currently all the components of the system have been rebuilt and are ready for pressure tests with the exception of the hydraulic pump and motor and, of course, the tubing. Taking the tubing out has had some unexpected benefits. Its exposed a lot of hidden sludge from broken connections that would have promoted the worst kind of corrosion - the kind that festers deep under bulkheads and floors. Removing the tubing has given the cable crew some great access to pulleys and the compartments that the cables run through. So by the time the new cables are installed and adjusted the tubing will be ready to put back in the fuselage. Also, this has given me the opportunity to reinstall the hydraulic system in the accurate combat configuration of a B-17G as described in the 1945 B-17G Field Service Manual and verified on our microfilm parts manuals.

Well I think that's enough rambling for this installment of Troll Talk. I need to brew up some more juice and get back to cleaning our tubing. Don't forget, the *Texas Raiders* will only be as great as we make it.

WOW ! We're really THAT good?



Hydraulic Panel BEFORE



Hydraulic Panel AFTER



Don Price presenting CAF Distinguished Maintenance award to Craig Aronson and the Maintenance Team.

“Obviously, solids have no place in a functioning hydraulic system...”

Troll Talk

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The Adjutant's Report



We're moving right along with our wing renewals.

Over 85% of our membership has renewed AND we have eleven NEW members as well. Your renewal displays a trust and belief in the mission of the CAF and your unit. Not only do we appreciate the money from your renewal, but we value your participation in this organization. We can't keep the airplanes flying without your help. Membership does give you benefits and privileges you wouldn't ordinarily receive, such as the ability to vote, committee participation, receipt of important member-bulletins (ie. recurrent training, updates on

meetings, COWL FLAPS and headquarters news). Please be assured that we appreciate your volunteer efforts. Know also that you are important to us as a member; so if you have financial concerns, time constraints or other work conflicts let us hear from you.

We will be publishing a wing Roster and are finalizing that now, so if you haven't renewed and you want a copy, renew before April 30, 2008. Renewals should be mailed to me at:

Craig Freeland, GCW Adjutant
12025 Oak Forest Lane
Conroe, TX 77385

Email is craig@swtrgroup.com



“I tried this with marinara sauce, but it still tasted pretty bad !”

Col Rick Sanchez

Note of Correction: Last month's issue listed the Maintenance Award without the designation of H.Platt Thompson Maintenance Award. This was an error and should be noted. *Editor*

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We're on the Web!
www.gulfcoastwing.org

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.

OCT 25 & 26 , 2008
Mark Calendars Now !
Wings Over Houston
Air Show
To Volunteer, Call
Bill or Janis Roach
281 579 1942



Gulf Coast Wing
Of The
Commemorative Air Force

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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



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