



## COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE HOUSTON WING

July 2019

# Slips & Skids

## Wing Leader

**“Don’t go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first.” —Mark Twain**



This is the month of our Independence Day celebrations. Every country has one but for obvious reasons, this one is special to me. Throughout the 243 years since our great country declared independence, she has been through many ups and downs and has thrived. People have sacrificed on many levels to maintain that independence and from those experiences stories can be told. The Commemorative Air Force is in a position to tell many of the aviation stories for WWII. We, as members of the CAF are the ones to share what we have and educate the next generations so they have a chance to appreciate what happened during the Greatest Generation.

When I first walk into our hangar I’m always struck with a sense of awe as I look at our

aircraft. These machines are survivors from a time when the USA was a very different place. They are all at least three human generations in age. Each plane has its own story to tell, not only of the make and model but of the specific aircraft. Most were in pieces at one or more points in their existence, laying in fields broken, sitting in storage, or in the case of the BT-13, mounted on the roof of a transmission shop. They represent the state of the art in military trainer aircraft design from the late 1930’s and early 1940’s. These flying machines were repaired, reassembled and put back in the sky through the labor of love from volunteers such as you. It is truly a privilege to be a part of an organization that allows us mortals a chance to experience a small part of the past by direct contact, not just by watching a movie or reading a book. I encourage all of our members to come out when you can and help keep our hangar, museum, and aircraft going. Most work goes on during Saturdays. If the heat makes it unhealthy to be on the hangar floor, our air conditioning works great in the O’Club and museum. Come on out and get to know the wing.

Keep ‘em flying and kind to each other  
Stan -

## **Eyes On the Horizon!**

### **July 20**

Museum Day  
Barnstorming in Conroe- Cancelled

### **July 21**

Wing Meeting @ 2pm Hangar B-5  
Potluck- BBQ

### **August 3**

Museum Day

### **August 17**

Museum Day

### **August 18**

Wing Meeting @ 2pm Hangar B-5  
Potluck- Cold cut sandwiches



## **Operations Update**



Houston Wing flight operations commemorated D-Day with a formation fly over of the Battleship Texas. Our volunteers included Dave Guggemos in his T-34, John Cotter in the syndicate T-28, Rob Parrish in his T-34, John Bixby in the GCW Twin Beechcraft, and initially, Ed Vesely in the BT-13. The BT was running hot trying to keep up with the faster aircraft and safely returned to base. The four ship Missing Man flyover was much appreciated by the crowd at the battleship.

Kevin Domingue and Greg Young in Navions were prepared to conduct a fly over of the Skeeters baseball game, but the mission had to be cancelled because of weather.

Again, special thanks to all our members and friends who brought their personal warbirds to support CAF formation flyovers.

The addition of ADS-B to the transponder system of our aircraft was completed on the N3N and Chris Walker and Jim Placette successfully completed the FAA required performance test flight. Installation of radios and wiring harnesses continues on the AT-6. The BT-13 radios and intercom are working better than ever thanks to the hard work of the Maintenance Team. The AT-6 will also be much improved for training and rides when the avionics are completed soon.

Pilot sponsors and other volunteers can help during aircraft maintenance as directed by the Maintenance Officer. We have already had help with hands on the aircraft and also help identifying and ordering parts.

Thanks again for your support for Wing Operations in 2019!

-Nathan

## Suzie's Safety Corner



Hiddy Ho Folks!

This months' safety tips/rules/ big hints are as follows. Please fellow mechanics, clean up after yourselves. If you see the trash needs emptied please do it. The bags are under the stairs in the little cubby/ triangle door. 55 gallon bags for the 55 gallon barrels and 38 gallon for all the rest. Please don't put a 55 gallon trash bag in a small trash can. It is a waste of a bag and a waste of money.

The second thing. We go through a lot of water for the summer and that's a good thing because you get very dehydrated working out in this heat. BUUUUT if you open a container of water, please finish it. I went around the hanger after we had many folks out and collected over 20 half/ partially used bottles. That is a waste of money and a FOD hazard because I found them everywhere. We also have a perfectly good water fountain. It has a fill spigot for refilling

personal water bottles and one that you got out of the frig. You can always refill those water bottles and use them all day.

Next, I got new sun screen that is on top of the big ass fan box. It is 50 spf and I know a lot of you are very fair. Take it from someone who has spent her life outside working and now I have to go to the dermatologist twice a year to get little pieces of me trimmed off as small cancers or suspicious spots. Let me leave you with one little sentence of wisdom that has served me well. "If you are gonna dance, one day you have to pay the band."

Take care out there and if you have any questions on hanger stuff or tool usage don't be afraid to ask me or Jim. Glad to help and want all to be safe and my biggest rule is.....please don't make me fill out paper work.

Later, Suzie B

## Marketing Report



Welcome back friends to an enthusiastic installment of "As the Wing flies." This month we are swinging for the fences with our mighty bats. Will we strike out or hit a home run? Keep calm and read on.....

The marketing group has been busier than I ever remember. The new website looks great and is working to our benefit already.

For the first time that I can remember we are getting a steady stream of inquiries for hangar rentals. We have received no less than (5) inquiries in the past 3 weeks. Great job to the website committee, looks like it's working quite well. To that end we formed a hangar rental committee consisting of Brian Kosior, Frank Vargas and Denise Walker to establish pricing/cost and marketing analysis. If we can procure some these type events that can go a long way towards fund raising for the new Interactive Educational Facility or keeping the wing solvent during lean years and there is no financial risk to the wing.

Frank Vargas and I were invited to attend the Houston Classic Chevy club's monthly meeting. As you remember the Classic Chevy club held their state convention and was a major participant in the 2019 Warbird Weekend. They saved our bacon on Saturday since the weather was not conducive to aircraft attendance and having 50+ classic Chevy's in attendance really made our day. The Chevy club gets sponsors and the funds they raise after they cover their costs they donate to local charities. This year they donated \$5000 to the American Cancer Society and \$5000 to the Houston Wing. If you are around the hangar and see any of their members roll through, please stop to thank them.

Looking forward enthusiastically to Warbird Weekend 2020 the marketing group is already looking at ways to make it our best year yet. We learned a few new things this year that will be a big help next year.

The Sugar Land Skeeters invited us for to promote the Wing at a game, see the article about that elsewhere in this issue.

The marketing group is beginning work on the *Interactive Educational Facility*. This is by far and away the largest undertaking the Houston Wing has attempted to accomplish. We need everyone's help that would like to. We need help with project management and fundraising. Interested? Wing Leader Stan Turner would like to hear from you if you can help.

By now I'm sure you're wondering what the box score is? We've hit a few home runs, a double or two and a strike out too. Taking a phrase from Cincinnati Reds radio announcer Joe Nuxhall' "This is the old left-hander, rounding third and heading for home." Sam B.

## Fundraising

The Houston Wing started fundraising for the new Interactive Educational Facility in January of this year by patterning the CAF aircraft sponsorship program for our facility fund raising activity. So far we have raised \$29,523.35.

Our initial goal is \$125,000 and as you can see we are off to a challenging start but if everyone gets involved to contribute we can begin construction on the *Interactive Educational Facility* in short order. Once constructed we'll be able to better host social events and parties to re-pay the loan and better continue to fund the operations of the wing.

Till next time, the fundraising continues and a huge thank you to those that have contributed so far.

## Maintenance



Greetings once again from the Houston Wing Maintenance Department.

Work continues even as the temperatures climb. The main work is concentrated on ADS-

B and radio upgrades in two of the planes. The N3N-3 transponder upgrade is complete, and that plane is up and flying. The major radio upgrade in the AT-6 is moving along very well at the hands of Suzie and Stan. Great work from the pair of them. Next in line is the C-60, and speaking of the C-60, her annual inspection has started. Also on 29 Jun, the right propeller was swapped out. Many thanks to the members who helped with that job. It is way bigger than one man can handle. Operational checks showed a malfunction, so that will be corrected during the inspection. At this time, the PT-19 fuselage wood is varnished, thanks to Ed B, and completely installed. Now it is being checked for smooth clean lines. Once that is completed, and the fuselage cleaned and masked, we can get on with the fabric install. Also the center section sanding is about completed, so the wing is moving along well. Thanks the all the members who have pitched in to help make that plane fly again. Your work is critical to completing the plane. And, of course, there is the BT-13, which is doing well, but the cowling needed

to be tightened. That is being worked on currently. The L-17 continues, and all the guys are working hard on it. Engine runs after engine fuel system repairs are up next.

The cadets are still hard at work. Thanks to Chris D and Sam M for coming out and working on the R-985 project. The pushrod tubes are about completed as well as the intake pipes. When more cadets return from summer, the R-985 will be blasted and painted. Also, we will return to the L-39 project to get that one ready for Wings Over Houston.

Last month I intended to hold some maintenance classes, but those did not get announced, so we will try again. The weekend of 27 & 28 July is now the target dates. If you would like to attend the classes, we will be doing sheet metal, hydraulics, and safety wire this time. We can also discuss anything you want to about airplane repair. I will also offer to teach a swing dance class, if there is any interest. I can also hold this later, closer to the dance in Feb. Please contact me by e-mail or in person, so I have a head count for the classes.

That is all for now, but work is always going on at the hangar. We need all the help we can get to keep all these planes flying. It might not be directly on the planes, but they all need money and public support to fly.

The Houston Wing needs You!!!! –Jim





PT-19 Center Section. Photo: Jim Placette



Photo: Stan Turner



PT-19 Front Cockpit. Photo Jim Placette



Photo: Stan Turner





Even in the summer heat work continues around the hangar. Jim and his maintenance volunteers including Ed Bergmann, Jeremy Wright, and Cadet Samantha changed the right propeller on the C-60 on a hot Saturday afternoon. Every five years we are

required to remove the C-60 propellers and send them to an outside shop for corrosion inspections and hub seal replacement. Fortunately the Wing has a spare propeller so Jim is able to swap them at one time. The spare is kept as a backup on a stand behind the C-60.

## Museum Moment

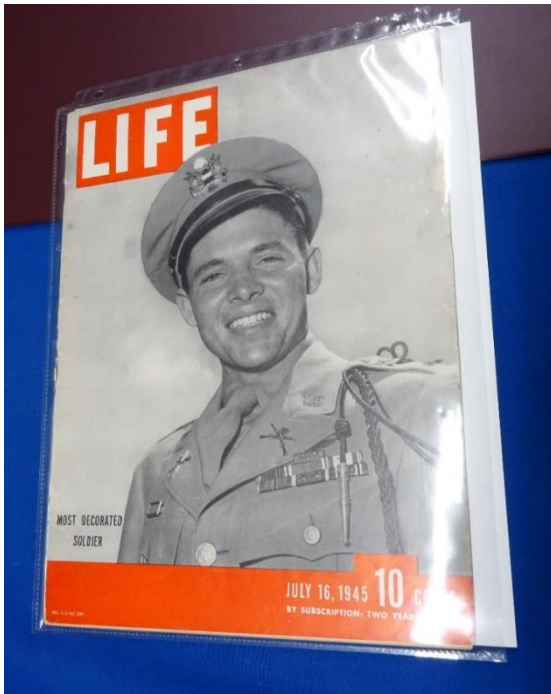
### Audie Murphy (Highest Decorated Soldier of WWII)

We recently added (thanks to Chuck Waters) a copy of the July 16, 1945 *Life* magazine to our collection of WWII magazines with covers of world and military leaders. This issue of *Life* contains the cover photo of Audie Murphy – “Most Decorated Soldier”, who was a Texas farm boy who became the most decorated soldier of WWII before the age of 21 and then after the war became a movie star. It was also the magazine issue that later launched his 20 year movie career.

The binders on the table in our museum contain a lot of interesting information and documents from WWII and are organized into the following binders.

1. Life, Look, Time and Newsweek Magazines
2. Yank Magazines
3. Stars and Stripes and other Newspapers

#### 4. Documents, Photos and Letters



#### Biography of Audie Murphy

Audie Leon Murphy (1925-1971) was born on June 20, 1925 in Kingston, Texas, to sharecroppers of Irish descent. He was the sixth of 12 children, two of whom did not survive to adulthood. His father abandoned the family while Audie was still in grade school, and the young Audie dropped out of fifth grade to help support his family by picking cotton for \$1 a day and doing other farm work. He became a crack shot with his rifle, bringing home squirrels, rabbits and birds to help feed the family. He was said to have remarked to a friend, "If I don't hit what I shoot at my family won't eat today." While still a youngster he worked at a garage and a radio repair shop.

In 1941 his mother passed away. This was also the same year the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Audie feeling incensed tried

to join the Army, Marines, and Navy, even though he was under age. He was denied by all three branches for being too short (five feet, five-and a half inches), slight of build (110 lbs.) and underage. His sister lied on an affidavit about his age and he was finally admitted into the army on June 30th, 1942, ten days after his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday.

On February 20th, 1943 he was finally shipped off to participate in World War II. Casablanca in French Morocco would be his first stop. He was assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 19th infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division. His first duties included being a platoon messenger in Algeria. By July 15th he had been promoted to Corporal.

On July 10th, 1943 his infantry landed in Sicily. He performed service as a division runner. In September of that year he was part of a mainland landing at Battipaglia in Salerno. He was scouting on the Volturno River with two comrades when they were attacked by German machine gunfire. One of his fellow soldiers was killed. He killed the German soldiers with machine gun fire and grenades. In October he participated in an assault near Mignano Monte Lungo Hill. He and his men were attacked by the Germans and they defeated them and took those who survived captive.

On December 13th, 1943 he was promoted to Sergeant and in January 1944 he was promoted to Staff Sergeant. He was supposed to serve in the first landing at the Anzio Beachhead but he had contracted Malaria and was out of commission for about a week. On January 29th, 1944 he returned to service and engaged in the first Battle of Cisterna. He was promoted to



Platoon Sergeant of Company B Platoon after the battle. He remained in Anzio with his Platoon for months.

Murphy earned a Bronze Star on March 2nd, 1944. He and his platoon took refuge in an abandoned farmhouse. A German tank was passing by and he and his men killed all the German soldiers. He exited the farm by himself and destroyed the tank with a grenade.

In August of 1944 he participated in one of the first Allied invasions of Southern France. He earned the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions in battle. He and his platoon were passing through a vineyard when they were ambushed by German machine gunfire. Murphy located a machine gun and turned the weapon on the Germans. He was able to kill two men and wound another. A few Germans deceptively waved their white flag and killed his friend when he went to accept their surrender. Murphy advanced on them by himself and he killed six, wounded two and took eleven soldiers prisoner.

On October 2nd 1944 he earned a Silver Star attacking Germans at the L'omet Quarry in the Cleurie River Valley. Three days after that he crawled by himself towards the Germans at L'omet. He directed his men over radio and they were able to take the hill. This earned him his second Silver Star. On October 14th he was promoted while in combat to Second Lieutenant, this made him his platoon leader.

While traveling to a different French locale, on October 26th, he and his platoon were hit by a German sniper group. Murphy took a bullet to the hip but was able to fire a return

and hit a sniper square between the eyes. His wound got infected with gangrene. He had to have surgery and lost a good portion of his hip muscle. He was not able to serve for several months and received a Purple Heart for his injury. In January of 1945 he returned to action.

On January 24th, 1945 he and his division advanced to the town of Holtzwihr where they were attacked by a group of Germans. Murphy was wounded in both legs. The Germans took down a M10 tank destroyer and the Murphy ordered his men to retreat. Audie stayed and climbed on the burning tank destroyer and took over the machine gun attached to it. He stayed in that position for an hour before he ran out of ammunition. Rejoining his men he continued to serve with them while his legs were being treated. For this he earned the Medal of Honor, a Purple Heart, a Presidential Unit Citation and a Legion of Merit Medal. He also was promoted to First Lieutenant.

By the war's end, Murphy had become the nation's most-decorated soldier, had spent some 400 days on the front lines and earned 33 military awards, citations and Decorations including three from France and one from Belgium. Murphy had been wounded three times during the war, yet, in May 1945, when victory was declared in Europe, he had still not reached his 20th birthday.

By mid-1945 he had returned to the States. He was discharged on September 21st, 1945 as a First Lieutenant and with 50% disability. He was called back into service briefly during the Korean War to serve as captain in a division of the Texas Army

National Guard. He retired from the Texas National Guard as a Major in 1966.

He appeared on the cover of the July 16, 1945 issue of Life Magazine with the title “Most Decorated Soldier” that we now have in our museum. Because of this magazine cover, he was asked to Hollywood by James Cagney and it ended up with his spending 20 years as a movie actor, starring in over 40 films.

After the war he struggled with PTSD. He suffered from insomnia, depression, mood swings, headaches, vomiting, and nightmares. Constantly reminded of the horrors of war he slept with a loaded gun under his pillow.

On May 28th, 1971, tragedy struck and he died in a plane crash. The plane crashed near Brush Mountain in Virginia. At the age of 45, Audie still had a lot more life to live. He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery with full honors. His grave shows his birth date as 1924 the date his sister lied about to get him into the Army and therefore his official birth date.

#### Audie Murphy's Decorations



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## Social Media



When the weather gets this hot, I'm often thankful that I can do my volunteering from the comfort of my keyboard!

I'd like to thank Denise Walker for taking over the June issue of the Newsletter while I was on the Midwest Tour with Texas Raiders. She did a wonderful job and I appreciate her willingness to take it on! Thank you!

If you haven't already, please take the time to visit our new website!! After many months of work, it is finally live. [www.houstonwing.org](http://www.houstonwing.org) Please notice that we have changed our emails to simply one email. Feel free to use personal emails for the staff members, but the Wing will only use [info@houstonwing.org](mailto:info@houstonwing.org) from now on. As PIO, I (plus the Wing Leader) will receive the incoming emails and will forward them on to the proper staff member.

It seems as though our website has been getting a lot of attention online, which is awesome. As mentioned in the Marketing Report, we have a lot of interest in hangar rentals for special events. If you are a person that would like to help with these events, please let Sam Bulger or I know. We have a true potential to earn some extra money for our Wing, and we sure would appreciate the help. -Brian

## Special Report:

### Schon Cormack

(Specialist Schon Cormack, 1-41FA, 3rd infantry Division)

For those of you who don't remember his red hair, Schon (middle) was a very active cadet with the Houston Wing from age 15 until he graduated and joined the Army. He spent almost every Open Saturday working the museum and guiding visitors and he is missed.

Schon will be home on leave from June 22nd to July 7<sup>th</sup> and he plans on coming to the Hangar one of the Saturdays he is home to visit and say hello to all his friends at the Houston Wing. It will be his last leave before he deploys to Iraq in 2020, so if you see him at the hangar wish him well.

-Sam Hoynes





## Meeting Potluck

As always our Potluck lunch will take place after the 2 pm Membership meeting on June 20th.

This month's theme will be BBQ! Go ahead and bring your favorite thing to cook on the grill. If grillin' isn't your speed, then please bring a side dish or a dessert.



Chris, Denise, Katie and Brian. Warbird Expo in Tyler



The N3N was very popular in Tyler.

## Wing Leader Position Opening

At the end of this year, I will be stepping down as your Wing Leader. Family and business commitments are in need of my attention. It is an honor to be able to lead such a fine group of dedicated volunteers. The Houston Wing has been evolving like the rest of the Commemorative Air Force. It is not the same as when I joined – and it shouldn't be. It takes fresh ideas and people with self-motivation to keep the CAF mission alive. If you would be interested in taking on the challenges of leading a team with a passion for aviation and history, please contact myself or the Nominating Committee Chairman Howard Quoyeser. If you have any questions of what the position entails, look me up around the hangar on most Saturdays or after the general meeting. I'll be happy to explain the details.

Stan Turner

## Poetry Moment

The fighters made the famous, on that we all agree.

The bombers were the ones that made the history.

Cargos and L-Birds were the ones to make it possible,

But few remember that the trainers made them all.

Stan Russ

# Tour Planning



Hello All!

Well summer is in full swing now! Wow is it hot! This past weekend a few of us supported the wing by taking the N3N and the PX to Tyler

for a four day Barnstorming and Airshow event. It was a very successful, as we brought in almost \$5,000 for the wing. Within that amount, we also flew 11 riders. Unfortunately, the N3N is now down due to some mechanical issues with the alternator and/or voltage regulator, and now a nose seal leak as well as a few smaller squawks. The N3N is a show stopper, so we need to get her back in the air as well as Ace our AT-6. We need your help to make this happen. And when I say we, I mean Jim in our maintenance area.

I want to take a moment and personally thank our volunteers for stepping up - especially in 100+ degree heat to make the Tyler event happen. So THANK YOU to Chris Walker for flying 11 rides and 1 media ride, and making sure our N3N was good to go. Brian Kosior thank you for taking care of the rides desk, putting our riders in the planes, making sure our pilot was hydrated, and helping in the PX. Kate and Colin Walker were on the ramp marshalling aircraft all weekend. In the slow times they would come help in the PX when I needed a break or needed to go take care of things. And Thank you to Kelly Walker for her help in the PX and anything else that needed to be

done. Sam thank you for all you do to coordinate our events and all you have done to build our team relationships within our wing as well as our fellow wings. It felt like we were all little buzzing bees - working well as a team and making it happen. Thank You! I had fun and enjoyed working with you all.

Also we want to send a big THANK YOU to the Gulf Coast Wing for always including us in a whole host of events. It is a joy to watch their crew come together and make things happen. Nancy Kwiecien made sure all the wings were taken care of and fed. Everyone kicks in full gear when something goes wrong to help fix it. Little Raider developed a crack in the oil tank just after a couple of flights. It was unfortunate because they had a full schedule. However, their mechanics hopped on it and worked in 100+ degree heat until it was fixed and flying again. Unfortunately, that was on Sunday afternoon when it was finished.

We all should be encouraged to cultivate the friendships within our own wing as well as the Gulf Coast Wing and build a strong business relationship with them. Their wing is running very smoothly right now and is definitely something to be modeled afterwards - and everyone is friendly and fun to play with! We all have a love of the WWII era and aircraft or we wouldn't be here volunteering our time. Please help support your fellow friends and teammates by getting involved. Look at the upcoming events and see where you can fill in. We really would like to encourage everyone to come out and help support the wing by

stepping up to volunteer at least 1-2 of the flying events. Not just Wings Over Houston or Warbird Weekend events. The whole year really is a TEAM event. It really makes a difference when you have more than the minimum amount of people needed and is greatly appreciated. If you only have a couple of hours to spare, then we would love to have you for the time you can give. Please help spread to love! Come out and play!!

Thank You! ~ Denise



Jo, Jason, Dave, and Jim supporting the Wing at the Skeeter's Game.



Sam Bulger and Frank Vargas receiving a \$5,000 donation from the Houston Classic Chevy Car Club!



The N3N in Tyler. Can you name the other two aircraft in the picture?





Cadet Katie poses with Pilots John and Nathan in the B-17 Texas Raiders. Photo: Denise Walker



Dave, Kent, Collin, Katie, and Chris pose with the N3N on the ramp in Tyler. Photo: Denise Walker



Collin, Denise, and Katie working the PX trailer in Tyler. Photo: Denise Walker



Brian singing the National Anthem as part of the Opening Ceremony for the Vintage Warbird Expo in Tyler. Photo: Denise Walker





Swatson welcomes Jolene, Jason, Dave and Jim to the Skeeters game

Our really cool advertisement



**Take me out to the ball game, take me out to the game.....**

The Houston Wing was invited by the Sugarland Skeeters to participate in their Women's Veterans night. We were scheduled to perform one of our famous pre-game flyovers (the weather did not cooperate) and in addition we were invited to promote the wing by having a table to promote the wing at the game and including a full back page advertisement in their program that they hand out to every guest that comes through the gate. We met many interested people and families and most of them told us they had no idea we existed. Promotions like this are integral to getting people to come out and visit our museum. I want to thank Jolene Meldrum, Jason Delaney, Jim Placette and Dave Eagan for promoting the Wing at the game.



TABLE DISPLAY

**COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE**

- **WORLD CLASS MUSEUM**
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- **FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY**

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# Staff Directory

**Wing Leader**

Col Stan Turner

**Executive Officer**

Col Dave Eagan

**Adjutant**

Col Denise Walker

**Cadet Program Officer**

Col Jim Placette

Col Frank Vargas

**Development Officer**

Col Sam Bulger

**Finance Officer**

Col Steve Sparks

**Maintenance Officer**

Col Jim Placette

**Museum and Education Officer**

Col Sam Hoynes

**Marketing Officer**

Col Sam Bulger

**Operations Officer**

Col Nathan Harnagel

**Personnel Officer**

Col Tammi Lockwood

**Public Information Officer**

Col Brian Kosior

**PX Officer**

Col Susan Vaculik

**Safety Officer**

Col Susie Bredlau

**Rides Coordinator**

Col Tammi Lockwood