



Commemorative Air Force Wisconsin Wing Newsletter

Chartered April 30th, 1982

Editor: Brad Ohde

February 2023, Issue #2302

From the Front Cockpit Col Gary Otto – Wing Leader



COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE
Wisconsin Wing Newsletter

Your dedicated WI Wing staff, with the guidance of headquarters and input from many members, has set our path into the future with their recent decision to return our beloved PT-26 to headquarters for reassignment to a new unit. This was a very difficult and emotional decision to make, but it was deemed necessary for the long-term success of the WI Wing and our ability to continue to carry out our mission to Educate, Inspire and Honor.

PT-26, N9474H, was acquired and assigned to the WI Wing in 2012, following our first PT-26, N103JC (2008-2011). It served us well, with 10 years of mission flying and support of our wing activities. It took the support of all the wing members, numerous sponsors, and many sponsor-pilots to keep this WWII historic aircraft flying. I want to thank all of those WI Wing members for their commitment to the CAF mission while N9474H was with us.

We now need to focus our efforts and support towards our two (2) assigned aircraft, the 600HP 1943 SNJ-5, N3195G and the 300HP 1953 T-34A, N5347W. These WI Wing aircraft have specific needs for volunteers and support to get and keep them mission ready. I strongly encourage all of our members to support these historic “time machines” in any way you are able:

- Flight Crew support for fixed costs (min. \$20/mo commitment) This is most needed for the T-34 and is an easy way to financially support your favorite warbird!
- T-34 restoration fund donations to complete the engine overhaul/repairs. This is the most significant immediate challenge for getting the T-34 mission ready for 2023.
- Aircraft Sponsorship (\$750 Supporting Sponsor, \$1500 T-34 Sponsor, \$3500 SNJ Sponsor) Sponsor funds are restricted to major repairs and/or upgrades.
- Pilot-Sponsor (\$2000 for T-34, \$3500 for SNJ) Both aircraft need additional pilot-sponsors to fly and share in fixed cost payments
- Mission Flying donations to help support actual mission flights
- Volunteer to wash/wax/clean canopies/clean bellies/cut hangar grass/shovel snow

These aircraft are not our mission in themselves, but they are the primary means that we have for carrying out our mission. Our aircraft are involved in many mission activities throughout the year including:

- PX support
- Honor Flight Escorts
- Static Display at fly-ins and events
- Veteran Rides
- Member Educational Rides
- Educational cockpit tours at events
- Sports game flyovers to honor veterans
- Event flyovers that benefit/honor veterans
- AirVenture activity nearly every day of the convention
- Missing man memorial flights to honor our heroes

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Wisconsin Wing News



From the Front Cockpit (cont'd from previous page)

Getting involved up close and personal with these beautiful aircraft is unique to CAF members. No other warbird organization offers members the opportunity to fly or ride in these powerful awe-inspiring flying machines. We get to use these planes to touch people's lives through education, by inspiring young and old to be the best they can be, and by honoring those military servicemen and women who have gone before us, as well as who are serving our country today.

As we move forward with a renewed spirit and direction, find out how you can be part of our mission, so you can experience the passion for yourself.

Best to you all,
Gary Otto - Wing Leader: WI Wing 2021-3



Many factors went into the PT-26 return decision:

- The PT-26 continues to have excessive and long down times (12 months in 2019-20 and now 18 months) due to a wide range of problems that carry the common issues of hard to get parts, hard to find shops to rebuild components, and hard to get qualified mechanics to work on it. All issues that are not going to go away.
- While several members came forward to support fixed costs, the staff was also looking for a long-term commitment to the CAF Mission for the PT-26, where the PT would contribute to the future growth and success of the wing. The staff did not see enough of that vision and commitment.
- While very positive statements regarding the integrity and longevity of the wood PT wings were offered, there were just as many statements of concern for the length of time the wings will be viable, and the huge cost and time to rebuild the wings when just one of them fails. The risks for safety, excessive (12+ mo.) downtime, and huge costs were all weighed in by the staff.
- The decision on the PT was not directly related to our 2 other assigned aircraft, but the staff had to consider the relationship of the aircraft to each other, including what effects the decision would have on present membership and our future ability to recruit and retain members. The T-34 and SNJ share many common traits; speed compatible for formation flying, aerobatic capability, metal structure, good parts availability, component rebuild shop availability, readily available qualified maintenance, and attractiveness/suitability for the CAF Rides Program. The PT does not share most of these traits and in the 15 years that the WI Wing has had a PT flying, not one pilot has used the PT as the training platform to step up to the SNJ. The SNJ was seen as a viable wing aircraft with growing support and the T-34 was seen as the better aircraft to build the future of the WI Wing on. The T-34 can also fly 12 months of the year.
- The unexpected and unplanned huge expense for the T-34 engine repairs was also a factor. While the T-34 sponsors and supporters have donated 100% of the \$158,000 T-34 restoration costs to date, including a \$10,000 donation from the last GOW event (each aircraft received \$10,000) and 2 restoration matching grants, the present \$50-60,000 cost to get the T-34 flying has overwhelmed the sponsors and supporters, and without an alternate plan, the T-34 might very well need to be returned to HQ for another unit to fund and restore. We appealed to CAF HQ for funds, but since their hands were tied for proving any more restoration grant funds, they provided us with a recommended path forward that had many positive outcomes for the WI Wing and HQ.



Wisconsin Wing News



Many factors went into the PT-26 return decision: (cont'd from previous page)



- ✓ HQ will accept the return of the PT as-is (we do need to finish the tailwheel repair) and HQ will send in parts and labor to be able to ferry the PT back to Dallas. HQ assumes all costs for the PT as of the return notification date.
- ✓ The PT would be reassigned in the CAF New Unit Initiative, helping to get a new unit off the ground. The new Toledo, Ohio unit is a probable target.
- ✓ All the WI Wing spare parts for the PT can be retained and sold to raise funds for the WI Wing.
- ✓ Any PT-26 sponsors or pilot sponsors who would like to become a T-34 sponsor-pilot can request this through the normal FEB process without any further requirement for a sponsor donation for the T-34. Aircraft sponsorships stay with the original aircraft you sponsor regardless of where the aircraft goes. So, we would not be transferring a sponsorship, but merely recognizing the PT sponsor as having T-34 Sponsor privileges.
- ✓ All PT-26 maintenance and overhaul reserve funds can be retained by the WI Wing and reapplied to the T-34, indirectly providing the requested funding support for the T-34.
- ✓ HQ personnel committed to pressing the Museum Board to provide a \$10-15,000 "hardship" grant to the WI Wing T-34 to also help with the financial burden.
- Once there is a clear path forward for the viability of the T-34 at the WI Wing, the T-34 team committed to restoring the sponsor pilot base to 10+, ambitiously seeking sponsors, flight crew and outside support, and quickly getting the T-34 back to carrying out our mission here.

WI Wing Membership Meeting

You are invited to the CAF WI Wing on Sat., Feb. 11th, 2023

10:30 AM Central Time → Waukesha Airport Terminal Conference Room
(Airport Drive, Waukesha)

Program: The future of the WI Wing – PART II

A lunch option is available (subs & chips) – details to follow in the email meeting invite coming out with the newsletter.

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Maintenance Report by Col Scott Twesme – WI Wing Maintenance Officer

SNJ

- Flying. Only upcoming event is oil change in approx 5 hours.

T-34

- Alternator needed new gear and other associated parts.
- Estimated costs yet to be paid:
 - ✓ \$ 2,600 Alternator replacement
 - ✓ \$46,000 Engine re-assembly (still on hold pending funding/release)
 - ✓ \$ 3,000 (est) Engine install at Plane Safe
 - ✓ \$ 2,400 (est) Annual
- Recently completed work: Exhaust system rebuild/propeller flush-reseal.



Wisconsin Wing News



Warbird Heavy Iron (in plastic) – “Meet the Modeler”: *by Col John Leidel, WI Wing Adjutant Officer*

Hello, my name is John, and I am addicted to Warbirds. Both iron and plastic.

First in a series!!!

My Brother Glenn was my greatest influence in both. He, along with our older brother Gregg, built models that I liked to play with as a child. Glenn taught me how to build models as I grew older.

As for real Warbirds, Glenn took me to Burlington in 1973 for my first Airshow, followed by Oshkosh. I have not missed a year of Oshkosh since! Additionally, our father was an Aircraft Armorer with the 390th Bomb Group, 570th Squadron during WWII. With these events in my life, my passion for Warbirds and modeling was cemented!

For most of my life, my time was filled with my full-time job, as well as serving on the Merton Fire Department. When I decided it was time to retire from the FD, I decided I wanted to focus on following my passion of Warbirds. It was through Facebook that I was invited to share my models at EAA’s Family Flight Fest. Then one day I received an invite for a Warbird Squadron starting in Oshkosh. My dream was coming true! One of my first accomplishments in Squadron 32 was designing our patch. Since then, I have had the honor of serving as Adjutant and helping coordinate Training Command at AirVenture. Recently, I joined the Wisconsin Wing for the Commemorative Air Force, and am now serving as the Wing Adjutant Officer.

All of this has brought me here. Seriously collecting models since about 1983, I have accumulated well over 800 models, mostly 1/48 scale aircraft. From the Wright Flyer to the F-35. I always built for myself, but through exposure at Flight Fest and Facebook, I have been asked to build models for Veterans and their families. This took my hobby to a level I never imagined! In future articles, I will share some of these stories with you, along with modeling tips and information.

Keep ‘em Flying (or Build A Model of ‘em!). - CAF Col John Leidel, WB 6076



One of two identical builds for my brothers in memory of our Father, Sgt. Robert C. Leidel, Aircraft Armorer 390th Bomb Group, 570th Squadron, Framlingham England



“Times-A-Wastin” built for the Grandson of the Ball Turret Gunner who was KIA when it was shot down. This picture made me cry when I first seen it. This is why I do what I do!



Built and presented to Nick Mendiola who was the Nose Turret Gunner in several B-24s with the 455th Bomb Group, 472st Squadron. Sadly, he recently passed away



This might look familiar to some of you! I built this for a fundraiser for Squadron 32 along with the P-51 Quick Silver that Chris Henry built.



Where the magic happens LOL! 

The Magician (John)! 





Wisconsin Wing News



EAA WARBIRD 32 Squadron

Feb. meeting: Wed., 2/8, 6pm
 Military Veterans Museum – Oshkosh
 Neil Hansen – Air America Story

March meeting: Wed., 3/8, 6pm
 Military Veterans Museum – Oshkosh
 EAA’s Paul Maloy – Pearl Harbor

Related links: <https://www.facebook.com/OshkoshSquad>
<https://chapters.eaa.org/war32>

Membership dues lowered to \$30!!!



CHECK THIS OUT!



EAA “Flight at the Museum” - Education Fundraiser/Event!!!

Saturday, March 11th → EAA Museum, Oshkosh

5:30pm Doors open
 7pm Dinner

Purchase tickets at:
EAA.ORG/FLIGHTATTHEMUSEUM

Cost: \$125 Members
 \$150 Non-Members



New Members!!!



Brian Liddle’s “Life Member” Package.....

2022		
Donn Droegkamp (Pewaukee) *** Gold Lifetime Member ***	Al Pavik (TX-Coyote Squadron Member)	Eric Ruediger (Racine)
Jackson LaManna (Mequon) *** Cadet ***	Laura Stants (Indiana Wing)	John Reed
Scott Slay	Mitch Saltzberg	Candy Parr
George Bacik	Jeff Karsten	Cadet Francis Anderer (Noel Skerven’s Nephew!)
Joe Van Wie	Glenn Leidel	Brian Liddle *** Life Member ***
Mary Berg	Eric Chappelear	Evan Bauer
Dan Butler	Tony Madonia	



Wisconsin Wing News



Mission Report: Waukesha Jamboree “Flannel Fly in & Chili Cook Off by Col Candy Parr – WI Wing Education Officer

Date: 1-21-2023 **Time:** 10AM – 2PM **Place:** KUES Terminal/Ramp.

Thank you to all that came out to assist with our booth- 2 tables & an activity table:

Mary Berg (drove 3.5 hours the night before), Cadet Francis Anderer & his parents, Gary Otto (SNJ-5 displayed on ramp), Kathy Laabs, Glenn Leidel (Thank you for washing the tablecloths), Thomas Leunig, Steve Betzler, Steve Lark. **Thank you to all our volunteers!**

The **4-hour** event, with an estimated count of *500 that came through the Kues terminal*. We (CAF - WW) took **2nd place** in the chili cook-off. (Waukesha Fire Dept. took 1st) **Big THANKS** to Mary (**Bear/Beef**-yes, BEAR-it was delicious) and Francis and his parents (2 crockpots: chicken & beef) for making the chili.

Activity Age 4 to 104: CAF Poopy postcard written out to thank a veteran was well received. It was touching what these children and adults wrote. The post cards will be delivered to a facility with veterans. Many were encouraged to take them home & give them to their dad/mom, uncle/aunt, grandparents etc. who served in the military.

The SNJ-5 was displayed on the ramp- Gary was busy in the cold weather showing our warbird.

Outcome: Outreach to introduce more of our community to CAF and its mission. We did have a few people interested in joining us-even pilots that we will follow up on. KUES Admin/Staff were pleased with our enthusiasm and can't wait to do another community activity with us.



Col Candy Parr with some of Waukesha County finest visitors and our SNJ-5

Cadet Francis and his parents! Thank you for making 2 crockpots of chili!



Mary Berg's Bear/Beef Chili was a hit! Complete with Apple Cider.

CAF Poppy Post cards for all ages to write a THANK YOU to a veteran.

Dum Dum Lollipops when they were done.

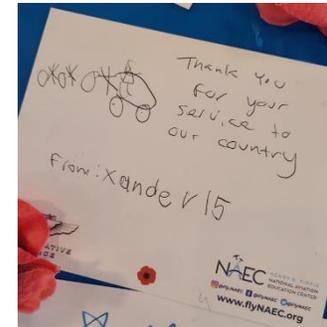
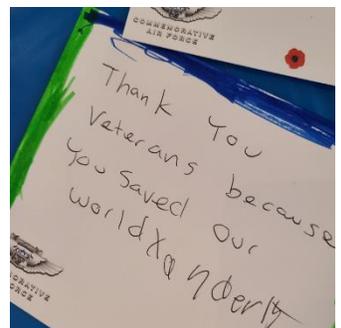
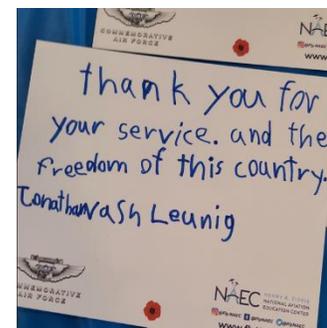
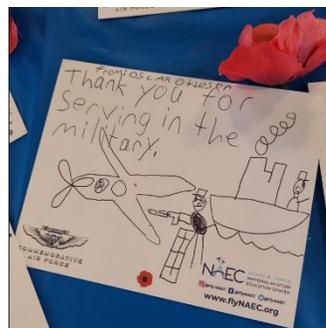
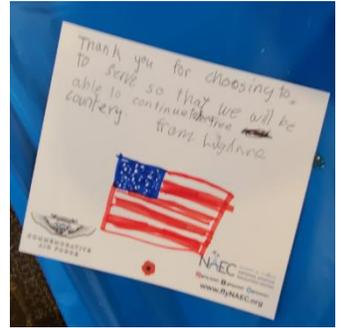
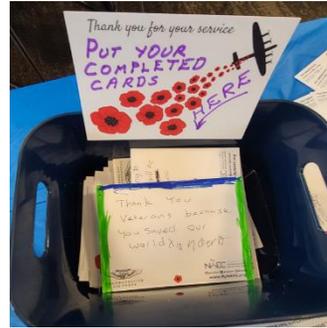




Wisconsin Wing News



Mission Report: Waukesha Jamboree "Flannel Fly in & Chili Cook Off" (cont'd from previous page)





Wisconsin Wing News



Mission Report: Waukesha Jamboree "Flannel Fly in & Chili Cook Off" (cont'd from previous page)



Yes, we even learned about wildlife management at the airport, including how to safely capture, remove, and relocate birds.

Gift of Wings was a sponsor that had the big 60 ft movie screen for the Top Gun movie.





Wisconsin Wing News



“Upcoming” Mission Report: CAF Winter Staff Conference - Dallas TX by Col Candy Parr – WI Wing Education Officer

The **2023 CAF Conference is March 16 to 18** at the CAF National Airbase in Dallas, TX

NOTE: There are topics for every officer and staff member to learn something new, best practices or plan your future role to assist in growing our Wing.

I was asked by Craig Tuminaro (VP of Membership)/Brenda Townsend (Director of Education) from CAF Headquarters to present a joint conference session with Michelle Siemens, of the Central California Valley Squadron, to talk about STEM activity in different settings. “Getting started in STEM and beyond!”

Deadline to register **March 1st** \$250 after \$300. The group room rate for the hotel is valid until **March 10th** or all rooms booked. All members are welcome to attend!

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Operations Report by Col Mike Woods – WI Wing Operations Officer

During 2022 we flew our SNJ 46.1 hrs. with Gary Otto flying it 26.5 hours, Steve Sorge 7.8 hours, Scott Twesme 7.8 hours, and rides (Steve Sorge) 4.0 hours. We used a total of 1,363 gals of fuel or an avg of 29.6 gal/hr. The fixed costs were \$18,912, and the hourly costs were \$18,399. The fixed costs are divided up evenly by the pilot sponsors and the hourly costs are paid by the pilot flying the plane. The hourly costs were \$399/hr and the fixed \$410/hr or a total of \$809 average cost per hr. The SNJ has not flown in 2023 yet.... Too much cold/bad weather!

The T-34 flew a total of 13.5 hours with Gary Otto having 4.3 hrs., Mike Woods 3.4 hrs. and maintenance 5.8 hrs. The fixed costs were \$17,762, which were close to the SNJ, and the hourly costs were \$1,782. The airplane did not fly past June due to the unforeseen engine issue. We are aiming to get the T-34 flying again by Springtime with the engine and components overhauled and installed.

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The Wing received this note from Bethany Cummings, niece of Gone West David Carr:

Ms Beck, Commander Otto and all,

Uncle David enjoyed his involvement and time with the CAF-WI wing, and often chuckled that he “is a Colonel in the Confederate Air Force.” in our phone conversations.

Thank you for your organization's gift of camaraderie, intellectual and skills challenge, and ongoing love of aviation and purpose to him. Please keep up the good fight and Fair skies and good flying to all.

*Bethany Cummings
Niece of Gold Life Col David Carr*



Wisconsin Wing News



Mission Report: MOVIE Night at KUES was a hit! Waukesha Jamboree 1-21-2023 -1900 Hours *by Col Candy Parr – WI Wing Education Officer*

The SNJ-5 was on display in *Atlantic Aviation's* heated hangar, flanking the movie screen with Paul Keppeler's T-33, to watch the new **Top Gun Maverick** film. Attendees were encouraged to wear their aviation gear and they took advantage of the photo ops by the two displayed aircraft. Organizers were pleased and overwhelmed with what they **estimated 500** people. The crowd loved it and wanted to do a hanger movie again! Free admission, free parking, and free popcorn! They couldn't keep up on popping popcorn as they never dreamed that many people would show up.

In addition, Gary had a chance to go up front & talk about CAF Wisconsin Wing & the SNJ-5 in front of the movie crowd while waiting for popcorn and get the movie started.



Fly in Cinema at Waukesha County Airport 1-21-2023 : Sponsored by Atlantic Aviation, Gift of Wings and Waukesha County Airport



3 Generations! Kurt Stanich along with his father and son in attendance



Gary Otto & Candy Parr tried freeze-dried "Astronaut Ice Cream!!!"



Gary & Dave from the Milwaukee Air Show



Gary Otto, our Wing Leader, speaking to the crowd of 500 about the CAF.



Kurt Stanich welcomes the crowd (Right photo: our SNJ-5 in the background!)



Calendar – Upcoming Events

Please go to cafwi.org for more details on all the Commemorative Air Force Wisconsin 2023 Wing activities.

Notes: CAF WI Wing activity always subject to weather and aircraft availability

- WI Wing Staff meetings are always 10 days prior to each wing meeting and open to all members to attend.
- Waukesha Airport Food Truck Fridays Run June 2nd thru Sept. 1st, with WI Wing PX attending and Aircraft support.

Date	Event Name	Location	Time	PX Booth	Education Table	T-34A	SNJ-5
Feb 11	Wing Meeting & Lunch	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30 am start				
March 11	Wing Meeting & Lunch	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30 am start				
March 16-19	HQ Wing Staff Meeting	Dallas, TX CAF HQ	Long weekend				
April 8	Wing Meeting & Lunch	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30 am start				
April 22	Honor Flight Escort	KUES KMKE	5:30am depart				
May 12	Dock Hounds Opener	Fly Over with SNJ	TBA			x	x
TBA	Spring Banquet	Delafield Brew Haus	5:30PM to ????				
May 13	Wing Meeting & Lunch	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30-11:30 a.m.				
May 20	Honor Flight Escort	Milwaukee Mitchell Airport	6:00 a.m.			x	x
May 26-28	Dock Hounds Military Wk	Fly Over with SNJ	TBA				
May 27 28 29	Memorial Day Fly-overs	Union Grove & Wood Cem.	TBD				
June 2	First Food Truck Friday	KUES Terminal Ramp	11AM-2PM				
June 9	128 th ARW Tour (TBC)	MKE Airport: 128 th Base	TBA				
June 10	EAA Warbird SQUADRON 32 Fly-in	KOSH Oshkosh Terminal and Ramp	10AM – 4PM				
June 10	Wing Meeting	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30 am start				
TBA	Menomonee Falls WWII Days Big Band Sat nite	Old Falls Village Historic Park, Menomonee Falls, WI	10:00-5:00 p.m. plus Sat night band	x	x		
TBA	Honor Flight Escort	KMKE Mitchell Airport	6:00 AM			x	x
July 3	Shawano Fireworks day	Shawano Airport	Noon-dusk			x	x
July 8	Wing Meeting	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30 am start				
July 19-23	CAF AirPower History Tour FiFi & Diamond 'Lil +	TBA		x		x	x
July 24-July 30	EAA AirVenture	Oshkosh Airport		no	no	x	x
Aug 5	Old Glory Honor Flt Event	Fly Over Oshkosh					
August 12	Wing Meeting & Lunch	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30 am start				
TBA	RC Warbirds and Classics Over the Midwest	Welnuts RC Field SE of Fond du Lac	TBA	x			x
August 20	Shawano Fly-In	Shawano	All day/rain 8-21	X?			x
September 2	EAA Chapter 1365 Fly-in	Mauston/New Lisbon Union Airport	Go Friday night	x		x	x
September TBA	Honor Flight Escort	KMKE Mitchell Airport	6:00 AM				x
September 9	Wing Meeting & Lunch	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30 am start				
Sept TBA	Oconto Fly-In	Oconto Airport	9:00AM – 4:00PM	x			x*
October TBA	Honor Flight Escort	KMKE Mitchell Airport	6:00 AM				x
October 14	Wing Meeting & Lunch	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30 am start				
October TBA	Corsicana Airshow	Corsicana, TX Coyote Sqdn	Sat. 10-8 all day				
November TBA	Honor Flight Escort	KMKE Mitchell Airport	6:00 AM				x?
November 4	Veterans Day Parade	Fly Overs	11AM???				
November 11	Wing Meeting & Lunch Election nominations	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30 am start				
November 24	Trip to EAA Museum	Oshkosh, WI	9:00 a.m.				
December TBA	WI WING Holiday Party	Brewhaus	Details to follow				
December 9	Wing Meeting Election for 2024-5 terms	Waukesha Airport Terminal	10:30 am start				
TBA	N103JC return to flight	Tulsa OK Wing	TBA				



For the latest EAA AirVenture news & info go to:

<https://www.eaa.org/airventure>

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