Commemorative Air Force Wisconsin Wing Newsletter

Chartered April 30th, 1982 *Editor: Brad Ohde*

February 2026, Issue #2602

From the Rally Point *by Col Candy Lee Parr*
Wing Leader

www.cafwi.org https://www.facebook.com/CommemorativeAirForceWisconsinWing

COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE
Our Mission: To Educate, Inspire and Honor!!

January 2026 had a nice kick off for our WING! We are blessed to now have a FULL staff for all voting staff positions in addition to all other staff positions! We welcomed our **8th T-34 Sponsor Pilot Spencer Anderson**! He will be a great addition to our Rides program and role model for our EDUCATE & INSPIRE to our youth! Great news looks like we will have **#9** this month and THREE other T-34 sponsor pilots on deck! NOW we need tailwheel time pilots for our **SNJ-5/T-6 Navy Trainer**! Looking for 5 more pilots this year! With our rides program launch this Spring 2026 we will be at full throttle on our **MISSION to Educate, Inspire & Honor!** Let's add more wing members to help share the experience!

Congratulations to our **cadet Bobby Gibson** on achieving Eagle Scout! Some of the wing members were able to celebrate with him and his family. (see photos inside) **Congratulations** to our **cadet Matthew Morin** on receiving the Principal Nominee for the United States Naval Academy in addition he was nominated for the U.S. Air Force Academy. (See photos inside)

Our 4th ANNUAL participation in **Waukesha JanBoree** at the Waukesha County Airport with an "Outer Space" theme was a big hit! Even with the frigid temps the people came out! The children wrote THANK YOUs to our veterans (see photos inside)

CAF Conference in Dallas, TX Feb. 26-28: A great time to learn what other wings are doing to promote our mission**! 2025 RECAP**: CAF has 19,177 members, 85 units and 184 aircraft in our fleet! 6,780 hours flown with 114 ride aircraft that gave 1,700 rides.
WI WING members please make plans to attend in 2027! It will be CAF 70th Birthday!

SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, **September 20, 2026**, from 9 AM to 4 PM! **Wing and Wheels** event here at Waukesha County Airport. *With 300 vintage cars, 24+ warbirds, military vehicles & motorcycles! A salute to those serving and ceremony to honor our veterans! We will need VOLUNTEERS to make it a success! All hands-on deck!*

Happy Valentine's Day!

Inside this issue:

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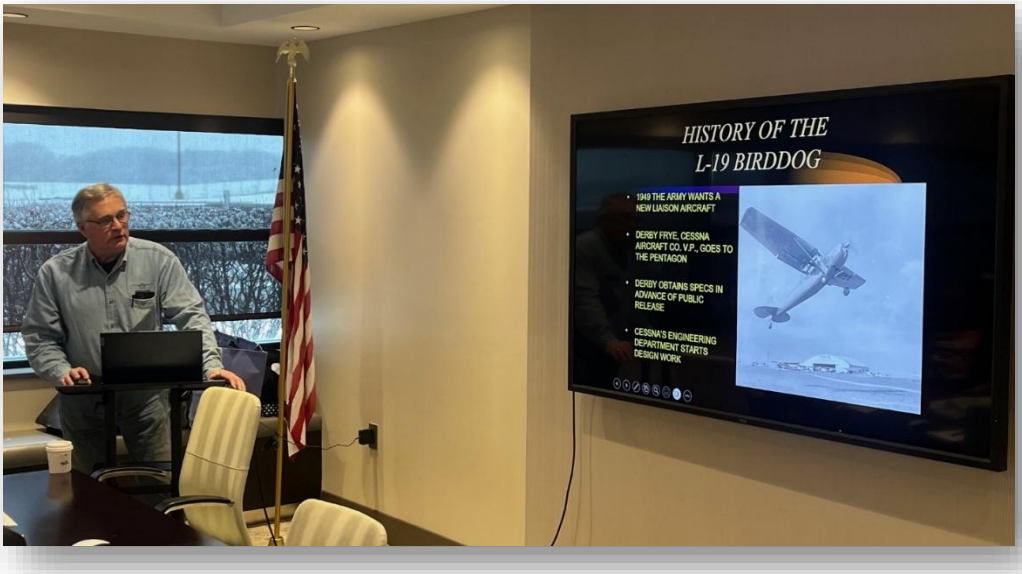
Wisconsin Wing News

January Meeting Presentation Recap *by Col Tom Leunig, CAF WI Wing Education Officer*

Big thanks to Mike Weinfurter and his wife for driving all the way down from Rhinelander to visit us! The weather unfortunately meant he couldn't bring his beautiful O-1 Birddog along, but his presentation was a fascinating coverage of the type's history and military service. Not only that, but we learned that Mike's airplane is itself a local veteran, having served at the ANG unit in West Bend many years ago!



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Thank You, Chuck Allen!

Thank you, Chuck for supporting our "Youth in Aviation" .....our future!

Congratulations on the behalf of Commemorative Air Force Wisconsin Wing!
-Candy Lee Parr, CAF WI Wing Leader

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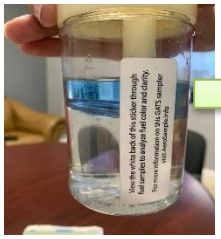
NEW MEMBERS!!!		
Sam Todd	Randy Wegner	Barb Lepinski
Dr. Arthur Angove	Joshua Cargille	Andrew Cloyd
Bren Nimke	Evon Celander	Spencer Anderson
Jim Foskett	John Almquist	Patrick Etringer
Kathryn Ratenski	Jake Taff	Mike Mecha
Kenn Kessler	Mark Davis	Roger Kiefer, II

Wisconsin Wing News

Upcoming CAF WI Wing Presentations

by Col Michael Guslick, CAF WI Wing Membership Officer



February 2026 – "When preflights go wrong" Mike Mecha, a CFI/CFII/MEI/A&P (and former FAA employee) has been a frequent guest at recent meetings and will give us a useful safety presentation on some of the wild things he's seen in his career, as well as tell the personal tale of what may be the very worst thing that can happen on your very first XC solo flight!

March 2026 – Our very own Bob Christie will speak about his family connection with Wisconsin's own Ace of Aces, Richard Bong!

April 2026 – "Flying the F-4 in SE Asia" Col. Steve Ladd (https://phantomtowarthog.com/) devoted 28 years of his life to flying fighters in the USAF across 4 different decades of the Cold War. His memoir, "From F-4 Phantom to A-10 Warthog" is a must-read for anyone interested in the culture of the endangered species known as the 'fighter pilot'. He'll join us remotely from his home in Bristol, England to talk about the first part of his career flying what has been called the greatest combat aircraft in history, the mighty F-4 Phantom!

May 2026 – Paul Walter's T-28 Trojan is one of the many warbirds we are privileged to have on the grounds at KUES. Not only is it one of the most beautiful Trojans in the skies, given its centennial paint scheme, but it is a combat veteran with a couple of patched over bullet holes if you know where to look! Paul is not only a generous benefactor of the excellent Aviation Heritage Center of Wisconsin at the Sheboygan airport, but an accomplished airshow performer as part of the 6-ship 'Trojan Thunder' display team. He'll talk about the magnificent T-28, the last of the big radial engined trainers.

June 2026 – Stan "Stitch" Markus, topic forthcoming!

July 2026 – No meeting due to…… *(you guessed it!)……* OSH

Wisconsin Wing News

Cadet Bobby Gibson Earns Eagle Scout Award! *by Col Tom Leunig, CAF WI Wing Education Officer*

On January 19th Cols Candy Parr, Gary Otto, Michael Guslick, and Tom Leunig attended the Court of Honor where Cadet Bobby Gibson was awarded his Eagle Scout award with a Bronze Palm. Eagle Scout is the highest, most prestigious rank in Scouting America earned by only 4% of youth. The rank of Eagle Scout is a great achievement and showcases leadership, perseverance, and commitment. Requirements include earning 21 merit badges and completing a service project. The Bronze Palm is awarded for 5 merit badges over the initial 21. Bobby also received a proclamation from the Mayor of Brookfield. Congratulations to Bobby's parents Scott and Annmarie on their son's achievement. The Commemorative Air Force-Wisconsin Wing is proud to have you as a Cadet.

Wisconsin Wing News

Congratulations CAF WI Wing Cadet Matthew Morin!

Congratulations to our WI Wing Cadet Matthew Morin as he earned Principal Nominee for United States Naval Academy. He also received the nomination for Air Force Academy.

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Commemorative Air Force Wisconsin Wing
Onward and upward! Col Candy Lee Parr- Wing Leader

How did the year end?

2025 WI WING Goals for 10-10-100-25
10: T-34 Sponsor Pilots (at 7 with 1 on deck)
10: SNJ-5 Sponsor Pilots (at 5)
100: Wing Members with 30% ongoing active to carry out our Mission (at 70-30% at Rally Point)
With a Thriving Rides Program In 2025 Not yet!

How are we looking so far in 2026?

2026 WI WING Goals for 12-10-100-26
10: T-34 Sponsor Pilots (at 9 with 3 on deck) Awesome!
10: SNJ-5 Sponsor Pilots (at 5)
100: Wing Members with 30% ongoing active to carry out our Mission (TBD)
With a Thriving Rides Program in Spring of 2026
T-34A Std Category by April -95% And we now have 5 single engine commercial pilots.
SNJ-5 We now have 2 single engine commercial pilots

2025: How did we do all together!

Wisconsin Wing News

Mission Report – January 2026 *by Col Tom Leunig, CAF WI Wing Education Officer*

1. Pistons & Props STEAM Career Day 2026

We are all set for this event that will be held on Thursday, April 30th in Janesville. We will be presenting "Fundamentals of Flight" using our Cessna 172 radio control model in a static tabletop role where students can operate the flight controls. We will also have a flight simulator that the students can experience. Last year Cols Mike Guslick, Bryan Thornton, Tom Leunig, and Cadet Bobby Gibson participated. I am hoping the same people can assist in 2026. This year we will be joined by Cadet Preston Fimiano and anyone else who would like to participate.

2. Aviation Merit Badge for Scouting America

We had planned this for Saturday, May 2nd but the Girl Scouts have an event that weekend. The new date is Saturday, April 25th. It will run from 9AM to 3 PM. This will be a merit badge clinic for 30-35 scouts. The Potawatomi Area Council will handle the registration, flyers, and promotion. The flyer is being designed. The plan would be to rotate three groups between the KUES conference room, FAA control tower, and a hanger tour. Sue Davies from Spring City Aviation will set up the hanger tour to meet pilots, A & P's, and see some jets! The CAF WI Wing would provide the instructor counselors. Instructors will need a Youth Protection Program background check. The CAF Cols participating will all be approved merit badge counselors and by the end of the day the attendees can be signed off and receive the Aviation merit badge!
I am hoping we can get the SNJ and T-34 parked on the ramp for the scouts. Col Steve Sorge volunteered to bring the TBM or Stearman up! Col Jeremy Keyes will also bring his aircraft. I will be asking for volunteers at the March Wing meeting.

3. Girl Scout Event

On Friday, May 1st and Saturday, May 2nd there will be 100 Girl Scouts camping at the Waukesha airport over in the SE corner by the Quad hanger. Then on Saturday they will be having a FAA hanger tour, and a tour of Plane Safe Aircraft Maintenance. I talked with the leader Crystal Polak and she asked if we could provide the SNJ and T-34 for static display? The plan is to have our aircraft parked at Plane Safe or near the FAA tower from 9AM to Noon. We would need some volunteers to help with the scouts and observing the aircraft. I'll provide more details as planning continues. The good news is we're invited to their pancake breakfast at 8AM at the campsite!

4. CAF Youth Interaction & Protection Program 2026

All CAF Colonels are required to complete the YPP education and background check process through the Sterling Volunteer Dashboard. If you haven't done so, please complete the training, you can start here: https://www.cafeducation.org/youth-interaction-and-protection . Thank you for your prompt attention to this important requirement.

5. Youth in Aviation Task Force / Wisconsin Aerospace Crew

This task force continues to grow under the leadership of Abby Lorenz, the Waukesha Airport Commissioner. Col Mike Doble is also on the commission. We have three schools participating: Sussex Hamilton, Oconomowoc, and Pewaukee. All three have aerospace programs. New Beginnings Aerospace Ministry has partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs to offer a "8-Week Ground & Flight Training Course" with ground school from March 17 thru May 5, every Tuesday from 6:00-8:30 PM at the Waukesha County Airport Conference Room. It will also include 10 hours of flight lessons. It's open to veterans and their dependents age 16 and older. For more information or to register visit www.NewBeginningsAerospace.com . Best of all its FREE!

Wisconsin Wing News

Safety Message: The Hidden Hazard We All Face *by Col Jeremy Keyes, CAF WI Wing Safety Officer*

Most of us think we understand fatigue—feeling a little tired after a long day, grabbing an extra cup of coffee, and pushing on. But fatigue is far more than just being sleepy, and its effects can be just as dangerous as something we already work hard to avoid: intoxication.

Let's start with something familiar to everyone—driving.

Nearly all of us have driven while tired. Maybe it was a long day at work, a late night with family, or an early-morning departure after too little sleep. Behind the wheel, fatigue shows up quietly. Reaction times slow. Attention narrows. Small mistakes—missed signs, drifting within the lane, delayed braking—start to creep in. Judgment suffers, and risk-taking increases. The scary part is that fatigued drivers often don't realize how impaired they are. Confidence stays high while performance steadily drops.

Studies consistently show that fatigue can impair performance in ways comparable to alcohol. Staying awake for extended periods can affect reaction time, decision-making, and coordination at levels similar to being legally intoxicated. In other words, a tired driver may be just as impaired as a drunk one—only without the obvious warning signs or social stigma that might stop them from getting behind the wheel.

Now let's shift that same reality into aviation.

Pilots are not immune to fatigue—if anything, we may be more vulnerable to it. Long duty days, early show times, weather delays, travel, maintenance demands, and the excitement of events can all chip away at rest and recovery. Just like in a car, fatigue in the cockpit degrades situational awareness, slows mental processing, and increases the likelihood of errors. Checklist items get missed. Communications become less precise. Decision-making becomes rushed or overly conservative at the wrong time.

And just like driving, fatigue can feel manageable right up until it isn't.

The comparison to intoxication is especially important for us to recognize. None of us would ever consider flying after drinking alcohol, even in small amounts. We respect the regulations, the risks, and the responsibility that comes with aviation. Yet fatigue can produce many of the same effects—and unlike alcohol, it's easier to rationalize. "I'm just a little tired." "I've done this before." "Once we're airborne, I'll be fine."

That mindset is where fatigue becomes truly dangerous.

Safety culture isn't just about rules; it's about honest self-assessment and looking out for one another. Recognizing fatigue means being willing to speak up, delay a flight, swap a duty, or ask for help—without fear of judgment. It also means planning ahead: prioritizing rest, managing schedules realistically, staying hydrated, and understanding that excitement does not replace sleep.

Whether we're driving to the hangar or strapping into an aircraft, the responsibility is the same. Fatigue impairs performance. It clouds judgment. And it can be just as dangerous as intoxication.

By treating fatigue with the seriousness it deserves, we protect ourselves, our crews, our passengers, and the legacy of the aircraft we are privileged to fly.

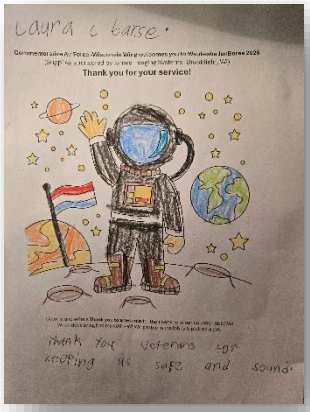
Wisconsin Wing News

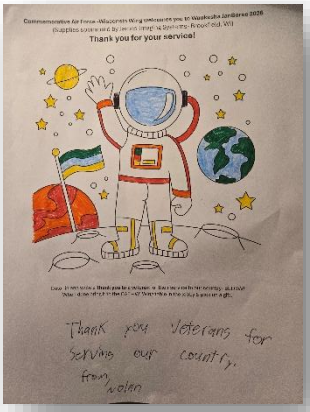
Waukesha Janboree *by Col Tom Leunig, CAF WI Wing Education Officer*

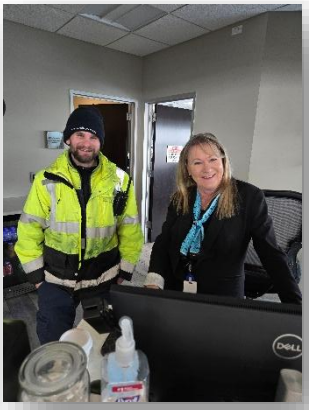
Saturday, January 24th was a very cold day. All the outdoor events for the Waukesha Janboree were cancelled. However, the "Out of This World-Aerospace and Aviation" event was indoors at the airport. There was a great turnout for the event. The CAF WI Wing had a large presence with a double table in the atrium that featured the 5-point harness and flight helmet for kids to try on and get photos. Also, Cols Larry McClellan and Tom Leunig had their chili for the chili cookoff contest. We came in third and fourth! In the conference room we had three tables with coloring activities that were to be sent to veterans. Each child submitting one got a special snap bracelet. We collected the veteran art, and it was sent to a veteran's group. Thanks to all the CAF Colonels who participated in this special event, including Candy Parr, Gary Otto, Larry McClellan, Gerasimos Blatseas, and Cadets Bobby Gibson and Preston Fimiano. Special thanks to Bobby's mom Annmarie for the basket of cornbread muffins!

Wisconsin Wing News

Waukesha Janboree *(cont'd from previous page)*







Wisconsin Wing News

Waukesha Janboree *(cont'd from previous page)*

Wisconsin Wing News

SAVE THE DATE !!! Pistons & Props 2026 in Janesville

Friday, Aug. 28th → 4-8 PM Saturday, Aug. 29th → 9 AM – 4 PM Sunday, August 30th → 9 AM – 4 PM

Main schedule:

- Friday (evening): Veterans Night community program (veterans admitted free), meet-the-performers, evening activities such as fire works, hot air balloons, aircraft display and rides etc.
- Saturday & Sunday (daytime): Show days with same activities as friday such as aircraft displays/rides and family programming Airshow window: 1:00–3:00 PM both Saturday and Sunday

We are once again expanding our kids area- which will run Saturday and Sunday from 9AM - 1PM.

Details to come at….. https://pistonsprops.com/

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Wisconsin Wing News

WI Wing Staff

Position	Person	Contact Info.
Wing Leader:	Candy Lee Parr	262-490-0330 / candyleecafwiwing@gmail.com
Executive Officer:	Gary Otto	262-875-1640 / gary.arthur.otto@gmail.com
Finance Officer:	Mike Doble	414-553-7702 / cafwiwingfinance@gmail.com
Maintenance Officer:	Scott Twesme	920-650-6101 / srtzen@gmail.com
Operations Officer:	Steve White	920-969-8407 / steve.white787@outlook.com
Safety Officer:	Jeremy Keyes	614-535-6296 / jkeyes01@msn.com
Rides Officer & Ground Crew Lead:	Mike Ziarniak	414-380-9532 / ziarniakm@gmail.com
Public Information Officer:	Bryan Thornton	608-354-4786 / thornton302@yahoo.com
Development Officer:	Mike Woods	262-781-0487 / mikewwoods@gmail.com
Education Officer:	Tom Leunig	262-327-8805 / tgleunig@yahoo.com
Membership Officer:	Michael Guslick	262-203-6049 / haveblue@haveblue.org
Adjutant Officer:	John Leidel	414-651-7636 / mfd4401@yahoo.com
Events Officer:	Evon Celander	312-399-1440 / EvonCAFWWevents@gmail.com
Historian:	Brian Liddle	920-634-7034 / liddle.brian@yahoo.com
Newsletter:	Brad Ohde	262-309-8600 / brad.ohde@outlook.com
PX Leader:	Ed Pleva	262-844-0965 / ed.pleva@gmail.com
Fly-Over Coord.	Joan Doble	414-708-4049 / joan@exploriumbrew.com
Wisconsin Wing Mailing Address:	**CAF Wisconsin Wing, P.O. Box 1998, Waukesha, WI 53187-1998** www.cafwi.org	

Wings & Wheels
Sunday, September 20, 2026
9 AM to 4 PM

Commemorative Air Force Wisconsin Wing
Waukesha Old Car Club
Location: Waukesha County Airport
Save the DATE! More details to come!

Classic cars, military vehicles, warbirds, vintage aircraft rides, food & drink, music & more.
Hours: 9AM to 4 PM and at **11:00 AM Salute to our veterans**- Ceremony with Flyover.
How can you help? Spread the word, **attend, sponsor, bring your vehicle or vintage aircraft AND volunteer for the day of the event**!
For more information contact:
Col Ed Pleva CAF Event Organizer - call/text **262-844-0965** ed.pleva@gmail.com or
Col Candy Parr WI Wing Leader -call/text **262-490-0330** candyleecafwiwing@gmail.com

Wisconsin Wing News

Calendar – Upcoming Events

Please go to cafwi.org for more details on all the Commemorative Air Force Wisconsin Wing activities. Joan Doble, WI Wing Fly-Over Coordinator, has also created this link to a more in-depth calendar: **https://www.cafwi.org/calendar.html**

Notes:

- CAF WI Wing activity always subject to weather and aircraft availability.
- WI Wing Staff meetings are always 1 hour prior to each wing meeting and open to all members to attend.

Breakfast at Denny's in Waukesha most Saturday's - 8:00 AM !!!

Event Title	Date(s) & Time	Location
WI Wing Meeting	1/10/26, 10:30AM	KUES Terminal
4th Annual Waukesha Co. Airport JanBoree	1/24/26, 10AM – 2PM	KUES
WI Wing Meeting	2/14/26, 10:30AM	KUES Terminal
WI Wing Meeting	3/14/26, 10:30AM	KUES Terminal
WI Wing Meeting	4/11/26, 10:30AM	KUES Terminal
WI Wing Spring FUNDRAISING BANQUET	4/18/26, *** TBD ***	*** TBD ***
CAF Honor Flight Mission	4/25/26	KUES
WI Wing Meeting	5/9/26, 10:30AM	KUES Terminal
7th Annual Girls Can Fly Event	5/16/26, 10AM-12PM	Hartford Municipal Airport
CAF Honor Flight Mission	5/30/26	KUES
WI Wing Meeting	6/13/26, 10:30AM	KUES Terminal
EAA West Bend Air Camp 2026 / CAF Day	6/19/26, TBD	West Bend
CAF Honor Flight Mission	6/20/26	KUES
***** NO Wing Meeting (EAA!) *****	7/11/26	KUES
EAA	7/20-7/26/26	KOSH1
WI Wing Meeting & PICNIC	8/8/26, 10:30AM	KUES Terminal
Pistons & Props	8/28-8/30/26, <4-8PM, 9-4PM, 9-4PM>	Janesville
WI Wing Meeting	9/12/26, 10:30AM	KUES Terminal
CAF Honor Flight Mission	9/12/26	KUES
1st Annual Wings & Wheels	9/20/26, 9AM-4PM	KUES
WI Wing Meeting	10/10/26, 10:30AM	KUES Terminal
CAF Honor Flight Mission	10/10/26	KUES
CAF Honor Flight Mission	11/7/26	KUES
WI Wing Meeting	11/14/26, 10:30AM	KUES Terminal
WI Wing HOLIDAY BANQUET	12/5 or 12/6/26. *** TBD ***	*** TBD ***
WI Wing Meeting, Elections & Food Drive/Santa!	12/12/2026 10:30AM	KUES Terminal