



# Commemorative Air Force Wisconsin Wing Newsletter

Chartered April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1982

Editor: Brad Ohde

## November 2021, Issue #2111

**From the Front Cockpit**  
**Col Gary Otto – Wing Leader**



# COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE Wisconsin Wing Newsletter

November brings about a definite shift in WI Wing activities as the cold weather approaches and the days get shorter and shorter. Our aircraft are going to the shop for annual inspections, fly-ins and shows are no more, and the PX packs up for the season. This is also the time for election of new staff officers, including executive, operation, safety and education officers. Our election is Dec. 18th at the Wing Meeting, and this newsletter issue features background information on the candidates that our nominating committee recommended for these positions.

These members have agreed to be candidates and to serve on the staff, if elected. These are very much appreciated volunteers, just as the existing officers are too. Serving on the wing staff is a very important part of the total operation of the WI Wing and allows you to be part of the wing management team, setting our direction, defining our values, and taking actions to carry out our CAF mission to educate, inspire and honor!

The Nov. 13th meeting is also an opportunity for anyone the nominating committee may have missed or just not been made aware of, to be nominated from the floor. If you, or someone you believe would be a good fit as an officer, want to be added to the ballot, the Nov. 13th meeting is your opportunity to do so.

Checkout the 12 planes of Christmas program too. Bob Vajgrt is leading our wing efforts to participate in this national fund-raising program, and has a great update article on the process and goals.

Looking back at 2021 I see so many new and old members who have volunteered to carry out our mission. I want to thank all of you for bringing our wing back to life and pulling us out of the COVID shutdowns and solitude. I think 2022 will be even better. Get ready for even more volunteerism and meaningful results.

Gary Otto  
Wing Leader



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# Wisconsin Wing News



## Wisconsin Wing Elections

Our annual Officers' Election voting will be held during our Wing meeting on Saturday, December 18th at 10:30 a.m. at our Waukesha Wing Hanger. The Officer positions open for this election period are:

• Education Officer	• Executive Officer
• Operations Officer	• Safety Officer

We are truly looking forward to a solid turnout. Should you not be able to personally attend the December 18th meeting and would like to vote, you may request an Absentee Ballot.

Remember, and this is important, only WI Wing members that are current as of November 18th (30 days prior to election date) are eligible to vote in the election, which means you must be current in dues at both the local Wing level and the national CAF level. You can renew your national dues online at [commemorativeairforce.org](http://commemorativeairforce.org), and your WI Wing dues at [www.cafwi.org](http://www.cafwi.org).

**\*\*\*\*\* How to Request an Absentee Ballot \*\*\*\*\***

Send an email to Bob Lawn (email address: [blawn@execpc.com](mailto:blawn@execpc.com)) requesting an Absentee Ballot. Be sure to indicate the email address where you would like the Ballot to be sent via email. You shall receive your Ballot and instructions via responding email. The Absentee Ballot will be sent out to requesting members starting November 19th through December 10th. So, if you know your schedule, make your request as soon as possible. Completed Ballots must be delivered by December 17th via US Mail to:

CAF Wisconsin Wing  
 Election Committee  
 PO Box 1998  
 Waukesha, WI 53187-1998

The results of the election will be announced upon tally completion and verification.

Regards,  
 WI Wing Election Committee

**Welcome  
 New Members!!!**

2021		
John Schroeder	Matt Phillips	Gary Kozlowski
Paul McAllister	Tom Leunig	Herb Coussons
Chuck Christburg	Scott Meisenheimer	Tim Tyre
Steven Mueller	Jeff Otto	John Leidel
John Hartmann	Matt Phillips	Mike Pastore
Enzo Aita	Tracy Hunter	Ed Pleva
Michael Moynihan	Tonie Michaels	Karl Beckle
Noel Skerven	Chris Reeves	



# Wisconsin Wing News



## Candidate Profiles

### Executive Officer

Candidate: Col Tom McDermott

Tom McDermott has been a member of the Wisconsin Wing for 11+years. He joined the unit just as the Wing had suffered the loss of the beautiful yellow PT. His 1st visit to the hanger was as the salvage aircraft returned to Waukesha.

In the following months, Tom noted that rather than pointing fingers, the Wing pulled together and grew stronger. He was not surprised to learn the SNJ was then assigned to the Wing. His enthusiasm is inspired by the service of his father in the 13th AA Corps who helped navigate B-25 Bombers across the vast waters of the Pacific.

Tom has assisted with Wing Staff Conferences', Midland AirSho, Coyote AirSho, Wings over Houston, Wings over Dallas and a little gathering known as the Oshkosh Fly-In / AirVenture. Tom was recognized by EAA this past summer for 40 continuous years of volunteering for EAA.

In addition to his home unit, he is a member of the Coyote Squadron, Central Texas Wing, Big Easy and Oil Crew. He enjoys close relationships with CAF members and sponsors various aircraft across the country.

His motivation to serve as Executive Officer is based on his desire to support the Wisconsin Wing to grow and care for the membership. Tom is supported in these activities by his wife, Mary Kay. *(She just wants him out of the house !!!)*

### Operations Officer

Candidate: Col Mike Woods

Mike Woods brings a wealth of experience and a strong history of volunteerism to the operations officer position. Mike advised, "As Operations Officer, I would like to get more pilot input on the operation and cost of our aircraft, and give them current information on aircraft expenses and reserve amounts. I would encourage more usage by more pilots, and I would also like to keep our pilots posted on upcoming currency requirements and potential aircraft issues."

Education: 1968 BBA (accounting major) University of Notre Dame.  
1972 MBA Wright State University.

Military: 1968-1972 Captain, USAF, Procurement Officer – negotiated and wrote R&D contracts.

Professional: 1975 - Admitted as a CPA in Wisconsin.

Work: 1972-1976 - Accounting positions.  
1976-1978 - Beechcraft Aircraft Sales.  
1978-1986 - Pegg Metals - General Manager.  
1986-Present - Custom Components Int'l - Owner of Mfg's Rep Firm

#### Volunteer:

- St. Dominic's Catholic Congregation – Served on the Finance Committee for several years, two terms on Parish Council with being head for one term. Co-Trustee for two terms, ran the raffle for our festival with my wife for several years.
- EAA - Young Eagles Pilot at Pioneer Airport with about 900 Young Eagles flown.
- Wisconsin Wing CAF - Operations Officer for four years.
- Currently on my second term on the Board of Directors serving as the Treasurer for our Condo Association in Florida.

Flying Qualifications: Private license issued in 1965, currently I have a Commercial license, with single engine land and sea, multi-engine, instrument and second in command Ford Tri-Motor ratings. Not current but have previously been a flight, instrument and multi-engine instructor. I have a Second Class Physical and fly our PT-26 and T-34, and I am a check pilot and rides pilot for our PT-26. Current total time is 3100 hours.



# Wisconsin Wing News



*(Cont'd from previous page.....)*

## Candidate Profiles

### Safety Officer

### Candidate #1: Col Chuck Christburg

Chuck is new to the CAF and the WI Wing this year, having recently retired from a long military and public service career. Chuck brings us a strong background in safety and is very qualified to carry out the responsibilities of the position. While assigned to a Marine Corps A-6E Intruder squadron, he served as one of the two safety officers. While the Aviation Safety Officer focuses on flight safety, Chuck was the senior accident board investigator for the squadron and Marine Corps, and he served as the Ground Safety Officer. The focus of his duties ranged from OSHA compliance in the work spaces, hazardous material storage to safety procedures regarding the movement and maintenance of aircraft, (i.e. ground related safety procedures). While assigned to a Marine Expeditionary Unit and Special Operations Training Group he was assigned as a safety officer. Chuck assisted in the establishing and monitoring of special operations live fire training events, safety procedures and emergency response planning groups in support of training incidents (e.g. live fire Hostage Rescue and Helicopter Raid events, etc.). While assigned to the USS Saratoga and USS Peleliu, he served as a Replenishment at Sea (RAS) safety officer. During RASs it is common for the ship to receive 200-400 sling loaded pallets to the flight deck over a 3-4 hour time period, while fork lifts and personnel simultaneously moved pallets and supplies to aircraft and ship elevators for storage.

### Safety Officer

### Candidate #2: Col Scott Twesme

Scott is relatively new to the CAF and the WI Wing, and brings us a strong background in safety and is very qualified to carry out the responsibilities of the position. Scott joined the Air Force in 1996 after graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He flew the A-10 from 1998 to 2006 while on active duty, and continued to fly it until 2011 in the Reserve and ANG. He was qualified as an A-10, 4-ship flight lead, CSAR mission commander, instructor pilot, examiner, FAC(A), and FCF pilot with over 2000 hours of flight time. Scott's Safety background started in 2000, when he attended the 5-week Flight Safety officer training course at the Air Force Flight Safety School. He was the 75th FS safety officer, the 23rd FG flight safety officer, and deployed to Kuwait as the 9th AF flight safety officer during Operation Iraqi Freedom. While in Kuwait, he deployed to Tallil Air Base Iraq and oversaw the stand-up of a safety program there. Scott has also received CRM training from the start. Single-seat Cockpit Resource Management while flying the A-10, plus yearly traditional CRM training in his current airline job.

### Education Officer

### Candidate (incumbent): Col Jeanette Anderson

Originally from Pennsylvania, I have lived most of my life in Wisconsin. In 1997, I graduated from UW-Milwaukee with a degree in German and History. In my third year, I did an exchange semester at Justus Liebig University in Giessen, Germany. I also have a BA in Elementary Education from Lakeland College and a certification in Early Childhood Education from UW-Whitewater. I have been teaching for over 20 years, and currently teach kindergarten in Waukesha, where I live with my husband, Doug.

Other than commercial flights, my first experience with flying was a "Discovery Flight" at the Manitowoc Airport about 25 years ago. Back then, for about \$20, an instructor would take you up and show you a little about how to fly the airplane. It was an amazing experience that I have never forgotten. Recently, I had the privilege to fly on the EAA's B-17, Aluminum Overcast, and the CAF's That's All Brother. But the best ride of all was in our own SNJ. Getting to participate in these flight experiences really brings history alive in a way that no book can. As Education Officer, I hope to share the story of our aircraft to Educate, Inspire, and Honor.



# Wisconsin Wing News



(Cont'd from previous page.....)

## Candidate Profiles

### Education Officer

Candidate (incumbent): Col Jeanette Anderson

I have been a CAF member since 2017, and served as Adjutant Officer for one year. I have been interested in history, especially World War II history, since I was a young child, listening to my uncle's stories about his service in the Navy during World War II. As an educator, I am especially passionate about the CAF mission to educate younger generations about military aviation history. I believe it is important to remember and honor the sacrifices of those who fought to defend our freedom. I'm very excited to be a part of the CAF and look forward to serving the WI Wing as Education Officer to contribute to its mission and continued success.

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## November Maintenance Report

By Col Steve Sorge

### T-34

- On Line
- There is an altimeter reporting / reading discrepancy (700ft).  
Mike woods has volunteered to take plane to SKYCOM, for adjustments.  
THANK YOU!! Mike

### PT-26

- Down for annual / winter hibernation.
- Mechanic has begun annual.
- In parallel, SKYCOM will be evaluating recinet issues we had with the Radio / Intercom installation.

### SNJ-5

- Aircraft in annual inspection, expect return to service by November 10, 2021.



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**Wisconsin Wing Holiday Party**  
**Friday December 17<sup>th</sup> - Delafield Brew House**

*If you want to volunteer to be on the banquet committee and help plan this enjoyable event, please contact Kathy Laabs – Events Officer.*



## Wisconsin Wing News



### CAF 12 Planes of Christmas

*By Col Bob Vajgrt*

Did you know that our Wing's Cornell PT-26 has been selected to be one of the CAF's "12 Planes of Christmas" campaign? Congratulations! The "12 Planes of Christmas" is a holiday giving campaign that enables people to support the restoration and operation of Commemorative Air Force aircraft.

The next issue of the "Dispatch" magazine will highlight all the planes and our very special PT-26. The article will outline the history of our plane and the needs that we are seeking donations. The Wing has set a goal of \$10,000 to help offset costs of radios, intercom, and landing gear upgrades. Contribution will help keep this unique and gentle trainer, accessible to the community and inspire a love for aviation, honor our veterans, and educate about a special part of military history.



If you choose to donate during the holiday season, please check with your employer to see if they have a matching donation program. This may be a great way to increase your donation amount with a matching fund. A Wisconsin Wing member has also stepped forward and will match the first \$500 of donations, which means that when we reach the \$500 dollar mark that member will double our money. A special thank you to that member for generously supporting the Wing and the "12 Planes of Christmas" effort. If you are interested in supporting a matching fund program, please reach out to me.

The "12 Planes of Christmas" is a great opportunity for you to share your enthusiasm for the Commemorative Air Force, our Mission, and our aircraft with your network of family, friends, and co-workers by sharing links that will enable others to learn about the CAF, our PT-26 and reach a donation page.

I would like to thank the following who have been involved in the "12 Planes of Christmas" campaign planning thus far and will be integral in moving this effort forward: Gary Otto, Paul Holdredge, Tom McDermott, Steve Lark, Ryan Beard, Henning Henningsen, Mike Woods, AG, Scott Twesme, Andrew Jaskie, Joe Lofy, Brad Ohde.

Thank you, our members, for your support in helping to continue to Educate those who experience this aircraft, Honor those who built, flew, and maintained them and Inspire future generations.



## Wisconsin Wing News



### Lt Colonel John Anthony Palese Jr., USAF (ret) (September 3, 1955 - October 17, 2021)

Lieutenant Colonel John Anthony Palese, Jr. (ret.) passed away peacefully surrounded by his wife and four children on the morning of Sunday, October 17, 2021 at the age of 66.

He was the beloved husband of Angelina "Angie" (née Coles) and the loving father of Rachel (Patrick) Drayna, Christopher (Shannon), Catherine (Grant) Smith, and John III (Ashley). He was a dear

grandfather of Charles "Charlie" and William "Willie" Drayna, Kennedy Palese and Rose Palese. He was the cherished brother of Lisa (Paul) Leister, Sarah (Jeff) Thomson, Linda (Alan) Baker, and Luke (Enrique Useche-Andueza) Palese. He is also survived by many nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

John spent his life serving his country and putting others first. He served in the United States Air Force, United States Air Force Reserve, Wisconsin Air National Guard (128th Aerial Refueling Wing), and in the Persian Gulf War.

John was an American Airlines Captain, Line Check Airman, and Federal Flight Deck Officer.

After retiring from American Airlines and the Wisconsin Air National Guard, he became a sworn Law Enforcement Officer in the state of Wisconsin (Washington County Sheriff's Office, Chenequa Police Department, Ozaukee County Sheriff's Office, Town of West Bend Police Department, and the Town of Hartford Police Department).



Throughout his professional career John served as an instructor in aviation (Carroll University and St. John's Northwestern Military Academy) and in law enforcement (Waukesha County Technical College and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College). He was also a personalized flight and ground instructor for the civilian aviation community. In the last several years, John provided strong leadership as the Chief Executive Officer of the Terra Vigilis Security Group.

John "Jay" will be remembered for his laughter, squinty smile, big personality, bear hugs, quick wit, polkas, pilot humor, morse code, and his amateur radio personality and voice. He was known for being a family man, caring brother, husband, dad, and grandpa. John's faith, service to others, and patriotism were steadfast as he always did what was right. Every time we look to the sky we know he is smiling down from Heaven. He will always keep watch over us from a higher altitude.

## Calendar – Upcoming Events

Date	Event, Time, Location
Sat., 11/13	Wing Meeting 10:30AM - In Hangar & Virtual
Fri., 11/26	Annual WI Wing field trip to EAA Museum
Fri., 12/17	CAF WI Wing Holiday Party Delafield Brew Haus
	*** Updates coming soon !!! ***

## WI Wing Staff

Position	Person	Contact Info.
<b>Wing Leader:</b>	Gary Otto	262-875-1640 gary.arthur.otto@gmail.com
<b>Executive Officer:</b>	Paul Keppeler	262-443-0624 pbkepp@aol.com
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Ryan Beard	847-858-7846 rcbeard1@gmail.com
<b>Maintenance Officer:</b>	Steve Sorge	414-852-8104 ssorge@wi.rr.com
<b>Operations Officer:</b>	Henning Henningsen	262-951-6472 henning.henningsen.wi@gmail.com
<b>Safety Officer &amp; Ground Crew Leader:</b>	Mike Ziarniak	414-380-9532 ziarniakm@gmail.com
<b>Public Information Officer:</b>	*** Open *** This could be you!	
<b>Development Officer:</b>	Bob Vajgrt	414-550-2770 dawnbob@wi.rr.com
<b>Education Officer:</b>	Jeanette Anderson	414-313-9513 jfa16daa@gmail.com
<b>Membership Officer:</b>	Tom McDermott	608-289-2424 mcfender@yahoo.com
<b>Adjutant Officer:</b>	A.G. Bharatkumar	262-366-3295 agbkumar@wi.rr.com
<b>Events Officer:</b>	Kathy Laabs	414-418-7222 t28gal@att.net
<b>Historian:</b>	*** Open *** This could be you!	
<b>Newsletter:</b>	Brad Ohde	262-309-8600 brad.ohde@outlook.com
<b>PX Leader:</b>	Tracy Sorge	262-366-0664 horseshowmomm@wi.rr.com
<b>PX Volunteer Coord.:</b>	Dennis Flancher	414-534-0160 dennislf@att.net
<b>Fly-Over Coord.</b>	Vic Stottlemeyer	262-391-5110 stottlemey7@aol.com
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