



# COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE



## **LOBO WING CHATTER**

### **Janurary - February 2020**

#### **Special Notice: Corona Virus Impact on Lobo Wing Ops**

All Lobos,

This probably goes without saying, but the Lobo Wing will still be shut down for the near future. The state of NM has yet to reach the apex of the COVID 19 outbreak and it is prudent for everyone to adhere to the advice being given by health officials and keep your social distance as much as possible. Just think about the fact that every time you touch any surface outside of your home someone else you don't know has touched it also.

Stay safe

Dave McBride

### **Wing Leader Report by Scott Witschger**

I hope this news letter finds everyone in good health (or at least not worse). As you have seen, in our response to the Covid-19 virus we have shut down our hangar to external traffic. A few of us are still going to the hangar on Thursdays and Saturdays to keep things moving on the AT-11 but we try and stay in compliance with government guidelines.

On March 30th Hank Coates (CAF President) conducted a webinar with Wing Leaders to discuss the situation as it applies to CAF operations. As you might imagine some wings that operate large aircraft are already missing air shows and their financial situation could deteriorate

rapidly. Some large operations have full time employees, mostly A&P's, and it was good to hear that they will qualify for government assistance.

In short, the main take away was, "please don't do anything stupid that will put the CAF in a bad light". As much as possible, use the opportunity to conduct additional maintenance without violating your state guidelines.

The other main discussion was with regard to the potential impacts on the CAF that might arise from the B-17 Nine-O-Nine crash at Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, Connecticut.

The initial FAA report is not pretty and points to numerous maintenance and safety item violations. The initial message being sent to the CAF is that the FAA is not interested in shutting down war bird operations but we may see more local monitoring and oversight of local CAF wing operations. How much that might be and what form it will take is unknown at this time. For us this could range from a minor inconvenience to a major problem. Stay tuned.

## **FUND RAISING**

The Lobo Wing is already starting to get hit hard by the Covid-19 virus. One if not the most important fundraising activity we have going all the time are the Saturday lunch's. We have slowly built up a loyal following over the years and often get quite a few visitors. Last year alone these lunches netted the wing \$5756.46 on a gross of \$9144.75. It is a large part of the reason we seldom have to reach out to our membership for additional funding assistance.

This income pays for all hanger operating expenses for the year. That includes Gas, electric, garbage, water, lot lease and insurance. We have a really nice home and I hate to see our activities put at risk.

So I'm going to make a plea for an unusual round of financial support for your Lobo Wing (Let's call it Stimulus One). If we have to stay closed for 8 weekends we could end up short on our budgeted annual income by \$1000.00. So Maggy and I are issuing a challenge to all wing members. We will each donate \$100.00 of our stimulus checks to help out the wing in this difficult time. Will you join us?

If you can then please send your generous check to Lobo Wing, P.O. Box 20576, Albuquerque NM 87154-0576.

Alternatively you can call Dave McBride at 505-238-8021. He can process a credit card transaction over the phone.

In other news we have our newest aircraft sponsor. Maggy Witschger purchased an aircraft sponsorship for the AT-11. This will provide much needed funding to complete work on the starboard engine.

If there are any subjects you would like to see covered in upcoming news letters or areas that you would like to know more about please send an e-mail to Larry Dalton or Andy Wells. Their e-mails are at the end of the newsletter.

### **AT-11 Update by Scott Witschger**

Last update I asked for volunteers to support our effort to acquire the necessary tools to install and remove our Hamilton Standard 22D30 propellers. As is usual Lobo's came through. Julie Smith provided funding for the purchase but then Larry Dalton designed the prop hub wrench and Tom Thompson had it water jet cut so we can put that money to better use elsewhere. Tom also painted it bright red so we won't lose it. He knows us well.



With those in hand we set about evaluating the remaining props to see what we thought was rebuildable. First up was to fabricate a tool to separate the hub case. It doesn't look like much but it worked perfectly to split the cases.



To say the insides of the props were nasty would be generous. They were full of muck and looked disgusting. After time spent cleaning we decided that we may have enough parts to build one more complete prop and may have enough for another partial build.



Some pictures were sent to the prop overhaul shop and one blade was rejected outright. Another blade we rejected due to numerous poor repairs. We still have four more blades that we hope will pass. I was intending to take the prop components to Tulsa as soon as possible to have them evaluated but with all travel plans now cancelled that is on hold. We could crate the components for shipping but they are heavy and the cost would be high and we still need to stop at Southwest Aero to look for some other AT parts. So for now the props have been prepared for transport and stored back upstairs.

In the process of reviewing documentation I discovered that some military Technical Orders had never been complied with. These all seem to originate in the early days of production. That is not surprising as that is when weak points will show up. What is surprising is that they have not always been completed. Given the potential for added oversight by the FAA we need to make sure that we have taken care of all these issues. It is adding time but it can't be helped. We want a good safe airplane.

To that end I continue to work on documenting the restoration for CAF Headquarters and the FAA. This is some but not all of the documentation binders.



If you're just up for some grunt work come on out. We still have a number of parts that need to be cleaned, prepped and painted before they can be reinstalled. It all counts and it's all appreciated.

### **Winter Staff Conference Update by David McBride**

Every year the CAF Headquarters holds a conference to discuss many items relating to the operation of the CAF. Larry Dalton, myself and Sara McBride were able to attend this year's conference and came away with a lot of useful information. Breakout sessions included operations, maintenance, finance, marketing, development and safety. We were able to cover most of these sessions but not all because there were only three of us so we concentrated on the most important ones.

Operations and safety focused mainly on the fleet of aircraft we operate throughout the U.S. There are 176 aircraft in the CAF fleet. 116 are flying, 33 are in maintenance, 25 are in restoration and 2 are in storage. The entire fleet flew a total of 5644 hours last year which is a decline of about 1000 hours from 2018. There are 105 aircraft in the two ride programs used by the CAF. 82 aircraft are in the LOA (Letter of Agreement) program which requires the crew and mechanics to be in a Drug and Alcohol testing program (The PT-26 is in this program) and 23 are in the LHFE (Living History Flight Experience) program which doesn't require drug and alcohol testing (don't try to understand it...it's the FAA) but requires extensive inspections. The very good news is that the CAF did not have any accidents last year. The one incident was a gear collapse on a P-40 which was due to metal fatigue.

Maintenance was very important and a well attended session. The Minnesota Wing gave a presentation on their present situation of being inspected on a regular basis by the FAA. Apparently someone on their airport reported them to the FAA for some reason and that started a series of inspections. Their XO and maintenance officer are maintenance people with major airlines and decided to institute programs that are very similar to what they use in their day to day jobs. As you might imagine these are very rigorous and proven techniques. The major emphasis they got from the FAA was DOCUMENTATION. The inference was this may be filtering down to the rest of the CAF. We shall see what the future holds.

The new mantra from headquarters is Educate Inspire Honor. Therefore education was an important topic at the conference. There were four sessions on Organizing an Aviation Day, building foam gliders, Mini Aviation Discovery Zone and Careers in Aviation. I never knew I could make a glider out of a Styrofoam plate and a penny. And it flies!

Another topic near and dear to us was Fundraising/Development. This is a never ending task and the CAF has many ideas on how to approach the subject. All of their ideas are on the CAF website. Please take a look at it and consider helping the Lobo Wing.

One last session was marketing which mostly focused on social media and how to manage it. Social media is a big monster as most of you already know. It entails things like Face book, Twitter, Instagram, etc. All of these are important to the marketing of the CAF and specifically to the Lobo Wing. I know some of you still don't trust these tools, and yes, they can have faults. But in most cases it is very beneficial to us.

Lastly, I know some of you would have liked to have gone to the conference but cost was a factor. This was brought up to Hank Coates, President/CEO. The answer given was that hopefully by this time next year the National Education Aviation Center (NEAC) will be completed and the conference will be held in that facility. HQ is also looking at other alternatives to help boost attendance.

Speaking of the NEAC, ground was broken on this facility late last year. Due to the weather in Dallas construction has been challenging and it has not progressed past the groundbreaking. It will be an amazing facility mostly dedicated to Education but will also have a wing dedicated to the Nose Art collection which is in storage in Dallas.

It's impossible to thoroughly cover everything that was covered at the conference. The good news is a lot of the information is available on the CAF websites. Check out [Commemorativeairforce.org](http://Commemorativeairforce.org), [CAFoperations.org](http://CAFoperations.org) and [CAFeducation.org](http://CAFeducation.org).

### **PT-26 Update by David McBride**

Not much news here except to reinforce that the PT is in the Rides program now and we can officially sell rides. Tell all your friends. It's \$150 for a 20 minute local flight out of Moriarty airport.

### **Questions or comments about Lobo Chatter should be directed to:**

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