



COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE



LOBO WING CHATTER

November - December 2019

Wing Leader Report by Scott Witschger

So, I'm back. For those members that have been around awhile you know that CAF headquarters has a term limit rule. Wing leaders can only serve two consecutive two year terms. All other officers can serve as long as we can keep getting them to do the job. For many years now Dave McBride and I have swapped off the Wing Leader and Executive Officer title. In reality it has really been a Co-Wing Leader situation. Dave and I have run the wing for years with a shared vision and I think it has worked out well for the Lobo Wing and for both of us. I look forward to this continuing into the future with few changes.

Officer Elections were held at the Christmas party and these are your current wing staff officers:

Wing Leader	Scott Witschger
Executive Officer	Dave McBride
Adjutant	Phil Nuckles
Finance Officer	Maggy Witschger
Operations Officer	Andy Wells
Maintenance Officer	Chuck Swanberg
Safety Officer	Scott Ruyle
PX Officer	Sarah McBride
Drug Program Administrator	Sharon Nuckles
Development Officer	Korry Tilbury
Education Officer	Vacant

As I entered my 70th year I realized that I needed to make sure that the AT-11 project had a path forward just in case (you know the rest). So to recognize Scott Ruyle's significant contribution to the project I have appointed him to be the Associate Project Manager. Scott will primarily be responsible for getting all the mechanical systems up and running. I will focus on the big picture and making sure work is completed in an orderly manner and all the volunteers have an assignment. This will free me up to spend more time on all the paper work needed to get the AT flying and to work on "What's Next?". The "What's Next" will be discussed further in upcoming issues.

FUND RAISING

We have had several recent fund raising campaigns that have met with some success. Our bowling tournament in October netted \$872.00. Jennifer Witschger ran a birthday Facebook fundraiser for the AT-11 that started in November and netted a total of \$2675. This was our biggest single fundraiser of the year and by far our best social media success. Sean McBride signed us up for a Facebook fundraiser that would provide matching funds from Facebook at a minimum this will raise \$375.00. We are still waiting to get the final results from this campaign but it is another social media success. At the Christmas party we raised \$1680 for the PT-26 which is nearly all we need to purchase an ADS-B system for the PT-26. Next up was the 12 Planes of Christmas campaign through CAF Headquarters. That campaign raised \$2202.75 for the AT11. This provided the funding we needed to purchase the remote spin on oil filter system for our two R-985 engines. Hopefully this addition will improve the life of these very expensive engines. In less than 90 days we netted \$5252.75 from social media fund raising. There is a real message here and its one we need to embrace going forward. Thankfully we have younger members who are guiding the way.

Lastly, we mourn the passing of long time member Dick Kifer. Dick, who flew west on January 11, was very active in the wing for many years and helped teach me the ropes when I joined in 1999. In the 2000's, when there were still lots of air shows and fly-ins, Dick was PX Officer and his background in retail sales proved beneficial in maximizing our PX sales and had a major impact on the wing's financial success during that period. Farewell my friend, you will be missed.

As always, we want to see you at the hangar so please come on out. Oh, and by the way we still need cooks!

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.

PT-26 Update by David McBride

The PT-26 has had a very maintenance intensive year. I am glad to say that I think we have turned the corner and she is airworthy once again. Over the last year we have spent a large part of our maintenance time working on the tailwheel. PT tailwheels are prone to shimmying and we spent a lot of time and money addressing this issue and we now have a solid performing tailwheel. Then last summer we had a very intensive annual inspection resulting in numerous issues that needed to be resolved. Most of these were minor but again, it involved chasing down parts and making sure everything was correct. The taxi test and engine runup on 11 January was successful and as I write this the airplane should be getting a test flight. Once that is complete we will be back in the Rides program and the airplane will be available to sell rides. Spread the word!

AT-11 Update by Scott Witschger

Last time I got you up to speed on the Prop overhaul process and this time I have to let you know the news is not all good. One of the props appears to be in serviceable condition but the other prop is not good. The worm gear, blades and hub all have corrosion damage that is beyond acceptable limits. We also found out that when we delivered the props we were missing some components that are needed to set hydraulic pressures and gear gaps. We did find the parts upstairs and sent them off to Tulsa. The Hydraulic valve assemblies did not look in good condition so we can only hope they are serviceable. We have spare props but not the tools to separate the cases so we can inspect the components ourselves. By doing this we can take only parts to Tulsa that we think are serviceable. So now we have to fabricate the tools we need to separate the cases to remove the prop blades, spider gear and hub case. That process is underway.

The other item we discovered is that we are missing three key special tools we need to even install the props. They are a Hydraulic Valve Wrench, Prop retaining nut wrench and the Dome retaining nut wrench. These are rare items. We can rent or borrow them but in the long term it would be nice to have our own set. Good used ones are currently available on E-bay for the tidy price of \$1365.00 for the set of three. If you would like to sponsor this set of tools we could really use it. Again, please contact Larry or Andy.

On other fronts, the pre wiring of the avionics rack is complete and the rack is ready to be installed and the final wiring can be completed. After the gear is finished we can move the plane outside and test all the radios.



With the main gear struts and drag legs rebuilt, we turned our attention to completing the rebuild of the Goodyear disc brake system which is now complete. We took advantage of a year-end sale to acquire a set of new Goodyear Tires for the main gear. The wheels were bead blasted, repainted and the bearings repacked. The port main gear was reassembled and reinstalled and now the port brake system can be completed. We had to acquire a new brake engagement ring for the starboard gear. It came undrilled so we have to make a tool to allow us to precisely drill and tap the holes we need to mount the ring gear in the wheel. Making the tool has become a weekly process as we get into the fine detail of rebuilding components. We had to make three tools just to rebuild the disc calipers



Significant progress has been made on the port engine installation. Most of the hoses have been fabricated and test fit. When complete, fire sleeve will be added to all the hose assemblies. We are converting all the hoses to AN fittings as opposed to the original push on and AC fittings. This will make future maintenance far easier but it has been very costly to implement. All the fittings, nipples, hose, and fire sleeve are going to cost over \$3200 per engine. In addition, due to the funds raised in the 12 Planes campaign, we are going to be able to install a remote oil filter system from Airwolf that will help improve the longevity of our new engines.

Now that we are doing the main engine work its necessary to spend a lot of time on ladders. Not all that safe. We have a picture from the 1940's of a maintenance crew working on an AT-11 and they have this great work platform. So our ace woodworker, Larry Dalton, fabricated a wood replica. It has been great and provides us with a much safer work environment.



Here is the oil filter system mentioned earlier. It is a beautifully fabricated kit but that massive filter sucks up a lot of room.



As usual, at this stage, we have numerous small detail projects underway. Some of them are to clean up previous work that was not 100% finished. Some are to correct errors that we have found based on our improved knowledge base and others are to correct problems that have arisen as more systems are added.

We have learned a significant fact that will prove beneficial going forward. After asking around, we found that we can mount both engines without the wings being installed. And if you add some weight in the cabin you can actually hang the props and taxi the aircraft. This will make moving about the hangar a lot easier.

Questions or comments about Lobo Chatter should be directed to:

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