



THE READY ROOM



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Heart Of America Wing Est. 1982

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A **ready room** is the room on a Navy aircraft carrier where air crews hold their pre-flight and post-flight briefs. Crews serving during WWII considered the ready room to be a clubroom.

"The funny thing about a ready room is that you get attached to the hole. As much as you are attached to the ship. It's more than sentiment. It's an urge for protection. The loneliest feeling in the whole of a carrier pilot's world is when he's at sea with the gas running low, and he can't see his carrier. You think of the ready room then, and the noisy guys who make it the most desirable place in the world. It's your office, you live in it, it is the big thing in your life. [...] You sweat and worry in it, and grouse and argue, and you get mad at it when you can't hear yourself speak because everyone is yelling at once, but you're deeply attached to the place.

— Tommy Booth

"Wildcats" Over Casablanca

Wing Leader's Report

The first meeting of the year started out on the cool side, with temps in the 20's, 30 mph winds and 3 inches of snow. But for those that braved the elements we had a good meeting with a Vietnam era veteran, Richard Brundage. He is the subject of one of Sean Winn's patriot feature films and has written a book, "The Five o'clock Follies". He donated a book to the Wing and it will be available for all to read.

Winter conferences will be held at headquarters in Dallas on February 17-20, 2022. This is a great way to find out what the CAF is all about with meetings and workshops about a variety of subjects.

Registration and hotel information can be found on the National CAF website, www.commemorativeairforce.org.

Kansas Aviation Day is also in February on the 17th, at the Capitol building in Topeka. We are still working out the details. Contact Linda Sladish for more information.

Our hangar is 20+ years old and in need of some TLC. There will be lots of projects this spring when it warms up to get the hangar in good shape for several events in the works this year. A lot of it will be cleaning and getting things in order. Thanks to Jim Boughan, Rick Schubert, Brian VonBevern, Jim Neese and Phil Pardon for repairing the broken water line and working on some repairs in the roof. We will have other maintenance items on the hangar when it warms up and would appreciate any help we can get. There will be a sign up list at a future meeting.

The next meeting is February 19, 2022. It is Purple Heart month and Dave Dyer will have a great program.

-- Steve Zimmerman

NEXT MEETING:

19 FEB, 10:00

Maintenance Report

We started winter maintenance on the Stearman, with the goal of having the Annual inspection done in time for spring flying. We are ahead of schedule so far with no major issues noted as of yet. I would like to get the seat cushions and baggage compartment liner cleaned up. If you would be interested in taking on that job, please let me know.

Progress continues on the PT-19. In the next few weeks, the wings will be taken to Pennsylvania from Atlanta to be finished. The tail section is in Michigan being reworked. The center section is still in our hangar, waiting to be shipped to Pennsylvania to be mated up with the wings. Jim Stella has been heading up the project.

Blue skies and tailwinds.
-- Steve Zimmerman



New Year's Resolutions!

With a new year comes an opportunity to set new goals, renew commitments, take stock of where we are, and ask 'are we where we want to be.' Even the most successful CEOs in Fortune 500 companies periodically review their Vision and Mission statements in order to ensure they are staying true to their stated goals.

The Heart of America CAF Vision: Shaping the future by honoring the Greatest Generation, inspiring today's youth, and educating through flight.

The Heart of America CAF Mission: Educating today's public about the history and legacy of the Greatest Generation, so that generation's strength of character, courage, and ability to triumph over adversity may inspire others to RISE ABOVE obstacles in their own lives.

Remember. Honor. Inspire. Fly!

<https://hbr.org/2013/07/we-all-need-friends-at-work>

Let's compare what we do against our stated Vision and Mission to keep us true to our task, "stay on course," and achieve our goals.

We are members of this grand organization for a simple reason – because we enjoy this! This should be FUN.

"Camaraderie is more than just having fun, though. It is also about creating a common sense of purpose and the mentality that we are in-it together. Studies have shown that soldiers form strong bonds during missions in part because they believe in the purpose of the mission, rely on each other, and share the good and the bad as a team. In short, camaraderie promotes a group loyalty that results in a shared commitment to and discipline toward the work. Camaraderie at work can create "esprit de corps," which includes mutual respect, sense of identity, and admiration to push for hard work and outcomes."



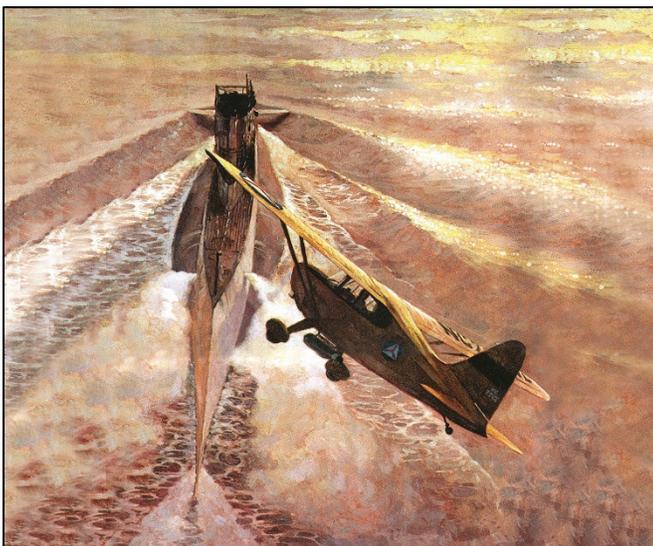
U-Boat Attacks Off The U.S. Eastern Coast, 1942

A quiet battle that was deliberately kept from the U.S. public started 11 January 1942 in the North Atlantic, off the Eastern Seaboard of the U.S. For a short period, German U-boats would dominate the waters, and the attempt to ship U.S. war supplies to Europe, until August 1942 without much opposition from U.S. forces.

After the U.S. entered WWII in December 1941, Germany planned that it could win against England if it could prevent the U.S. resupply of England with food, military equipment, and fuel. Germany believed that the U.S. would not be able to start military operations in Europe against Germany until July 1943, and that it could not defend its coastline against the seasoned Germany U-boat fleet. At the same time, Americans were worried about another surprise air attack, from either Germany or Japan, and focused their efforts on the skies by practicing air raid and black out drills. British Intelligence warned the U.S. of the U-boat fleet and anticipated campaign that was advancing toward the East Seaboard to the area between Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New York, but to no avail.

On 11 January, Operation *Paukenschlag* ("Drumbeat") started when Reinhardt Hardegen, Captain of U-boat 123, sunk the freighter *Cyclops* in the waters off of Cape Cod. In the seven months that followed, 22 percent of the tanker fleet and 233 ships would be sunk, killing over 5,000 sailors and passengers. (Compared to 2,403 people that were killed at Pearl Harbor.) On 15 Jan, Hardegen reported looking at the Manhattan skyline, "I cannot describe the feeling in words, but it was unbelievable and beautiful and great. . . We were the first to be here, and for the first time in this war a German soldier looked out on the coast of the USA."

The U.S. Navy and news media collaborated to keep the attacks and losses a secret from the American public. The Germany Navy operated uncontested, expanding operations as far south as Florida, until mid-February when the U.S. began to take modest defensive measures against these attacks by laying mine fields to protect the harbors and positioning shore craft and airplanes to patrol the coasts. However, ships continued to be easy targets because they sailed with full lights on at night and alone, without the mutual protection of convoys.



Finally in April 1942, the U.S. started implementing effective tactics to protect ships, such as convoys with anti-submarine escorts, and over-nighting in sheltered harbors. The newly established Civil Air Patrol began flying anti-submarine missions from Maine to Florida. Another ad-hoc fleet, comprised mostly of civilians, was the Hooligan Navy, an auxiliary patrol made up of luxury yachts and fishing boats, some volunteered (like Ernest Hemingway) and some requisitioned. They rescued hundreds of sailors who survived the sinking of their vessels.

By August, after the coastal cities finally began to practice black-out procedures, coupled with improved military air defenses, the U-boat attacks dropped significantly and the German fleet suffered unsustainable losses. On 19 July, the U-

boat fleet was ordered back to home waters. Although, attacks and shipping losses continued in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico until 1945, it was a modest effort of the German Navy. The U-boat operation was a considerable victory for Germany, although Americans did not know it, resulting in significant fuel shortages for U.S. citizens in 1943 which slowed wartime production and forced the gasoline restriction, one of the most unpopular restrictions of the war.

<https://www.newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/u-boat-attacks-of-world-war-ii-6-months-of-secret-terror-in-the-atlantic/>



Civil Air Patrol Answers The Nation's Call To Action

The Civil Air Patrol was first conceived by Gill Robb Wilson in 1936. Wilson was a former WWI aviator and worked as the New Jersey Director of Aeronautics. After returning from a visit to Germany, he was convinced that war with Germany was looming and he saw the potential of using civilian pilots for national defense. In Spring 1941, backed by U.S. Army Air Corps Chief, General Henry "Hap" Arnold and the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA), Wilson helped establish the New Jersey Civil Air Defense Services.

This grew into a drive to form a national organization. Advocates like Fiorello LaGuardia (another WWI pilot) in his role as Director of Office of Civil Defense endorsed the proposed Civil Air Patrol (CAP), which would be comprised of 48 state wings under his office. The CAP was formally established on 1 December 1941, just six days before the attack on Pearl Harbor. After the attack, fears of another Japanese attack drove the government to restrict civilian flights in certain areas on the West Coast. Capt Earle Johnson, one of the founders of the CAP, did not think these measures were adequate. To prove his point, he dropped sandbags on three New Jersey factories at night, undetected. After notifying the CAA of his ease and success, the CAA grounded all private flights and implemented security measures like pilot background checks, guards at airports, and flight plans for all flights.

While most Americans feared an attack on the U.S. West Coast, it was actually the Eastern Seaboard that saw the first attacks, when German U-boats launched Operation Drumbeat to aggressively hunt and sink shipping resupply bound for Europe. Neither the Navy nor the Army Air Corps had sufficient ships or aircraft to counter this threat, so the CAP and its civilian pilots flying civilian aircraft answered the nation's call to action.

By September 1942, the Coastal Patrol, just one of the subsets of the CAP, was operating from Maine to the Texas-Mexico border. The pilot and observer crew focused on spotting submarines and broadcasting its position to the merchant ships, Navy, and Army Air Forces in order to pursue the subs. They also radioed any reports of sinkings and the position of survivors. They operated as far as 150 miles from shore, getting paid \$8 per day.



The Coastal Patrol was stood down on 31 August 1943. During this time, they had flown 86,685 maritime missions, reported 91 ships in distress, 363 survivors in the water, reported on the positions of 173 U-boats, lost 90 aircraft and 26 aircrew.

The Civil Air Patrol continued to augment the Army Air Forces during the war. The Courier Service flew 3.5 million pounds of cargo. The Southern Liaison Patrol patrolled the 1,000 mile border from Brownsville, TX to Douglas, AZ. The Target Towing Service provided aerial targets for the training of searchlight and anti-aircraft crews, as well as aerial gunnery. The Search and Rescue mission that began in WWII continues today.



Little known fact, the CAP started and remains a co-ed group, with women pilots making up 20% of its ranks in 1945. Many WASP got their start in the CAP. In October 1942, the CAP started a Cadet Program for girls and boys 15-17 years old. This ground school instruction helped many to earn private pilot licenses. It also became a pathway to enter the Army Air Force's Aviation Cadet Program.

In 1947, with the birth of the Air Force, the CAP was officially established as a civilian auxiliary of the Air Force and its mission grew. The CAP continued its search and rescue mission, and its radio networks were used to help in the relief efforts during national disasters. It also conducted aerial radiological monitoring of nuclear fallout and tracked artificial satellites for Operation Moonwatch. It flew parts for the Air Force and human tissue for organ transplants. It aided in operations around the Exxon Valdez oil spill, hurricanes Hugo, Andrew, and Floyd, and after the Oklahoma City bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. After 11 September 2001, a CAP C-172 was the only non-military aircraft allowed to fly, taking pictures of the World Trade Center site.

In 2015, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen Mark Welsh, declared the CAP as an official part of the USAF "Total Force", joining the ranks of the Active Duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserves. Today it has over 33,000 senior members, over 24,000 cadets, and a fleet of 560 aircraft.



<https://www.newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/u-boat-attacks-of-world-war-ii-6-months-of-secret-terror-in-the-atlantic/>

<https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/about/history-of-civil-air-patrol>

<https://www.historynet.com/civil-air-patrols-combat-pilots.htm>



Shameless Filling Up Space With John English's Awesome Pictures! (see more on our Facebook Page!)

<https://www.facebook.com/CAFHOA>

January is a slow month at the CAF, so here are some pictures to fill up some white space in the newsletter.



The January meeting was greeted by cold and blustery weather.

The group greeted newly-elected Wing Leader Steve Zimmerman as he called his first meeting to order. One of his first duties was to join with the attendees in facing West to honor Richard Schroder, recently flown West.





Colonel Linda Sladish is organizing HOA's booth for the Topeka Air Expo, to be held February 17th in the State Capitol Building. Volunteer workers are being solicited. This is a cool event, in a fantastic venue, with a bunch of awesome exhibitors. And a free lunch!

Jim Boughan, always the optimist, is planning for Summer. He polled interest in golf shirts available to members at a reasonable price.



The Hangar Dance is on again. John Wittenborn is in charge. Eye contact can get you a job.



A Patriot Features video introduced the January presenter. Richard Brundage spoke of his service in Vietnam as an Armor Officer with no tanks. He went on to host daily briefings for the Press Corps, which led to his book, "The Five O'clock Follies". He later excelled in television production, motivational speaking, and communication education.



Chow was A+ as usual. Mike Dodds loads up.



Wing Elected Staff Officers:

Wing Leader: Steve Zimmerman

Executive Officer: John Wittenborn

Finance Officer: Tom McChesney

Operations Officer: Bob Robinson

Maintenance Officer: Steve Zimmerman

Safety Officer: Jim Boughan

Adjutant: Beth McCale

Development Officer: Beverly Wittenborn

Education Officer: Janet McKenny

Wing Appointed Staff Officers:

Guest Speaker/Veteran

Outreach/Heritage Speaker: Dave Dyer

Open Hangar Day Operations: Linda Sladish

Facility Rentals: Jim Neese

Wing Newsletter: Anita Mack

Museum & Library Curator: Darren Roberts and John Curatola

Photographer: John English



**COMMEMORATIVE
AIR FORCE**