



# MILE HIGH VIEW

NEWSLETTER OF THE MILE HIGH WING,  
COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE (CAF)

*Keep 'Em Flying!*

*February 2005*

## MHW's Search for the "Great Pumpkin!"

*By Col Stan Peterson*

As you may recall from a previous newsletter article, some of the "pumpkins" that the Mile High Wing (MHW) Staff had considered were the Howard GH-3 Light Personnel Transport and the Cessna Bobcat UC-78, an early twin-engine trainer. However, both these planes were mainly constructed of wood and would require a hangar. There were some heavy metal considerations too, such as the C-46 and PV-2.

Both of these airplanes, it was decided, exceeded the Wing's capabilities to restore and operate. While the most practical replacement for the C-60 seemed to be a 1943 RC-45J, the owner proved unwilling to budge on a price that we simply couldn't afford.

Not to be dissuaded or discouraged, we continued our search: in Trade-A-Plane, E-Bay Planes, Beech18.net, the CAF, and the grapevine. Our latest and strongest lead came from the CAF via Eric Van Hoff, the maintenance and operations director, who put us in touch with Earl Long III of Westport Airport in Wichita, Kansas.



**Could this C-45 be the Great Pumpkin?**



Westport Airport just happened to be the home base of the CAF's Jayhawk Wing. When I stopped by to see them, they had just completed their new hangar with a nicely restored Bamboo Bomber sitting inside (some guys have all the luck). Outside parked along the flight line of their little 2,500-foot strip sat a Ryan PT-23 and three C-45s in military dress.

The airplane I had come to see hadn't flown in over a year and both propellers were due inspections, the

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## Calendar of Events

**Feb. 19, 2005** – Wing meeting:  
10:00 a.m., Front Range Airport, terminal building, upstairs conference room.

**March 19, 2005** – Wing meeting:  
10:00 a.m., Front Range Airport, terminal building, upstairs conference room.

Wing meetings are held on the 3rd Saturday of the month at 10:00 a.m.

### Are You Past Due?

If you haven't yet paid your annual Wing dues, please mail your \$45 check to:

The Mile High Wing  
P.O. Box 471596  
Aurora, CO 80047-1596

Or bring your payment to the next general meeting of the Mile High Wing. For this you will receive the monthly newsletter, an ID card, and a whole lot of camaraderie.

### *Great Pumpkin, continued from Page 1*

engines had 1,380/750 hours on them, and the total time on the airplane was 3,815 hours, which wasn't bad. And even though it appeared to be stuck in the mud and needs polishing, my overall impression was pretty good.

The real attraction of this airplane was its extensive and authentic military record, which dated back to 1942 when it was first assigned to the Army Air Corps. Furthermore, this aircraft was affordable, could be flying soon, and seemed well within the capabilities of the Mile High Wing to maintain and operate.

As it is presently configured, the airplane can carry five "paying" passengers, which could provide our Wing with a viable income and good public relations too. It is well instrumented and has good communication radios.

The Wing Staff, as well as the members that were present at our last general meeting, have decided to proceed with the procurement of this airplane. But before we commit to the purchase, we thought it would be wise to conduct an annual inspection to determine what discrepancies need attention and whether any needed repairs could prove too costly to make the acquisition feasible.

The time schedule for arrival in Denver and polishing to begin could be some time in March or early April. With this airplane, it appears as though we could once again be ready for the EAA Rocky Mountain Regional Fly-In at Front Range Airport in June.

Always forward, never turn back! →



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