



COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

George H.W. and Barbara Bush Commemorative Center Wins Award

MIDLAND, TEXAS (Sept. 10, 2009) – The Commemorative Air Force (CAF) is proud to announce, the George H. W. and Barbara Bush Commemorative Center has been awarded the 2009 *Texas Meetings + Events* Reader's Choice Award for Best New Venue in the Western Region.

The 2009 *Texas Meetings + Events Magazine* Reader's Choice Award Winners were announced at the second annual Best of 2009 awards celebration on Sept. 2, 2009, in Austin Texas. The awards are given to "honor the dedication and creativity of local event professionals who have earned the respect and admiration of their clients and peers" (<http://tx.meetingsmags.com>).

"The Commemorative Center is a hidden treasure in Midland and Odessa," says CAF President, Stephan Brown. "Our facility offers unique and affordable rental space at a central location for West Texas residents and businesses. We are happy to offer the space to all types of events, from weddings and celebrations to meetings and banquets."

The George H. W. and Barbara Bush Commemorative Center officially opened to the public at a ribbon cutting ceremony on Memorial Day 2009, and since that time the building has been a venue of great interest for area event planners.

"We have already hosted weddings, wedding receptions and formal banquets since the building's grand opening in May of this year," said CAF AIRSHO and Special Events Coordinator, Heather Francell. "In the coming months, the Commemorative Center will be the venue for several area businesses holiday parties. There have been many individuals planning events for 2010 who have voiced their interest in the utilizing this facility."

The Commemorative Center is home to 3,100-square-foot facility suitable for seminars, conferences, conventions and musical performances. On the second floor are O'Brien Hall, named for Midland Medal of Honor recipient George O'Brien Jr. and Gunfighter Pub. O'Brien Hall can be configured as a formal banquet facility seating up to 200 people. Just outside the hall is a large balcony overlooking the runways of the airport. The balcony has been used by some events as an evening dance floor with the lights of the runway providing the backdrop. The hall is adjoined by a food preparation and service area. Inside Gunfighter Pub you will find a unique setting that can be arranged to seat 60 people and is decorated with American Military Aviation memorabilia.

On the first floor of the venue is a Texas Medal of Honor Memorial featuring an eight-foot bronze sculpture on a four-foot stone base, displaying plaques with the names of the 84 Texans who have received our nation's highest military award for valor, making it the state's largest Medal of Honor

memorial. At the back of the Commemorative Center is a large aircraft hangar, suitable for a large event of up to 600 people. The CAF can easily arrange to have a few of its available historic World War II aircraft on display inside the hangar or on the ramp during private events.

Collecting, restoring and flying vintage historical aircraft for more than half a century, the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) ranks as one of the largest private air forces in the world. The CAF is dedicated to Honoring American Military Aviation through flight, exhibition and remembrance. A non-profit educational association, the CAF has approximately 9,000 members and a fleet of 156 airplanes distributed throughout the country to 74 units located in 27 states for care and operation. For more information, visit www.commemorativeairforce.org or call (432) 563-1000.