

The 2011 RRSW Fall Gathering
Fredericksburg, Texas



Todd Bengtson Pic

It finally all came together. Great weather, great attendance, and fantastic fellowship. 22 beautiful Swifts and a huge number of drive-in Swifters made the trip from many locations. Swifts came from Oregon, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, South Carolina, Florida, Michigan, and Colorado. Bill Kientz drove down from the St. Louis area, the Poats's from Tenn. and numerous other vehicles filled the parking lot from other locations. Great crowd. The Hangar Hotel on the airport is a very unique and intriguing place. It is a modern hotel on an airport ramp, built to look like a world war two hangar and decorated in 1940's décor. The Officer's Club on the lower floor is the evening watering hole and is set up to resemble what you would see in military O-club style. The next building over is the Airport Diner which is also of the same era with great milk shakes, burgers, or whatever you wish to eat. The back of the diner is a convention center where we had our Saturday eve banquet. We used one of the smaller rooms but it is set up to accommodate very large events.



A few early arrivals made the journey on Thursday but the weather kept most Swifters away until Friday. Even then the weather that had been in Texas on Thursday made

travel a bit difficult east of us until Friday afternoon and a few cancellations occurred due to this front becoming a problem for the northeast arrivals. Friday was a good travel day if you didn't mind the wind and Saturday was absolutely perfect. Since Friday was considered the arrival day for most Swifters we all just enjoyed hanging out and enjoying each other's company as Swifts began arriving. Our Friday evening meal was at a downtown location called "The Brewery" and was a very enjoyable place in downtown Fredericksburg. Fredericksburg is one of those quaint towns with a plethora of shops and a great Pacific War museum. The shopping kept the ladies very busy for two complete days and they appeared to really enjoy the experience.



The "Brewery Restaurant"



Terry Gillaspie, great hostess and "professional shopper's guide."

We adjourned to the Officer's club after supper and enjoyed a great evening with the exception of our Texas Ranger's losing game seven of the World Series. I think Bill Kientz enjoyed it though. Great game and the Cardinals deserve the win. Congratulations Cardinals.

Saturday morning started with a plan to do a sunrise formation flight but our plans were foiled as we discovered the wings of the Swifts covered in frost as the sun came up. Plan "B" was put into affect and we adjourned to the Airport Diner for an omelet.



The first frost of the year – Cnx. the flight. By 09:00 all was back to normal.



Breakfast at the Diner.

Todd's Pic

A well attended formation ground school was conducted at 09:00 with a large group of carded SFC members sitting in just to audit the class for a good review. Two new SFC members completed the exam.

At 11:00 a group of about 14 Swifts headed out for the fly-out to Burnet, Texas to a CAF museum that David Anderson is associated with. Great facility and a perfect morning to fly.



The Burnet CAF facility



The Fly-out pilots at Burnet.

Todd's Pic



The beautiful polished C-47 of the Burnet CAF.

Todd's Pic

We returned to Fredericksburg in various fashions, I rode with Ben Wilson as number two in a four ship and others toured the enchanted rock and other points of interest on the way home.

A missing man tribute flight was flown later in the afternoon to honor those RRSW members who have gone “West” in the previous year. Dave Anderson did an impressive job on the Bag Pipes while dressed in full Scottish attire as the four ship did the missing man pass. We have lost a few of our members during this past year but we will be blessed with their memories forever.



Mark, Flea, Stan, Wade



Dave Anderson

Prior to the Saturday evening banquet we adjourned to the O-club for a little “wind-down” time and were treated to a slide show presentation that Todd Bengtson had put together of various Swift activities from previous years. We would later move that slide show to our banquet facility. It was fantastic and I think we will help Todd find even more pics for next year.

The Saturday evening banquet is always a highlight since we can just relax and enjoy great food with great people. Since it was done in the banquet area at the Airport Diner the logistics were a snap. Out the O-club, go 200 feet, you’re there.

Carolyn Sisson had organized a “Lady’s” award to thank Terry Gillaspie and Barbara Lloyd for the great hospitality. These ladies did a fantastic job.



Carolyn Presenting Terry and Barbara with an appreciation award.



Texas Ear Rings were created by Carolyn and Perry Session. Most all the ladies had these on.

The “2011 Viewer’s Choice” award went to Alan Dicker in his beautiful Red Swift with Perry/Carolyn Sisson winning the Runner Up award.



Alan Dicker from Scottsdale, Arizona with the “Viewer’s Choice Award.”



Perry/Carolyn Sisson and the “Runner-up Viewer’s Choice Award”

Todd Pic

Two President’s awards were given this year. One to Ed and Barbara Lloyd and the second to Wade and Terry Gillaspie. Both of these awards were to show our appreciation for the hard work in putting this RRSW gathering together. It all showed. It was great.



Ed Lloyd with his “President’s Award”



Terry / Wade with their “President’s award”

Dave Anderson was also recognized for his talents with the Bag Pipes during the missing man fly-by. Dave was presented with a “Special Recognition” award for his great help with the fly-in in many areas.



Dave Anderson – Special Recognition for his contributions to the RRSW Group.

The Longest Distance in a Swift award went to Roger Weber from Independence, Oregon. What an effort to come to our event.



Roger Weber from Independence, Oregon.

The 2011 RRSW gathering will go down as our best ever attended event. Next year's plan is not complete but we will for sure be doing another event next October and a return to Fredericksburg will be considered. Thanks again to Ed Lloyd, Barbara Lloyd, Wade Gillaspie, and Terry Gillaspie for putting this event together and pulling it off in such an outstanding fashion.

Here are a few pics of some Swifters having fun:



Bud Brown

Todd Pic



Gerry Poats

Todd Pic



Ben Wilson

Todd Pic



Dave Anderson

Todd Pic



Hal Cope

Todd Pic



Todd Bengtson

Our Excellent Photographer –Thanks. Todd.



It's over for this year but we'll be back. Fly safe and see you in 2012.

Stan