Bucking economic turbulence unprecedented in recent times, Wings Over the Rockies held true to its course, significantly advancing its mission of education and inspiration throughout 2008.

Everywhere you look at Wings, good things are happening.

Outside, we added a new parking lot and landscaping in September. Enhancements to the exterior of our historic facility include almost 50 new parking spaces, improved pedestrian and handicapped access, new trees and plantings, lighted sidewalks and improved drainage systems.

Inside, we added four major exhibits to Wings’ improved gallery space in 2008. These interactive displays set a new standard of museum experience for our visitors.

The “Kiddie Airport” attracts toddlers to the world of aviation. The “Jetwing Exhibit” educates students about the fundamental forces of flight. “Colorado’s Astronauts, In Their Own Words” inspires families with personal reflections and artifacts from astronauts with Colorado ties. And the “Chasing Horizons” exhibit honors intrepid aviators whose round-the-world achievements exemplify the pioneering spirit of flight.

Our “Spreading Wings” educational outreach mission began to reach dozens of schools throughout Colorado in 2008. Outreach activities included the new Wings Aviation Science Program (WASP) initiative. This proven initiative trains teachers and motivates elementary and middle school student achievement in science and math with the excitement of aviation and space.

In addition to growth in admissions and outreach, the Wings family grew throughout 2008 in membership, volunteers and a new donor group called “The Leading Edge.” Of all the good things that happened in 2008, the growth of our Wings family is most heartening, as it reaffirms our focus on our people-serving mission.

Despite continuing economic headwinds challenging us throughout 2009, we are excited about our future. 2009 opened with promising possibilities for redevelopment of Hangar 2, allowing continuing investment in museum improvements and renewed planning for a second site at Centennial Airport. Projected growth for museum visitation and education program participation underscore our mission. We expect continuing challenges in our fundraising and corporate events revenues, and we have planned new programs and contingencies to meet these challenges.

On behalf of the veterans, families and young people that we serve, thank you for your continuing interest and support in Colorado’s Official Air & Space Museum.

Sincerely,

Greg Anderson
President & CEO
2008 was one of great change at Wings. The first professionally designed and constructed exhibits were installed and large amounts of supplies and preservation materials were acquired for the collection.

Exhibits expanded and increased with the completion and openings of the Jetwing and Colorado Astronauts displays. Both were accompanied by grand opening ceremonies and large attendance. The Jetwing exhibit was well-attended with Jetwing designer and builder Pete Bartoe representing his team from Ball Aerospace along with other Jetwing dignitaries.

The Colorado Astronauts exhibit was the Museum’s most attended event in recent memory, with more than 700 guests and dignitaries coming to share their thoughts on Colorado’s astronauts and Denver’s own Jack Swigert. The exhibit is made possible by its presenting sponsor Lockheed Martin and the exhibit co-sponsors; United Launch Alliance, Jeppesen, ATK and United Space Alliance. Among the dignitaries present were Jim Lovell, Scott Carpenter, Jim Voss, Dr. Ron Sega and Councilwoman Marcia Johnson.

While attending the event, Councilwoman Johnson was so taken with the exhibit she proposed a proclamation to the Denver City Council recognizing the exhibit and Wings’ contribution to the recognition of Colorado’s astronauts. The proclamation passed on June 16.

The Chasing Horizons exhibit was part of a grand opening night that included Dick Rutan, representatives from Jeppesen and dignitaries from Aurora and Denver Public Schools. The event featured Dick Rutan’s story of his around-the-world Voyager flight, the story of Elrey Jeppesen by Terry Barnhart and Flint Whitlock and a presentation of the museum’s newest educational program, WASP – Wings Aviation Science Program.

Jeppesen, Barron Hilton and Buehler Aviation Research Foundation were all contributors to the Chasing Horizons exhibit that “revolves” around the challenges of circumnavigating the globe by plane. Featuring artifacts from Barrington Irving, the Daniels Fund, Arnold Palmer, Dick Rutan and Steve Fossett, Chasing Horizons is full of stories and photos of some of these challenging flights. The centerpiece of the exhibit is a 10-foot globe. Additionally, an attached kiosk houses film of some of these great events as well as the Earthrounders Web site dedicated to those individuals that have flown around the globe in a light aircraft.

In the Wings collection, great strides were made with the purchase of supplies and archival materials for the care, storage and display of our valued artifacts. These purchases were made available by SCFD funding and included acid-free boxes, accessioning software, acid-free tissue, marking supplies and shelving.
Museum Membership

2008 Proved Members Matter Most

At the end of 2008, Wings Over the Rockies boasted nearly 1,400 members, three-quarters of whom joined at the Family Membership level. This represents an 8% increase in membership over 2007. Members enjoyed unlimited admission to the museum, as well as access to special programs including WOW series events and book signings. Membership rates remained at 2007 levels of $35 for Individual Memberships, $50 for Family Memberships and $300 for Patron Memberships.

The Leading Edge

2008 saw the creation of a major fundraising effort – The Leading Edge. Forty-five Charter Members of The Leading Edge contributed between $1,000 and $10,000 per individual, and accounted for more than $85,000 in general operating dollars. In return, members received unprecedented access to some of today’s most distinguished aerospace personalities, including Dick Rutan and Jim Lovell. Regular communications from the CEO reported on activities and initiatives their support made possible.

Above and Beyond Annual Fund

In 2008, Museum Members continued their generosity, contributing more than $7,500 to Wings’ general operating fund through donations to the Above and Beyond Annual Fund. Members heeded three different calls during the year to assist the museum in continuing the quality programs it provides.

Spreading Wings Gala

Eileen Collins, Patty Wagstaff and Emily Howell Warner mesmerized 650 guests, exemplifying the potential of women in aerospace at the 2008 Spreading Wings Gala. Attributing their success to dreams, determination and math/science education, they superbly represent attributes of Colorado’s Official Air and Space Museum. Through this event, Wings was able to gross almost $350,000, to support its Spreading Wings education mission.
Education

WASP (Wings Aviation Science Program) Year One

- Kits placed – 73
- Teachers trained – 102
- Distribution – 18 different districts and charter schools
- Commitment from Aurora Public Schools to implement WASP in all third-grade classrooms. In 39 classrooms now, will be in 110 classrooms in 2009/2010
- Interest from Pueblo District 60 to implement in all fifth-grade classrooms
- Invited to present two sessions on WASP at the NCASE - National Congress on Aerospace Education - in Washington, DC in October
- Developed WASP-specific tour, trained docents and launched in October
- Projected impact of this program in 2009 is 13,500 students statewide

Programs

- Served 15,049 students in 2008, up 7% (from 14,037) in 2007, in an environment where other museums are seeing steadily declining numbers
- Developed five new programs, including Top Gun for Tots, The Wright Brothers Inventors, Insect Aerodynamics and grade-level-specific, teacher-led programs which also offer pre- and post-curriculum
- Education assumed responsibility for Birthday Parties at Wings, transferred from Events Department
- Education assumed management of Wings Speakers’ Bureau after retirement of long-term volunteer
- Learning with Legends: 60 girls and 46 accompanying adults made balsa-wood planes with Emily Warner and rockets with Eileen Collins the morning of Wings’ Gala
- Planned and developed KidsDay program for launch on December 29 which served more than 400

KidSpace
(Hands-on Activities at Local Airshows and Fly-ins)

- Conducted KidSpace programs in Craig, Rifle, Steamboat and Akron
- Served a total of 3,400 Colorado “kids of all ages”
- Science of Flight K-12 Teacher Workshop presented three, two-day workshops for K-12 teachers; Programs were in February at Wings, June in Grand Junction and October in Pueblo
- Over 65 teachers attended with the potential to reach nearly 2000 students
- Hosted a booth at the Colorado Science Convention in November
- Hosted Aurora Public School Mini Ground School, September – November
- Hosted booth at the Colorado Aerospace Roundup in December
- Hosted CABCPE (Colorado Association of Black Professional Engineers and Scientists) class focusing on aerospace for high school students, October - January

SOAR – Special Outreach with Aviation Resources

- Hosted Mitsubishi Heavy Industries America, Inc. for a check presentation event celebrating their continued support of SOAR ($15,000 received in November 2008 to support 2009 programs)
- Served 858 kids who would not otherwise have been able to participate in Wings’ programs

WINGS
OVER THE ROCKIES
AIR & SPACE MUSEUM
Corporate Events

Fundraisers, Banquets, Conferences – Oh My!

2008 Highlights
- Collectors Extravaganza Antique Show & Sale
- Central City Opera – Denver Antique Show & Sale
- City of Aurora 13th Annual Veteran’s Salute
- Broomfield High School Prom
- CSU Green & Gold Gala
- Mizel Museum Gala Dinner
- Imprints Wholesale Annual Client Appreciation/Expo
- Pi Kappa Phi National Conference Reception
- Destination Colorado - Front Range Trade Show

Corporate Events made great strides in our corporate events business because of the exterior landscaping and parking lot improvements this past summer. Old and new clients hosting corporate events in 2008 fell in love with the ease of our newly renovated exterior space and quickly found creative new ways to light and decorate the main entrance for their events. Curb appeal is an important factor in our clients’ venue selection. Close-in and well-paved parking for cars and buses is a key offering.

New exhibits such as Colorado Astro-nauts delighted guests with new visual impact to the museum entry area often used for their guest check-in.

Every event from off-site conference receptions to nonprofit fundraising gala dinners provides an opportunity for our clients to expand their aviation and aerospace knowledge while having great fun climbing into aircraft cockpits and trying their hands at our flight simulators or pedal planes. Wings Over The Rockies hosted 115 events in 2008. One of the main highlights included hosting delegates from the states of Missouri and Ohio during the Democratic National Convention this past summer.

Museum Store

The Museum Store began 2008 with strong numbers. Increased attendance and large corporate events brought revenue that exceeded projections. This pattern continued until the latter part of July. Buying habits changed almost unnoticed – less expensive items and less volume per buyer replaced previous patterns. By early fall, the economic downturn was noticeable in the store. The attendance numbers for the B-17 event were down and the satellite store at Centennial Airport suffered. Despite a tremendous decrease in consumptive spending, the store finished the year short of the projected 2008 budget but ahead of 2007 actuals.

With careful buying and the targeting of specific audiences, the store continues to adjust to the economic climate we live in. The store will work hard to meet visitor needs, utilize the opportunities a redesigned Web site offers and continue cooperative collaboration with education, corporate events and exhibits to enhance and mirror our mission statement.
Revenue & Expenses

2008 Operating Revenues were $93,000 lower than the 2007 Operating Revenues. A $153,000 decline in Contributed Support in 2008 was partially offset by increases in Admissions and Program Revenues. Contributions continue to be the largest source of revenue for the museum.

Wings’ Volunteers accomplish a myriad of tasks necessary for the operation of the museum. Our 2008 crew of 269 skilled and dedicated volunteers donated an amazing total of 32,921 hours of their time. According to the latest research for 2008 of the Independent Sector/Non-profit Information Center* the average dollar-per-hour value of volunteering time is $20.25. This average dollar value includes tasks such as food delivery to skilled craftsmen. Using this average, Wings volunteers generously donated $666,650 of labor in 2008.

Volunteers range from cheerful greeters at our Welcome Center to skilled craftsmen in our Shop and Restorations area to researchers in our Collections area. Museum tours are conducted by Education department volunteers who ensure that everyone has fun but also leaves with additional knowledge of aviation and space. Our volunteers personify the mission of Wings Over the Rockies.


Volunteer of the Year

The 2008 Volunteer of the Year is John Bond. John was selected by his peers because of his continuing efforts to preserve the history of Lowry AFB and the people who served here.

John is always available to help Museum guests with their research and questions. Additionally, he is continuously assisting the Museum with the identification of the many donated historical photos and documents.

For that, we recognize John for his many years of dedicated volunteering to Wings.
Wings Over the Rockies recognizes its educational and cultural support from the Science and Cultural Facilities District. This enlightened tax payer supported program continues to make a critical difference in advancing Wings' mission throughout our communities.

Wings Over the Rockies Air and Space Museum's Annual Report is a yearly publication of Wings Over The Rockies Air & Space Museum to communicate our activity to our members and supporters. This publication can also be found at: WingsMuseum.org