Dear Members, Donors, Volunteers and Friends:

In December 2009, Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum celebrated its 15th anniversary. We honored the people who have made up our Wings family, the purpose that we have served together and the potential of our Museum to serve future generations.

In no uncertain terms, the 2009 economy provided challenges. Around mid-year, we reduced several areas of the budget, deferred planned hires, froze salaries and wages and consolidated non-core mission activities. In Board retreats and staff planning meetings, we also reviewed and reaffirmed our mission priorities and strategic goals.

Despite economic challenges, we closed 2009 with a mission that is stronger than ever. Highlights of the report that follows are worthy of special note. Total onsite admissions grew 17% over 2008 to nearly 80,000. Another 10,000 were served through off-site programs, not counting an estimated 13,500 students through our growing Wings Aerospace Science Program initiative. In fact, education programs served twice the number of students as in 2008, surpassing 30,000 in some 30 school districts and charter schools all around Colorado.

Although fundraising and corporate events were challenged by the recession in 2009, a successful Spreading Wing Gala closed the year with our best fundraiser ever. Honoree Harrison Ford helped make a movie which will advance our mission to educate and inspire even more visitors and young people.

I am more excited about the potential of Wings Over the Rockies than ever before. We stand on the threshold of completing plans to redevelop Hangar 2, adding a “Gateway to Flight” entrance complex to our Museum, growing our presence at Centennial Airport and considering the potential of an aerospace charter school.

My excitement arises from the commitment and dedication of the Board of Directors, staff, members and volunteers who make up our Wings family. It also grows from increasing recognition and support from corporations, foundations and donors throughout Colorado who recognize the significance of Wings to our way of life.

Wings will continue to face economic headwinds. Your continued investment of confidence and support is the fuel to continue our mission. We are dedicated to justifying it.

Sincerely,

Greg Anderson
President & CEO
The year was one of growth for the Museum and its collections and exhibits. Exhibits expanded with the openings of the “Tailor Made” Aviation Uniform Exhibit and a traveling exhibit from NASA to coincide with the 40th Anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission, and the “X-Wing Etc.” exhibit that promoted Harrison Ford’s visit to the Museum for the 2009 Spreading Wings Gala.

The “Tailor Made” Aviation Uniform Exhibit showcases some of the Museum’s artifacts from World War I up to modern equipment. Utilizing state of the art lighting, the exhibit is the first in the museum to be lit by LEDs. Not only are they inexpensive to operate, but easy on the artifacts by not emitting UV light. This exhibit helps bring Wings one step closer to its ultimate goal of being accredited by the American Association of Museums.

The “X-Wing Etc.” exhibit encouraged young people to build a model of their favorite plane or spacecraft that had been flown by Harrison Ford in one of his movies. Each child that exhibited a model was then eligible to fly with Mr. Ford at a Young Eagles rally held by Wings.

Upstairs in the collection rooms, a group of volunteers worked to improve the collection, archives, and library. The collections team began the process of digitizing all the Museum’s collections records, organizing artifacts from the Lowry collection, and photographing the many uniforms.

The archives volunteers continued to digitize thousands of photos of Lowry and integrate some with the collection and library. Meanwhile, our volunteer librarians continued to create one of the better museum libraries in the country, bringing their research services to two major history books slated for release this year.

In restorations, the biggest excitement was the substantial completion of five years of work on the Museum’s F-86H Sabre jet. To celebrate, the Museum threw a 1950s “sock hop” with a live band and food. Many thanks to the crew that brought the aircraft back to life.

The museum also continued to restore its collection of nuclear weaponry loaned from the National Atomic Museum in Albuquerque, New Mexico. When completed, the arms will give Wings one of the largest civilian collections of nuclear weaponry.
Participation in Museum Education programs in 2009 was over 30,000 – double our 2008 impact. Although the Education Department runs over a dozen different programs, this increase is primarily due to the Wings Aerospace Science Program initiative reaching 13,500 students throughout Colorado.

The Wings Aerospace Science Program is an eight-lesson, inquiry-based science curriculum using aerospace to motivate students to greater achievement in math and science as well as other core areas. The Program includes professional development for interested teachers, online WebQuests to further student learning, and student visits to Wings. In 2009, we trained 100 new teachers, added 15 new districts and charter schools, produced 50 new kits and provided 300 refurbishment sets to repeat users of the program.

Onsite Programs offered by the Education Department served 8,946, up from 7,276 in 2008. We continue to offer our selection of onsite tours, Project Pilot, and Boy and Girl Scout programs. We also developed two more new programs: Wright Inventors and Insect Aerodynamics. As always, dedicated education volunteers are at the heart of every program.

In 2009, Summer Camp at Wings served sixty-six 3rd through 6th graders. Wings is now a fully licensed summer camp provider, complying with Colorado State regulations. Two camps in 2009 were filled to capacity. The morning sessions focused on aviation and the afternoon sessions examined space exploration and rockets. Sponsorships from AVJobs and Powder Puff Pilot keep the magic of flight alive for children. Campers eight years old and over, who had not previously flown with the Young Eagles, were offered a flight courtesy of EAA Chapter 301.

The traveling KidSpace program visited 10 different communities, serving 4,600 “kids of all ages” throughout Colorado. The KidSpace Exhibit at Wings continues to improve. With the continued support of our original donor, we have added two new interactive exhibits. Another donor contributed dollars to create the KidSpace reading nook, including new bookshelves, books, and “floor furniture” for kids. A local Eagle Scout worked with Education staff to plan and create the Reading Nook, complete with child-friendly, aerospace-themed wall art which he and his troop created and installed.

“THIS WAS THE BEST SUMMER CAMP I EVER WENT TO. THEY TAUGHT ME A LOT OF STUFF THAT I DIDN’T KNOW ABOUT FLIGHT AND SPACE. I AM DEFINITELY COMING BACK HERE UNTIL I CAN’T COME BACK BUT I’LL DEFINITELY COME TO THE MUSEUM WHEN I’M OLDER”
**EDUCATION AND PROGRAMS (continued)**

Education managed the Speakers’ Bureau and coordinated 10 events serving 379 learners. Birthday Parties served a total of 495 people. Education staff and volunteers staffed four flight simulators at the B17 in June, serving an estimated 500 virtual fliers.

Education staff and volunteers coordinated activities on the morning of the Gala with Harrison Ford, along with EAA Chapters 301 and 43. Seventy students got to fly. Over 150 kids participated in hands-on activities and everyone in attendance, nearly 250, listened to Mr. Ford share his passion for aviation.

**REVENUE AND EXPENSES**

The 2009 Operating Revenues were $218,000 higher than the 2008 Operating Revenues due primarily to the success of the 2009 Gala. Increases in Admissions, Memberships and Program Revenues were offset by declines in rental and other revenues. Contributions continue to be the largest source of revenue for the Museum.

The 2009 Operating Expenses decreased $96,000 over the 2008 Operating Expenses due primarily to fewer exhibits opened during 2009 compared to 2008. Lower exhibit expenditures were partially offset by costs associated with the potential sale of Hangar 2. Functional expenses reflect proportional staff time spent on the various Museum programs as well as facility operating costs.

**2009 Operating Revenues**

$1,844,863

- Contributions: 37%
- Special Events: 26%
- Admissions and Program Income: 25%
- Facility Rental and Other: 6%
- Museum Store Sales (net): 3%
- Memberships: 3%

**2009 Operating Expenditures**

(excluding depreciation)

$1,757,925

- Education: 27%
- Restoration and Exhibits: 25%
- General and Administrative: 23%
- Fundraising and Membership: 14%
- Corporate Events: 8%
- Museum Store: 3%
At the end of 2009, Wings Over the Rockies had its highest membership count ever: 1,573. This represents an 11% increase over 2008, a testament to the growing number of quality exhibits and outreach programs at Wings. In addition to unlimited visits to the Museum, members enjoyed various events and book signings, including a six-part “Stories From Space” series with Colorado Astronauts. In light of a difficult economy, membership pricing remained at 2007 levels of $35 for individuals and $50 for families. In addition, a group of over 40 individuals contributed $1,000 or more to be a part of a special leadership group called “The Leading Edge.”

Above and Beyond Annual Fund: Despite economic difficulties, Museum Members donated $9,355 to the Above and Beyond Annual Fund, which supports the general operations of the Museum. This is a 20% increase over 2008 donations.

Spreading Wings Gala: Wings was honored to be able to present Harrison Ford with the 2009 Spreading Wings Award at the 2009 Spreading Wings Gala, presented by Jack and Viki Thompson and Holding Pictures. Ford’s tremendous accomplishments in aviation and film inspire people of all ages through flight. Almost 1,000 people were on-hand to witness the premier of the Wings Over the Rockies museum film, narrated by and starring Mr. Ford. The Gala exceeded expectations by all accounts, sponsorships increased over 33%, and the event grossed nearly $600,000, almost $200,000 over 2008.

2009 Event Highlights
• Collectors Extravaganza – Antiques at Wings
• U.S. Air Force Tops in Blue Concert
• Central City Opera – Denver Antique Show & Sale
• Mizel Museum Dinner
• Jeppesen 75th Anniversary Gala
• Frontier Airlines /Republic Merger Celebration
• Veteran’s Salute Luncheon – 14th Annual City of Aurora
• Allied Jewish Federation Men’s Event
• Omni Eye – Madison St. CE Lecture & Holiday Party

The Museum continues to provide corporate and private events business at a steady pace. In 2009, we were honored to be selected as the Colorado Meetings & Events Magazine, Editor’s Choice for Best Attraction in Colorado. This prestigious honor highlights what a FUN venue Wings is for events and how dramatically our museum education outreach mission is integrated with our private event functions. Every event client at Wings is encouraged to include and enjoy fully staffed open aircraft cockpits and flight simulators and intriguing hands on interactives as part of their event packages at Wings. With new museum exhibits opening throughout the year, our repeat clients, as well as new clients, have options available to them to keep their events vibrant and interesting. Dramatic lighting has become a popular way to splash the space with color and to accentuate the bars, food stations and activity areas.

MEMBERSHIP AND FUNDING

CORPORATE EVENTS
Year after year, Wings volunteers continue to offer dedicated service to assure that our visitors experience the thrill of aviation both past and present. From the friendly and knowledgeable volunteers in the Welcome Center, to the dedicated Operations Volunteer who closes at night, the museum is growing through the efforts of our volunteers. In 2009, 247 volunteers generously gave 34,600 hours of time to support Wings Over the Rockies. The museum depends on this grand effort. Wings volunteers work in almost every department of the museum as greeters, researchers, tour guides, educators, painters, carpenters, metal workers, maintenance, avionics, ham radio operators, and more!

This year has seen the Wings Ham Radio Station come alive. On Cockpit Demo Days, the Avionics crew helps children reach other operators around the country and the globe. Our visitors have even talked with people in Japan. The radio station is a valuable addition to our guests’ experience and another example of how volunteers directly support the mission of Wings Over the Rockies.

Harry Blout was chosen Volunteer of the Year for 2009 by his peers. He is well-deserving of this recognition as Harry is willing to help with whatever needs to be done. He has made the trip from Colorado Springs for many years to help in countless ways. Harry is a tour guide for the Education Department, a regular enthusiastic greeter at the Welcome Center, a host at special events and even makes the long commute to help with the tedious task of special mailings. We congratulate Harry for a continuous job well-done. We are very proud that he is part of our Wings family.

Wings Over the Rockies Museum Store was challenged with a most difficult business climate. Many museum stores across the country reported significant reductions in visitor purchases; some non-profits actually closed their stores. Significant attention to the overall visitor experience with focused customer service enabled the store to ride the ups and downs of 2009. The summer of 2009 was the most profitable in gross sales in the last nine years. Opportunities to participate with the education department in the development of KidsSpace, and working with the Director of Corporate Events and offering an assortment of products, books and film that complement our various exhibits has proven to be a successful formula. We look forward to the new challenges and opportunities 2010 promises to present.
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<th>MUSEUM MANAGEMENT</th>
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