



Friday May 23, 2014

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Hooks Airport hosting tours of B-17 bomber this weekend

By Bryan Kirk | May 20, 2014

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Photo By David Hopper/freelance

The Texas Raiders - one of only nine B-17 aircraft in operation - will be on display and open for tours on Sunday at 10 a.m.

More Information

Want to go?

What: B-17 Flying Fortress display and plane rides

When: Sunday at 10 a.m.

Where: David Wayne Hooks Memorial Airport, 20803 Stuebner Airline Road, Spring, TX 77379

Cost: Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. Service members are free with a military identification card.

Members of the **Commemorative Air Force** will be showing off a little bit of American history at the **David Wayne Hooks Memorial Airport** this weekend.

The Texas Raiders - one of only nine B-17 aircraft in operation - will be on display and open for tours on Sunday at 10 a.m.

Nancy Kwiecen, spokeswoman for the Gulf Coast Wing of the Commemorative Air Force, said the **Texas Raiders B-17 Bomber** has been housed at **Hooks Airport** since 2012 and flies regularly to various air shows throughout the United States.

"Texas Raiders was the first Flying Fortress to be operated solely for the sake of preservation and use as a flying museum," she said.

The aircraft, which was built in 1945, is one of the most accurately restored B-17s in existence and includes machine guns, period-specific radio equipment and the Norden bombsight.

Pat Elliot, who has been piloting the B-17 Flying Fortress since 1980, said he loves flying an important piece of American history, and meeting the men who flew them in World War II.

"There is a reason these people are called the Greatest Generation," Elliot said.

The aircraft also will provide a backdrop for famed World War II Gen. **George S. Patton**, who will be depicted by living historian **Denny Hair**.

To tour the aircraft, the Commemorative Air Force is asking for a \$10 donation for adults and \$5 for children.

Veterans and service members with a military identification card are admitted without charge.

Once inside, individuals are able to see how the aircraft operates and speak with the pilots and crew.

Kwiecen said the Commemorative Air Force will provide 30-minute flights at a cost starting at \$475.

"It's a tremendously expensive endeavor to keep a 70-year old aircraft flying. It costs us over \$3,500 per hour to fly the bomber," Kwiecen said. Those who wish to fly with Texas Raiders are asked to call 1-855-359-2217 or email info@B17TexasRaiders.org to make a reservation.