

Wings of Freedom Tour brings World War II-era aircraft to BHC

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Two World War II-era bombers and a fighter are coming to Bullhead City this week for the Wings of Freedom Tour.

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BULLHEAD CITY — Three vintage World War II aircraft will be flying over Bullhead City this week as part of the Wings of Freedom Tour.

Two bombers — a Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress and a Consolidated B-24 Liberator — and a P-51 Mustang fighter plane will be on display at Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport at Signature Flight Support from 2 p.m. Wednesday through noon on Friday. Ground tours are scheduled from 2 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Thursday and from 9 a.m. to noon on Friday.

Visitors are invited to explore the aircraft inside and out. Admission is \$15 for adults and \$5 for children younger than 12 for access to up-close viewing and tours through the

inside of the aircraft. Discounted rates are offered for school groups. Visitors may experience the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to actually take a 30-minute flight aboard these rare aircraft. Flights on either the B-17 or B-24 are \$450 per person. P-51 flight training is \$2,200 for a half-hour and \$3,200 for a full hour. For reservations and information on flight experiences, call 800-568-8924.

The Wings of Freedom Tour travels the nation as a flying tribute to the flight crews who flew them, the ground crews who maintained them, the workers who built them, the soldiers, sailors and airmen they helped protect and the citizens and families that share the freedom that they helped preserve. The B-17 and B-24 were the backbone of the American effort during the war from 1942 to 1945 and were famous for their ability to sustain damage and still accomplish the mission. Despite the risks of anti-aircraft fire, attacking enemy fighters and the harrowing environment of sub-zero temperatures, many B-17s and B-24s safely brought their crews home. The P-51 Mustang was affectionately known as the bombers' "Little Friend," saving countless crews from attacking Axis fighters. After the war, many aircraft were scrapped for their aluminum to rebuild a nation in post-war prosperity; few were spared. The rarity of the B-17, B-24 and P-51— and their importance to telling the story of WWII — is why the Collings Foundation continues to fly and display the aircraft nationwide. At each location, local veterans and their families are encouraged to visit and share their experiences and stories with the public. For aviation enthusiasts, the tour provides opportunity for the museum to come to the visitor and not the other way around.

Visitors can find out more by going to www.collingsfoundation.org.

The Collings Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational foundation devoted to organizing "living history" events that allows people to learn more about their heritage and history through direct participation. The Nationwide Wings of Freedom Tour is celebrating its 29th year and visits an average of 110 cities in more than 35 states annually. Since its start, tens of millions of people have seen the B-17, B-24 and P-51 display at locations everywhere.