

# Golden Wings Over Meridian

Parking gates open at 8 a.m.; booths open at 9 a.m.

Opening Ceremony begins at 11:15 a.m.

General parking entrance is accessible from Highway 45

**By Penny Randall**

Staff Writer

The performers are signed. Static aircraft are set to arrive next week. The 2011 Golden Wings Over Meridian air show will welcome thousands to Naval Air Station Meridian on March 26-27.

Opening ceremony for the two-day air show will be at 11:15 a.m. with the Black Daggers -- the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Parachute Demonstration Team bringing in the American flag as they parachute miles to the ground.

The Navy's elite demonstration team -- the Blue Angels will be the grand finale act.

Special exhibits located on the south end of the east side of the hangar will include 27 quilts from Thread Tails and Vapor Trails program. Other exhibits include the Navy Meteorology and Oceanography Command, and the Navy and Marine Corps Centennial of Aviation tributes. Be sure to check out the NAS Meridian 50th anniversary exhibit.

One of the most exciting moments during the air show will be when the classic Warbirds Demonstration Team takes to the sky over NAS Meridian. Known as the Trojan Horsemen, the pilots repertoires include

both four-ship and six-ship formation demonstrations including formation aerobatics by the two solo pilots. The routine is a patriotic tribute to the United States Armed Forces with music and narration.

The team is built around the T-28 Trojan aircraft - a crowd pleasing large, fast and loud warbird with combat history and a growling 1425 hp radial engine. The aircraft have smoke systems and sport authentic U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy paint schemes and markings to compliment the patriotic theme.

The 16-member team consists of former military pilots, decorated veterans, instructors, airline pilots, and experienced civilian air show pilots with hundreds of years combined experience, unblemished safety records and all required credentials.

Also scheduled to perform is the Viper West Team, one of two F-16 demonstration teams in the U.S. Air Forces' Air Combat Command. The F-16 Fighting Falcon, more commonly known to military pilots as the Viper, is a compact, extremely maneuverable multi-role fighter aircraft. The F-16 has proven itself in air-to-air combat as well as air-to-surface attack. It provides a relatively low-cost, high-performance weapon system for the air forces of the United States and other allied nations.

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