

Tremblay hailed the work of all squadron members, as well as prior squadron commanders, in getting the hangar project up and running.

"They brought the community together for us to work with," he said.

He was also pleased to note that the senior squadron is looking ahead to the future, with plans to initiate a cadet squadron and to make good use of the one-of-a-kind mobile communication center housed at the hangar.

"We have the tools to move into the future," he said.

Pineda presented Tremblay, 2nd Lt. Joe Wilkins and 2nd Lt. Tom Barthel with special CAP coins for their excellent service to the organization.

An open house followed the formal presentations, with attendees treated to a buffet of deli meats, fruits, vegetables and dessert. Guests roamed the office space, taking time to view the squadron's many honorary plaques and pictures of Spitfire, Mustang, Bearcat and other vintage aircraft.

Sharkey, who oversees the more than 4,200 CAP members in Florida, was impressed with the new hangar.

"It helps give CAP and the Marco Squadron a permanent presence in their community to serve the U.S. Air Force, the State of Florida and the community," he said.

"A lot of blood, sweat and tears went into this place," Lt. Col. Charles Krout said from the sidelines. "It's been a long time coming."

The hangar covers 6,000 square feet, including 2,400 square feet of office space, and stands 22 feet high. It was completed last year, following more than 18 months of construction. In addition to many generous donations from the public during its fund-raising campaign, the squadron benefited in particular from large donations from the late Gordon Lozire (\$350,000) and an anonymous benefactor (\$150,000).

Anyone wishing to donate to the CAP squadron and its efforts can do so at this address: Marco Island Senior Squadron, Civil Air Patrol, U.S. Air Force Auxiliary, P.O. Box 225, Marco Island, FL 34146-0225. The squadron offers an emergency signal mirror to anyone donating \$75 or more.

For more information on the CAP, visit www.capnhq.gov.

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