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POISED FOR A BOOM

by Chris Sasser,
Texas Transportation Institute

It's hard not to get excited about the development possibilities of the North Texas Regional Airport (NTRA). Because economic downturn or not, with recent infrastructure improvements, plenty of room for expansion and an ideal location, the NTRA and surrounding corridors are ready to roll.

The NTRA is located midway between Denison and Sherman and was once home to Perrin Field, an Air Force base for 30 years until its closure in 1971. Part of the surrounding acreage and remaining buildings are now used for a diverse assortment of 31 businesses that dot the grounds of the airport.

Crossroads Lead to the Airport

"There's no question that this airport is an economic engine for Grayson County. That's our focus," explains Bill Retz, who serves as the project manager for marketing for the NTRA. "The crossroads of FM 691 and U.S. 75, which is located a few miles from the airport, is becoming a major hub of development."

Currently, a 252-bed state-of-the-art Texoma Medical Center is under construction at that intersection. Just west of that, across the highway, a Hilton Hotel and Convention Center is in the works. On the south side of FM 691, the city of Sherman recently invested four million dollars into infrastructure improvements.

"The U.S. 75 corridor is incredible," says Jerdy Gary, chairman of the Grayson County Regional Mobility Authority (RMA). "Growth between the years 2000 and 2025 is forecast to increase by 800 percent and over a million new folks are predicted to live on the corridor between Dallas and the Red River. We're already feeling the pressure now. The traffic count is about 62,000 at this U.S. 75 and FM 691 intersection, and is projected to increase to about 75,000 in the next five years. The State Highway 289 and toll road corridor project is going to be a significant reliever to 75. The major drivers of economic development are the airport, hospital, a major highway and a regional workforce learning center. And we're going to have them all."

To be completed in July 2009, the SH 289 project that Gary mentions is under construction just a few yards outside the west gate of the airport. Plans are underway to construct water and sewer lines across the airport to provide utilities to the 200 acres of developable property on the west side of the airport and along the 289 corridor. → *continued on pg. 3*



Room to grow: The expanse of the North Texas Regional Airport is evident in this aerial photo. The construction of State Highway 289 can be seen on the far right.



This month's column features a special edition of Dave's Hangar, with the TxDOT director of aviation taking questions on some of the important issues facing aviation today.

What are your thoughts on the upcoming aviation conference?

I always look forward to our annual aviation conference since it is the one time a year we have the opportunity to meet with most of our constituents as a group. The conference gives us an opportunity to listen to those we do business with to discuss ways we can better assist them in our mutual efforts to improve the Texas Aviation System. Each year, the conference grows in number of attendees. I am a little concerned that attendance could be affected somewhat this year by the recession. In any case, I am sure that the conference will be a success as it has been every year in the past.



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David S. Fulton

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What are we looking at in terms of an Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill – what is the current thinking of a timeline and what might it look like in terms of dollars and sense?

It appears that we will complete this year without FAA reauthorization. I am not optimistic that Congress will enact new legislation during the current fiscal year. If that proves to be correct, this will be the second year in a row that FAA's programs have operated under a continuing resolution. Recently, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee did approve a bill to renew FAA programs including some \$4 billion for airport improvement grant funding, an increase of about \$485 million compared to the current year. However, a probable debate over how taxes should be levied and certain labor issues will likely postpone enactment of new legislation until sometime next fiscal year. Due to impacts of the recession and the fact that economic stimulus grants will be 100 percent federal funding, we will be changing the local match for grants issued by our office during FY 2009 from 10 to five percent to the maximum extent possible.

What is in store for Texas' airports in terms of the stimulus bill – how much money – what is it used for/what are the strings/restrictions/what will the matching requirements be?

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Economic Stimulus) has been passed by Congress and signed by the president. The act provides \$1.1 billion for airport development grants nationally. In Texas, we anticipate receiving approximately \$15 million in airport grants for general aviation airports. Specific projects will be selected by the FAA. All grants are to be funded 100 percent with federal funds. The program eligibility and administration of grants will be the same as our annual FAA grant program with two exceptions: (1) strict project completion deadlines must be met and (2) no local match requirement.

We've been hearing a lot about aviation education and workforce needs in the state. What are your thoughts on efforts in North Texas to establish a four-year degree program at a Texas university?

There is no college-level four-year aviation degree program in Texas. Texas residents must go elsewhere if they wish to pursue this type of educational opportunity. A lot of people, including myself, are interested in establishing this type of program somewhere in the state. As with most things, money is always the major obstacle in making it happen. →

Corporate/business aviation has come under fire recently as the economy unravels and corporations reduce or eliminate their corporate aircraft/fleet and use alternative methods of travel. How would you respond to help explain the value of these assets for both companies and communities?

The use of business aircraft is extremely important to a company and the communities it visits, especially in the current economic climate. Instead of telling companies that they can't use a general aviation aircraft to compete and survive and protect jobs, we should be looking for ways to increase general aviation manufacturing jobs, promote economic growth in communities without airline service and support companies' efforts to be as productive and efficient as possible. If a business is trying to reach one of the approximately 100 cities that's lost airline service in the past year, if a business is trying to reach several sites in a single day, if a business needs to move a team quickly and have them work on proprietary information en route and if a business is trying to move equipment that can't be shipped or

carried on an airline, business aviation is prudent and cost effective. Business aviation is a key ingredient in the nation's economic activity and well being. Business aviation works for Texas and America by creating over one million jobs, providing a lifeline to communities without airline service and providing humanitarian support for people in need. In a challenging climate like this, it should be promoted, not disparaged.

We have a vested interest in getting more people involved in aviation today. What one thing should we all be doing to make that happen?

Certainly, the Young Eagles Program has helped immensely by providing free flights to over one million youngsters. Programs such as our annual Aviation Art Contest can help spark an interest in aviation careers. We must make sure that our youth have access to opportunities to gain the skills necessary for a successful career in the field of aviation. ♦

continued from pg. 1



Men of action: (L-R) Bill Retz, director of marketing for NTRA; Jerdy Gary, chairman of the Grayson County RMA; and Mike Shahan, NTRA airport director, are three key figures in the drive to increase the growth of the NTRA and surrounding region.

Ready for Takeoff

It doesn't take an expert in reading maps to see that the NTRA is in a perfect geographic position to accept area growth. And with recent upgrades, the NTRA has been preparing for this growth for the last few years.

"Grants from the Texas Department of Transportation have enabled us to improve our drainage system that had been in place since the 1940s," says Mike Shahan, NTRA airport manager and director of Grayson County RMA. "We're currently scheduled to overlay the →

NTRA AT A GLANCE

- 2006 TxDOT G.A. Airport of the Year
- 9,000'x150' and 8,000'x150' concrete and asphalt runways capable of supporting large cargo aircraft
- 56 acres of concrete ramp space for aircraft parking
- Instrument Landing System (ILS)
- Airport fire department on site w/ARFF trained firefighters
- Tower operated by L-3 Communications

taxiways with asphalt. We are also hoping to receive some stimulus money to rebuild part of the runway and improve taxiway signage. Another thing I'm excited about is working with the Perrin Museum to have a front-gate display of five aircraft that were flown when this was an Air Force base."

The control tower has also been refurbished and is operated by L-3 Communications, which opened up an air traffic control academy at the airport this past January.

The Driving Force

"I think the strength of this county is the cooperative effort that exists," says Gary. "We have a great relationship between the RMA, county judge, the commissioners and city officials throughout the county. We partner on everything we are working on for the benefit of Grayson County."

Retz echoes the sentiment and adds, "It's a great combination and the synergistic benefits of all those entities partnering together are going to boost the area. We have an airport with uncongested airspace, runways that are long and wide, close to DFW, and perhaps, most importantly, it is in a business-friendly award-winning community. NTRA is not just an airport, but an opportunity for many people to come in and grow their business." ♦

BUSINESS ADVANTAGES

- Existing 440-acre business park
- 325 acres shovel ready for development
- Foreign trade zone
- Custom incentive packages
- Designated air attainment area
- Outstanding workforce training and recruitment
- Accelerated decision-making process
- Unrestricted airspace

For more information about NTRA, please visit their Web site at <http://www.northtexasregionalairport.com/>

VALERO NAMED FLIGHT DEPARTMENT OF THE YEAR

Professional Pilot magazine recently honored Valero as the flight department of the year in its December 2008 issue. The company operates a Gulfstream G550 and two G450s on global schedules with a 36-member flight department based out of a new 52,000-square-foot hangar based at San Antonio International Airport.

Valero recently contributed \$500,000 for a runway expansion project at the Moore County Airport in Dumas. ♦

CHANGES ON THE TEXAS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Texas Aviation Advisory Committee chairman Jim Schwertner has stepped down from his post following his appointment by Governor Perry to the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents. On March 9, 2009, at their regularly scheduled meeting, committee members elected vice chairman Gordon Richardson of Caldwell as the new chairman and Pete Huff of McKinney as the new vice chairman. One vacancy currently exists on the committee pending an appointment by the Texas Transportation Commission. ♦



Outgoing Texas Aviation Advisory Committee chairman Jim Schwertner (kneeling) along with other members of the Aviation Division and advisory committee pose for a final group photo before Schwertner heads to the Texas A&M System Board of Regents.

HOWARD HUGHES' SIKORSKY AT COUNTY AIRPORT

Jesse Bootenhoff settles into the same seat from which legendary aviator and eccentric billionaire Howard Hughes once planned to fly around the world.

"For its day, when it was built, everything was first class," Bootenhoff said from the thickly padded pilot's seat in the cockpit of the amphibious Sikorsky S-43. "He had movie stars like Gail Russell and Greta Garbo on here, and he would fly people to Houston and have business meetings on board."

The fuselage boasts wide, tan leather seats, a tall aisle and a large, four-compartment drink dispenser. The 10-ton "flying boat" features a full kitchen, bathroom and teak wood walls, and still includes many of the original instruments installed when the twin-engine, heavy-gauge aluminum plane was built in 1937.

The smell of leather, age and mechanical parts mixes with mustiness and memories inside the propeller-driven aircraft that Bootenhoff, 76, a retired Delta Airlines pilot now living in Alvin, said remains a few tweaks away from being air-worthy.

Outside, the only access to the plane is through a hatch on top, near the rear of the massive machine. The giant wings join in the middle and look like one wing, sitting on top of the craft and spanning 86 feet, holding the 1,200-horsepower piston engines.

Round porthole windows line both sides of the plane, and landing gear extends from each side like two giant locust legs. On one side of the nose is painted, "Pilot Howard Hughes, 1937

S-43 Sikorsky" and on the other, the names of the five other pilots who've flown the plane, including Bootenhoff.

"It's a unique machine," he said, almost reverently. "It's in good shape, and people come from all over the United States to see it."

At 54-feet long and about two stories tall, the Sikorsky is the largest of three planes in a 10,000-square-foot hangar at the Brazoria County Airport.

It also is certainly one of the most remarkable, Airport Manager Jeff Bilyeu said.

"Fascinating," said Bilyeu, who's been in Brazoria County more than a year but had not climbed into the tightly locked Sikorsky until this week. "This is aviation history. I had no idea this existed when I got here. It was one of those out-of-the-blue surprises."

HUGHES' PERSONAL PLANE

The reclusive Hughes died in April 1976, his passing surrounded by as much mystery as his life.

It's no secret the plane's fuselage once was all fuel tank, rigged to hold 2,100 gallons for the magnate movie-producer's trip around the globe.

"He bought the Sikorsky in 1937 to fly around the world," Bootenhoff said. →



Jesse Bootenhoff, current caretaker of the S-43, stands inside the cockpit of the historic airplane.

World War II short-circuited the attempt, which he never made. Hughes had the fuel tanks removed and the inside decorated with the top amenities of the day. Hughes' Sikorsky was one of the shining stars in the aviation aficionado's fleet and is the only one of its kind still in operable condition.

"It's the only flying one in the world," Bootenhoff said. "There's a non-flying replica in a Tucson, Arizona, museum."

Hughes' final flight in the Sikorsky came in the early 1950s, when he took it across the country, making numerous stops to refuel the 300-gallon tanks that allowed just less than three hours in the air at a time. His last stop was home, in Houston.

"He kept the plane at Hobby under guard and he never flew it again," Bootenhoff said. "He would take it out and hold business meetings on it, but he never flew it after that."

California entrepreneur Ronald Van Kregten bought the plane after Hughes' death. Van Kregten and his wife since have died, and the plane now is owned by their estate. It likely will be sold soon.

The plane is now worth between \$5 million and \$24 million, depending on who's asking.

"It's Howard Hughes and his reputation," Bootenhoff said. "Something is only worth what someone will pay for it, and this was Howard Hughes' personal plane."

OFF THE GROUND

Amenities such as individual lights and a small, round, adjustable air conditioning vent at each seat help make the plane impressive, said Doug Banks, Brazoria County base manager for Air Logistics. He's one of a handful of people who've toured the plane in the last few years.

"This was high-tech when it was made," Banks said in a hushed tone, peering from the galley into the black-painted metal cockpit featuring a pair of escape hatches over the pilot and co-pilot seats. "I'd love to fly it. You had to be quite affluent to even get this close to Hughes back then."

Bootenhoff doesn't claim to have known Hughes, but he has flown the enigmatic entrepreneur's aircraft slightly more than Hughes did. When he first took over the log book, it registered 499.1 hours. It now has about 1,000, he said.

In late 1974, the engines were removed for overhaul, and the wings were removed. The craft was trucked to the La Porte airport, where it was stored in a hangar until 1988, when it was moved to Wolfe Air Park in Manvel.

Van Kregten had crews reassemble the plane, and Bootenhoff's involvement with it was chance. He kept a Cessna 310 at the La Porte hanger and overheard a conversation between the airport manager and Van Kregten, who wanted the plane trucked to California.

"I opened my big mouth and said, 'Ron, why don't you just put

it together, and I'll fly it out there for you,'" Bootenhoff said.

In 1990, Bootenhoff moved the craft to a hangar at Houston Southwest airfield near Fresno. He flew the plane to a few shows around the country, including California and Florida. Its last flight was in May 2001, when Bootenhoff made the 12-minute trek from Fresno to Angleton.

"We kept it here because he had me to take care of it for nothing," he said. "Well, and I get to fly it."

FLYING HIGH AGAIN

Bootenhoff hasn't had the plane in the air since 2001, but said the Sikorsky could be ready for its next trip on short notice.

"It could be made flyable again without too much trouble," he said. "Somebody just needs to spend the time and money to get it going. And that's the plan right now, I think. It will make it easier to sell if it's flying."

He hopes the historic plane will be used and not placed in a museum, which was the fate of Hughes' most-famous plane, the gargantuan, wooden "Spruce Goose." That plane, with a wingspan of 320 feet, is in its own hangar at the Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum in Oregon, according to information at www.sprucegoose.org.

When that time comes for the Sikorsky's final flight from Angleton, Bootenhoff will be more thankful than sad that it flew into his life.

"It'll be a real fond memory," he said, looking from the cockpit into the galley. "I've been there and done that. I've never taken a nickel for flying it. I do it because it's a piece of history and aviation is what gave me such a beautiful life. I'm sure it's not flown its last. ... I feel pretty confident I'll see it in the air again."

FLIGHT FACTS

- *Howard Hughes flew his Sikorsky S-43 for 499.1 hours, according to the log book.*
- *Only five people, including Hughes, have flown the plane.*
- *The plane is worth \$5 million to \$20 million.*
- *Before it was remodeled, the plane could hold 2,100 gallons of fuel.*

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2009



Texas Aviation Conference

Sponsored by: The Texas Department of Transportation
Co-Sponsored by: Texas Airports Council and Texas Aviation Association

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

May 11-13, 2009

Hilton Austin

500 East 4th Street, Austin, Texas 78701

Conference Registration

Pre-registration is recommended and will help us in planning and preparing a better conference. If you pre-register, your name tag and program packet will be ready when you arrive at the hotel. You may pre-register until May 1 and the fee is \$175. **A \$25 fee will be added for all on-site registrations.** You are encouraged to register online **OR** you may choose to return the enclosed registration form (one form per registrant) with payment to "TTI, Event Management and Planning" (EM&P) at the address listed on the form. You may pay your registration fee by check, money order or credit card. **The registration fee covers conference handouts, break refreshments, Monday's get acquainted reception, Tuesday's luncheon, award's banquet and social.** Note: TxDOT employees are exempt from the registration fee but must register in advance.

Hotel Reservations

The Hilton Austin room block has sold out. The Hilton Garden also has a block of rooms available. You may contact the hotel at 877/782-9444.

Special Activities

On Monday, May 11, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., our 12th Annual Golf Tournament is scheduled at the *Bluebonnet Hill Golf Club in Austin, Texas*. There will be a fee. *All golfers must be registered to attend the conference.* Please contact TTI Event Management and Planning at 979/862-1219 for more details.

Also on Monday, there is the Second Annual Bowling Tournament, *sponsored by Garver Engineers*, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. *Participants are not required to be registered for the conference.* Please contact TTI Event Management and Planning at 979/862-1219 for more details.

A get acquainted reception is planned for Monday evening from 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. The reception will be located in the Exhibit Area with hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar.

On Tuesday, we will have our evening Awards Banquet located at the hotel. All participants are encouraged to attend. Guest tickets are also available for \$30. Tickets can be purchased online when you register for the conference. There will be a reception, *sponsored by Texas Airports Council*, prior to the banquet and a social, *sponsored by Rodriguez Engineering*, following the banquet.

Shuttle Service

If you need transportation from Austin Bergstrom International Airport, Super Shuttle is available. Upon arrival proceed to the lower level and collect your luggage, follow the signs to the Super Shuttle ticket counter located next to Baggage Carousel 1. Tickets can be purchased one-way or round-trip.

Special Needs

In compliance with ADA requirements, participants with special needs can be reasonably accommodated by contacting EM&P by phone: 979/862-1219, toll free 888/550-5577, or fax 979/862-1225, at least five working days prior to the conference.

2009 Texas Aviation

2009 TENTATIVE CO

MONDAY, MAY 11, 2009

11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Golf Tournament (Bluebonnet Hill Golf Club)
11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Bowling Tournament (sponsored by Garver Engineers)
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Exhibitor Set-up
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration/Check-in
5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Exhibits Open
5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Get Acquainted Reception

TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2009

7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Registration Desk Open
7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast (in Exhibit Hall)
8:30 a.m. – 8:50 a.m.	Welcoming Address and Words from the Sponsors <i>Dave Fulton, Director, TxDOT, Aviation Division</i> <i>Tim O'Krongley, Vice President of Texas Airports Council</i> <i>Jay Carpenter, Secretary/Past President of Texas Aviation Association</i>
8:50 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Introduction of Aviation Advisory Committee <i>Dave Fulton, Director, TxDOT, Aviation Division</i>
9:00 a.m. – 9:20 a.m.	State of the Aviation Division Address <i>Dave Fulton, Director, TxDOT, Aviation Division</i>
9:20 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	The Future of 100LL and Alternative Aviation Fuels <i>Dr. Max Shauck, University of Houston</i>
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Coffee Break
10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Professionally Managed Share Ownership for General Aviation <i>Mike Brosler, CEO and President, PlaneSmart</i>
10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Aviation/Airport Updates <i>Bill Gunn, TxDOT, Aviation Division</i>
11:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	New Trends in Aviation: BA609 Tiltrotor <i>Donald Barbour, Principal, DJ Barbour Consulting, LLC</i>
11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Luncheon
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Texas Airports Council Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approval of minutes from previous meeting• Election of 2009 Officers• TAC Goals for 2009• General Discussion

Afternoon Breakout/Workshop Sessions

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	I: Using the Texas Airport Zoning Act: Ensuring future compatibility for two airports in Val Verde County - Del Rio International Airport and Laughlin Air Force Base <i>Janice Pokrant, City Planner of Del Rio</i> <i>Jennifer A. Harris, Chief of Asset Optimization, Laughlin AFB</i> <i>Robert "Beau" Nettleton, Commissioner, Val Verde County</i>
	II: General Aviation Security Training for Small Airports <i>Waukesha County Technical College, Center for Law Enforcement, Homeland Security and Counter-Terrorism Initiatives</i>

2009 n Conference

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	III: Airport Markings, Paints and Regulations <i>Mark Cole, Eagle Enterprises</i>
3:15 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.	Break I: Using the Texas Airport Zoning Act: Ensuring future compatibility for two airports in Val Verde County - Del Rio International Airport and Laughlin Air Force Base <i>Janice Pokrant, City Planner of Del Rio</i> <i>Jennifer A. Harris, Chief of Asset Optimization, Laughlin AFB</i> <i>Robert "Beau" Nettleton, Commissioner, Val Verde County</i>
4:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	II: General Aviation Security Training for Large Airports <i>Waukesha County Technical College, Center for Law Enforcement, Homeland Security and Counter-Terrorism Initiatives</i>
4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	III: Pavement Evaluation <i>Craig Phipps, KSA Engineers; Tim Martin, Fugro Consultants</i>
5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Break I: Airport Marketing <i>Lois Kramer, KRAMER aerotek, principal Investigator ACRP 01-04, Marketing Techniques for Small Airports</i> <i>William A. Retz, Retz & Associates, North Texas Regional Airport/Grayson County Marketing Team</i>
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	II: RAMP "Deal or No Deal" <i>Kari Campbell, TxDOT, RAMP Coordinator</i> <i>Mike Reagan, TxDOT, Tyler District RAMP Coordinator</i> III: Pavement Evaluation <i>Craig Phipps, KSA Engineers; Tim Martin, Fugro Consultants</i> Reception (Sponsored by the Texas Airports Council) Awards Banquet <i>General Aviation Airport Manager of the Year, Most Improved Airport, Airport of the Year, Reliever Airport of the Year, Aviation Art Contest Winners</i>
8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	Evening Social (Sponsored By Rodriguez Engineering)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2009

8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Exhibits and Registration Desk Open
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast Buffet
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Washington/Reauthorization Update <i>Henry Ogrodzinski, President, NASAO</i>
9:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	Airport Cooperative Research Program <i>Linda Howard, TxDOT, Aviation Division, Chair; Transportation Research Board Committee on Aviation System Planning (AV020)</i>
9:45 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	The Texas Intrastate Air Service Initiative <i>Barry Clark, President, Barry Clark & Associates</i>
10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	TxDOT/DOT-FAA AIP PROGRAM & LISTENING SESSION <i>Dave Fulton, TxDOT; Mike Nicely, FAA Airports Development Office, SW Region</i>
10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Prize Drawing: Grand Prize, 1st Place, 2nd Place, 3rd Place

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the Aviation Division at 1-800/68-PILOT

2009



Texas Aviation Conference REGISTRATION FORM

Register on-line at <http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/tac09/>

To register for this conference, complete the form below and return with \$125 check made payable to: TTI-Avtn09, and send to Event Management and Planning, Texas Transportation Institute, Texas A&M University System, 3135 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-3135. Phone: 979/862-1219 and Fax 979/862-1225. NO PURCHASE ORDERS ACCEPTED. ONLY VISA, MASTER CARD AND DISCOVER CREDIT CARDS WILL BE ACCEPTED. ONLY CHECKS FROM U.S. BANKS ARE ACCEPTED. **TxDOT employees are exempt from the registration fee, but must register on-line.** If paying by check or money order, you may register on-line and then mail your payment. Only cancellations received in writing to EM&P by 5:00 p.m. on April 10, 2009, will be refunded, less a \$50 handling fee.

Name _____

Title _____ Company/Organization _____

Address, City, State, Zip Code _____

Day Phone Number _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

I will be attending the following functions during the conference:

Note: The golf and bowling tournaments run concurrently.

Monday	Golf Tournament	Yes	No
Monday	Bowling Tournament	Yes	No
Monday	Get-Acquainted	Yes	No
Tuesday	Awards Banquet	Yes	No
Tuesday	Evening Social	Yes	No

I have enclosed my check or money order **OR**

I would prefer to pay with credit card (circle one) Visa M/C Discover

Credit Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____ Amount _____

For TTI Use Only:

Check Number _____

Check Amount _____

Receipt Number _____

NOTE: If you are taking a guest to the awards banquet who is not registered, please include an additional \$30. Please include their names below:

GRANTS RECEIVED

Moore County Airport	\$5,000,480	The aviation work consists of seeding, marking RW 1-19, install fence, relocating Farmer's Road, adjusting gas line, replacing electrical vault, reconstructing & widening RW 1-19, constructing concrete apron, overlaying apron, extending RW 1-19, extending parallel TW RW 1 end, installing TW elevated edge reflectors, replacing MIRLs RW 1-19, & signage, replacing PLASIs w/ PAPI-4s RW 1-19, removing tetrahedran/installing lighted windcone and replacing rotating beacon and tower.
Arlington Municipal Airport	\$400,000	The aviation work consists of relocating the precision approach path indicator-4, Runway 34.
Georgetown Municipal Airport	\$40,974	The aviation construction work consists of fencing improvements.
Rusk County Airport	\$1,183,056	The aviation construction work consists of rehabilitating and marking Runway 16-34; rehabilitating and marking Runway 12-30; rehabilitating taxiway to runway 12 end; rehabilitating hangar aprons, terminal apron, north apron, south apron and partial parallel taxiway to Runway 16 end and improving runway safety area.
Kickapoo Downtown Airport	\$750,000	The aviation construction work consists of constructing 6-unit T-hangars.
Possum Kingdom Airport	\$1,106,140	The aviation construction work consists of extending, rehabilitating and marking Runway 3-21; rehabilitating turnaround Runway 3 end; rehabilitating hangar access taxiway; constructing turnaround Runway 21; rehabilitating apron; rehabilitating and marking taxiways; extending medium intensity runway lights on Runway 21; replacing medium intensity runway lights, regulator, lighting vault, land signage on Runway 3-21; replacing rotating beacon and tower; installing precision approach path indicators 2 at Runway 3-21; and replacing wind cone.
Brownwood Regional Airport	\$345,402	The aviation construction work consists of rehabilitating and marking Runway 17-35.
Addison Airport	\$345,370	The aviation construction work consists of rehabilitating apron in the area leading to and surrounding the fuel farm.
South Texas International Airport at Edinburg	\$1,607,700	The aviation construction work consists of constructing rigid pavement cargo apron.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS GRANTS

1. Scurry County for the Snyder Airport - \$2.0M – Reconstruct RWY 17/35
2. Grayson County for the North Texas Regional Airport – \$6.8M Overlay RWY 17/35
3. Sulpher Springs for the Sulpher Springs Airport – \$3.0M Reconstruct Taxiway
4. City of Brady for the Brady Airport - \$.8M – Partial Reconstruct RWY 17/35

NOTE: These grants are estimates. Actual grant awards will be based on actual project costs. There will be additional airport improvement work that will be done at Snyder, Grayson County and Brady in conjunction with these projects funded from the FAA AIP program at 95 percent of project costs. ♦

WINGTIPS PROFILES

AVIATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER PETE HUFF

Over the next several issues, Wingtips will profile the members of the Texas Aviation Advisory Committee. The six members are appointed by the Texas Transportation Commission for six-year terms and assist the Texas Department of Transportation with its aviation development programs. Committee members also work with members of the Legislature on various aviation issues. Members must have at least five years of experience in the field of aviation and a strong interest in supporting Texas' general aviation program.

In this issue, we profile Committee Member Pete Huff.

Eight decades ago, a plane fell from the sky onto the Huff family farm in rural Virginia—an unusual event considering many Americans had never even seen an airplane in the 1920s. That crash landing would change the lives of Oliver Huff and his unborn sons.

After helping the barnstormer get the plane air-worthy again, the pilot promised to come back and take Huff for a ride. He did come back, and the soon-to-be-former farmer took what would become his first of many flights.

“My father became a pilot,” says Pete Huff, the second son born to Oliver and Nellie Huff. “Dad tried to scratch out a living during the depression by offering sightseeing flights in the Virginia mountains. Like farming though, that didn’t work out too well financially.”

At age four, in 1940, Pete came to Texas with his family while his father became a career commercial pilot for a fledgling company called Braniff International Airways. Pete’s brother followed in his father’s footsteps, also becoming a commercial pilot. Although Pete dreamed of flying someday, he preferred a career in engineering. Besides, his →



Pete Huff stands by his homemade plane after arriving in Shannon, Ireland, in July 2005.



Pete Huff (third from the left) standing alongside friends after arriving in Germany. His plane is immediately behind them.

medical history—having survived diphtheria when he was two and a polio diagnosis at age 12—threatened his chances of even flying recreationally.

“My health problems eventually went away, including my paralysis,” Pete says. “But by that time, my dream of starting my own business in the engineering field was the only thing I was thinking about.”

In time, Pete did become a pilot and later enrolled at Rice University as one of the only college kids in the nation to own a plane. However, he stopped flying to concentrate on his other dream—earning degrees from both Rice and the Harvard Business School. Back home in Dallas, Huff began manufacturing pneumatic valves for the semiconductor and automobile industries through his company, DYNAMCO. Huff eventually moved the business to McKinney. As the business grew and became a success, Huff decided to start flying again in 1983.

“I figured it was either now or never,” Huff says. “In 1987, I bought and built a kit plane and used it on sales calls across the country.” Pete also wanted to fly the single-engine plane internationally, but had to make numerous modifications so it could cross the Atlantic.

In a 1995 article from the *McKinney Courier-Gazette*, Pete was interviewed about his upcoming flight:

“This is a boyhood dream for me,” Huff said at that time. “It’s the ultimate form of freedom...like you’re in heaven, so beautiful and serene, especially when you break through a cloud and there’s nobody there but you. It’s a wonderful experience.”

Later, he would describe his successful flight across the Atlantic as “pure elation.”

Huff sold his business in 2001, but flying remains a passion. Currently, Pete is an elected member of the McKinney City Council and serves as the liaison for the Collin County Regional Airport. He’s also been a member of the airport board. His work helped to shape the facility into one of the finest in the state. →

Pete Huff got to realize both of his dreams. He built his own company and his own airplane. In all likelihood, neither dream would have been possible had it not been for a barnstormer with engine trouble a decade before his birth.

Wingtips: How important is aviation to you?

Huff: Flying gets in your blood and becomes a part of you. It provides a serene sense of freedom and beauty that nothing else does. It has been a major part of my life.

Wingtips: What was your motivation in accepting the appointment on the Texas Aviation Advisory Committee?

Huff: Aviation is more than flying. It is an industry that has to be fostered and guided to provide the benefits to business and municipalities. My appointment to the Texas Aviation Advisory Committee offered me the opportunity to help Texas Aviation grow and prosper.

Wingtips: Was there a memorable experience that you can share that has occurred during your term?

Huff: I have been most impressed with the TxDOT Aviation Staff that does the real work. The team is led by Dave Fulton with division managers Bill Fuller, Karon Wiedermann, Linda Howard and Jay Joseph. Collectively they represent scores of years of experience and operate as a well-organized, focused team. This group really makes the TxDOT Aviation Funding System work so well.

Wingtips: What are the biggest challenges you see for general aviation going forward?

Huff: The biggest challenges for aviation are government over regulation and future funding. The Transportation Security Administration is overreacting on many aviation fronts. The federal government is grabbing airspace at an alarming rate. Funding is always an issue. Fortunately, Texas has achieved an appropriate balance of funding where many other states have not.

Wingtips: What would you like the public to know about general aviation in Texas and why non-pilots should care about it?

Huff: Texas has perhaps the best group of airports in the nation. They provide business the tools that result in economic development to support our cities and state, which otherwise would not occur. ♦

For more information on the TxDOT Aviation Advisory Committee, visit: http://www.txdot.gov/services/aviation/advisory_committee/default.htm.

TEXAS AVIATION ASSOCIATION MEMBERS ELECT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At its recent annual meeting, members of the Texas Aviation Association (TXAA), a non-profit organization of pilots and aviation enthusiasts that promotes general aviation and airports in Texas, elected its board of directors for 2009.

Elected to the board, which will provide strategic guidance to the association this year, were Jay Carpenter of Austin, Baron Carter of Lago Vista, Laura Jolley of St. Louis, MO, Ken Kooock of Austin, Jay McKinney of Austin, James Rank of Austin, Eugene Robinson of McKinney, Paul Smith of Georgetown and Conrad Werkenthin of Austin.

Carpenter was also elected Chairman of the Association's Management Committee for 2009.

Advisers to the board of directors are Shelly deZevallos, Regional Representative for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association; Bill Gunn, Director of Safety for the Aviation Division of the Texas Department of Transportation; and Stephen Hadley, Regional Representative for the National Business Aviation Association.

Keynote speaker at the annual meeting was Ron Henriksen, who is developing Bird's Nest Airport in Manor, Texas, in eastern Travis County, to accommodate more small aircraft and business aircraft. Mr. Henriksen and Andrew Perry, Vice President of Development, showed photographs of the construction work and updated TXAA members and their guests on progress toward building a new runway at Bird's Nest Airport. ♦

TEENAGED PILOT TACKLES SAFETY, RECEIVES EAGLE SCOUT STATUS

by Rick Davenport,
Texas Transportation Institute

At 18, Tommy Waldo takes the Boy Scout Oath seriously, being involved in scouting since elementary school. Along the way, he has built a resume worthy of someone much older. The high school senior began taking flying lessons at 14 and completed his solo at 16. It was flying that led him to his greatest achievement to date — becoming an Eagle Scout.

"I noticed that the wind was much different on both ends of the long runway at the Taylor Municipal Airport, where I learned to fly," Waldo said. "The wind could be calm on one end and gusty on the other." Waldo was determined to get another windsock installed at the airport — a goal that became his Eagle Scout service project. Little did he know all the hoops he'd have to jump through to see his windsock to completion. Luckily, he had the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) on his side.

First, Waldo spoke with Daniel Benson, an airport planner with the Aviation Division of TxDOT who worked with the Federal Aviation Administration to determine the windsock location based on strict design requirements.

During the approval process, Waldo also received some much needed help from Alton Young, the facilities construction manager in TxDOT's Aviation Division. It didn't hurt that Young was already an Eagle Scout, earning his honor 40 years earlier. "For a 16-year-old to have the insight to realize the wind differentials...well, I was impressed," Young said. "I was glad to help him anyway I could."

"The project started in the summer of 2006 when I made a presentation before the airport board," Waldo recalled, after looking back at the detailed records he was required to keep in earning his Eagle Scout. "After it was approved, it had to go through the Taylor City Council. After everyone signed off on it, we started doing the actual construction on January 19, 2008."

It was a simple idea with a worthy result. The windsock has helped pilots gauge the shifting winds at Taylor. Waldo has learned that coming up with ideas is sometimes easier than getting things done. It's a lot like flying, Waldo realized on his solo flight. "Taking off is the easy part, and flying is a piece of cake. But landing can get you. My landing was very rough. But the end product was worth all the effort."

And so was his service project. Waldo was honored with his Eagle Scout during ceremonies at the State Capitol in Austin on August 17, 2008. In attendance was fellow Eagle Scout, Alton Young.

Waldo plans on pursuing either an aeronautical or nuclear engineering degree at Texas A&M University next fall. Judging from his determination so far, it's a pretty safe bet that he'll achieve that goal, too. ♦



Tommy Waldo and TxDOT Facilities Construction Manager Alton Young stand beside the newly constructed windsock for the Taylor Municipal Airport.

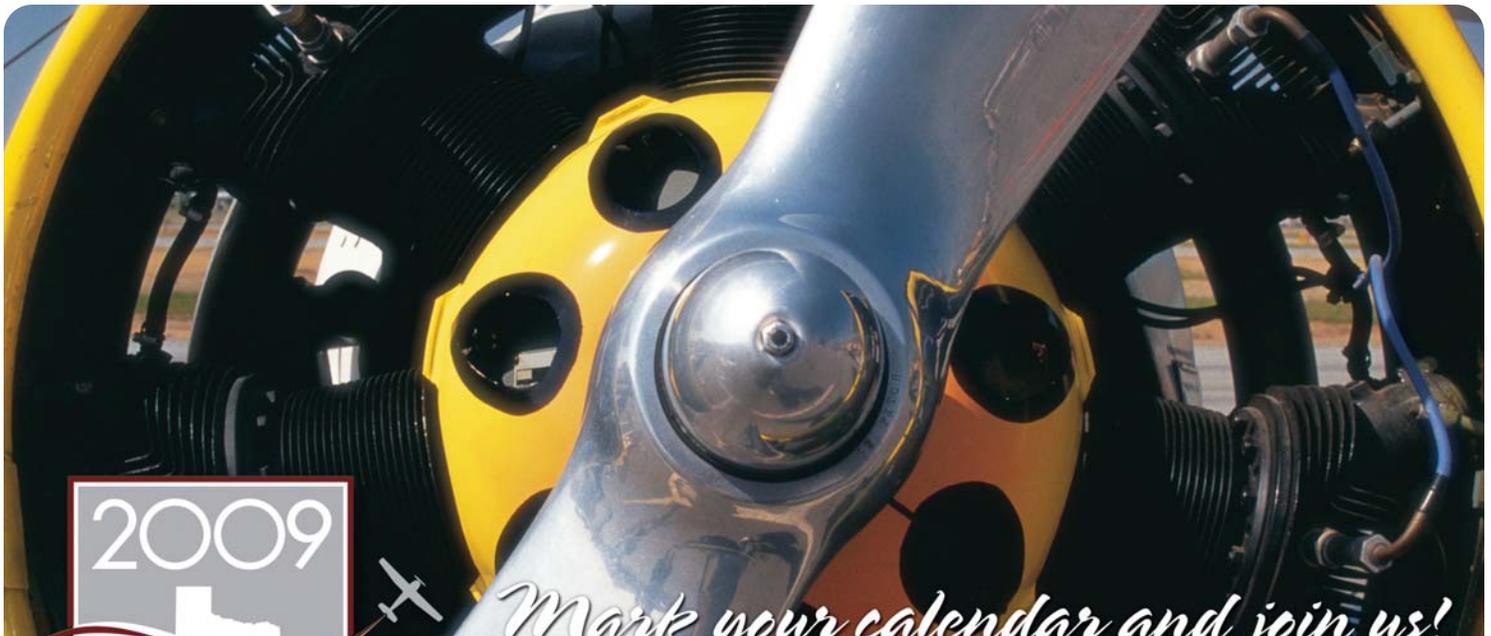


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Mark your calendar and join us!

Make plans to attend the **27th Annual Texas Aviation Conference**. To be held on May 11, 12 and 13, 2009, at the Hilton Austin Hotel located in downtown Austin.

Be sure to check out our www.txdot.gov or TTI Web site <http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/find.htm> for up-to-date events.

Social activities will include our annual golf tournament, bowling tournament sponsored by Garver Engineers, get acquainted reception, another great evening reception sponsored by Rodriguez Engineering, awards banquet and lunch, all at an exciting new location in downtown Austin. We are working on making this conference better than ever.

