

# WINGTIPS

JUNE-JULY 1998

## ANOTHER TAC, ANOTHER COUP, ANOTHER WIN!

BY MARIE C. PEINADO

AUSTIN- "We built it and they came!" was the overall reaction Texas Department of Transportation Aviation Division staff felt after another successful Texas Aviation Conference that was held in Austin on June 3-5, 1998.

This journal entry is specially for those who could not make it to the conference this year, nostalgic in that the actual conference went so fast that before you knew it, it was over! Goodbye friends, see you next year!

Months and months of preparation-meeting after meeting, mailing after mailing, the juggling of workshops, session times and speakers, food menu selection, coffee, tea or -decisions, decisions! Now, perish the thought that everything went as planned or that we will tell you with a straight face that, "it all went smoothly." We will own up to it, though; there were a few glitches which I will relate to you later, if I can slide by the editor's pen. Seriously, what really counts in the end is the delivery. Absolutely!

Our conference delivered an agenda that attracted 340 participants from Texas as well as nationwide. Old friends and new friends who welcomed the new inclusiveness of the conference, starting with the change in the conference name from Texas Airport Operators Conference to Texas Aviation Conference. The focusing of various perspectives was reflected in the issues that were featured in our presentations: regional air service, aviation education, Certified Flight Instructor Clinics (CFI), airport tax issues, aviation law, aviation organizations, airport program management, airport maintenance, airport inspections, grant allocations, federal and state legislative issues. The program availed willing participants a choice of information that best suited their needs.

As has been a tradition, the conference was co-hosted by TxDOT Aviation Division and the Texas Association of Airport Executives and was held at the DoubleTree Inn.

Kicking off the conference on Wednesday afternoon was a small golf outing at the Bluebonnet Hill Golf Club with aviation staff and conference participants. The camaraderie was great and expectations are that this event will become an annual happening at TAC.

New faces, new booths and new products perked visitors' attention during the conference. More than 51 exhibitors



TAC participants taking a break!

registered and provided hospitality to all, along with information on aviation product innovations. On Wednesday evening, exhibitors hosted a superb "Get Acquainted" reception in the exhibit area, that included an ice cream wagon and an ice cream lass who stole the show.

A small challenge was our Hangar Party at Georgetown Airport on Thursday afternoon. Temperatures nearing one hundred degrees, 4:30 p.m. rush hour traffic on I-35, and survival directions-land and surface-to the airport provided by one of our pilots made this an "are we there yet" experience. But, "never fear", the music and food were great, plenty of room to socialize! Considering the heat, and other hurdles, the turnout was outstanding. The only casualty was a bus that developed an air-conditioning leak and had to return to the barn. All told, everyone got into the spirit and into the swing-dancing.

A special salute goes to the dedicated pilots for their aerobatic performances at Georgetown Municipal Airport-fantastic fly-bys and aircraft formations-excellent flying! A special hand also goes to those who handled the static displays - nothing like seeing those birds and hearing the revving of aircraft engines to get one's adrenalin flowing.

Friday's banquet luncheon was the big event. Confidentiality is the word when it comes to awards at TAC. Staff members are sworn to secrecy from the time of award selection to the presentations - no leaking here or else! You could feel the excitement and anticipation as the crowd gathered to be seated at their assigned tables and to be fed-food and a few proclamations. Slowly, the emcee proceeded at his own pace, breath by breath, to announce the winners.

*continued page 2*





## CONGRESS BEGINS PROCESS TO RE-AUTHORIZE FAA AIRPORT GRANT PROGRAM

Now that the massive highway improvement program has been signed into law by the President, Congress is focusing its attention toward re-enactment of legislation to re-authorize the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Improvement Program (AIP). The current legislation, which expires September 30, 1998, gives the FAA the authority to allocate grants for airport development to public airports and private relievers from revenues deposited in the Aviation Trust Fund. One bright spot in the proposed legislation is that general aviation, reliever, and non-primary commercial service airports stand to gain a little larger share of the pie - 20% of the total funds as compared to 18.5% under current law. However, federal funding is a two step process. Once re-authorization is completed, the appropriations process, which sets the actual level of funding, must begin. Bottom line, most people following the process expect that a one-year extension for AIP will be passed prior to October 1, with the funding level remaining at \$1.7 billion, the same as the current year. Even so, if the increase for programs managed by our agency increases from 18.5% to 20%, we should see a small increase in federal funding for our statewide airport grant program. Let's hope so.

## REGIONAL AIR SERVICE CONCERNS

As a result of deregulation of the airline industry in 1978, domestic passenger travel on our nation's commercial airlines has grown at a rapid rate. While most of this growth has occurred at larger airports, unfortunately, many smaller communities have experienced deterioration in service, higher fares, and limited travel options-scheduled flights.

Because many communities over the past few years have expressed their concerns about commercial air service, TxDOT Aviation Division hosted a meeting on April 29, 1998, to discuss this issue. The meeting drew 47 participants from 17 communities, including representatives from the Federal Aviation Administration and the Texas Department of Economic Development. The general consensus of the participants was: (1) all communities represented at the meeting have some degree of air service problems; (2) the lack of adequate air transportation service has a significant negative impact on economic development; and (3) finding solutions to the problems could be better achieved by working together as a group. A subsequent meeting is scheduled for July 9, 1998.

Congress is well aware of the concerns of smaller communities about their air service and has begun to draft legislation intended to improve the situation. Deregulation of the airline industry has been a tremendous success for the traveling public in America. However, many smaller communities desperately need better access to our nations air transportation system. Perhaps by working together on this issue, we can improve the dialogue with the airlines and resolve some of our transportation problems. (For more details see page 6, Cities Seeking Solutions.) ➔

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This year's aviation awards were:

### 1998 AIRPORT MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARD

**Stewart "Stew" Shirey,  
Manager,  
McGregor Municipal  
Airport, Waco, Texas**



*David S. Fulton,  
Director, Aviation  
Division, Texas Department  
of Transportation and  
Stewart "Stew" Shirey,  
Waco, Texas*

### 1998 MOST IMPROVED AIRPORT AWARD

➔ **Brownwood Regional Airport,  
Brownwood, Texas**

### 1998 AIRPORT OF THE YEAR AWARD

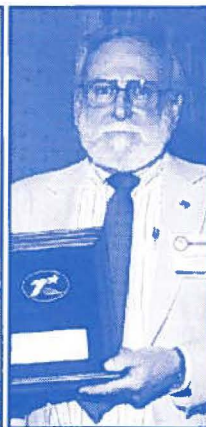
➔ **Avenger Field,  
Sweetwater, Texas**

### 1998 RELIEVER OF THE YEAR AWARD

➔ **Montgomery County,  
Conroe, Texas**



*Everett Pitts,  
Brownwood, TX*



*Paul McCarthy,  
Sweetwater, TX*



*John Mays,  
Conroe, TX*

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## WINGTIPS

is an official publication of the Aviation Division of Texas Department of Transportation. The intent of WINGTIPS is to keep the aviation community and others interested in aviation informed of local developments in aviation.

Comments and suggestions are welcome. Submission of articles is subject to space and editorial review; and should be directed to the editor at:



June-July 1998

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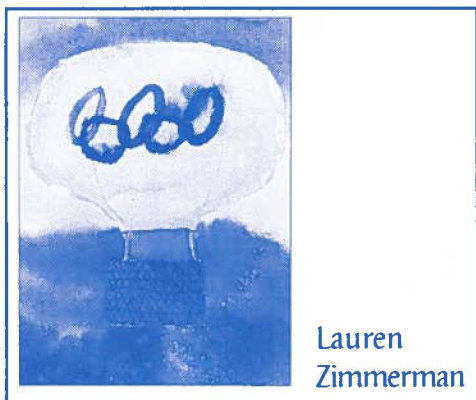
# "and the WINNERS are..."

We did it again! After a fantastic response to the call for art work, 1,194

children entered their drawings in the 1998 International Aviation Art Contest for the State of Texas. This year's theme was "Air Sports in The Olympics."

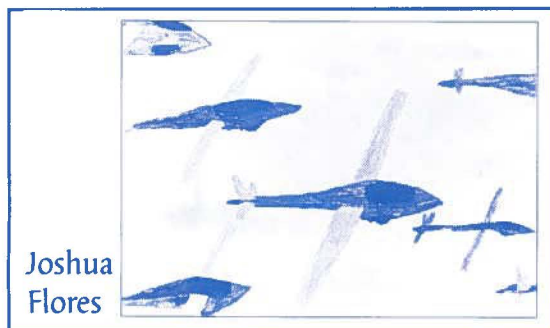
The contest drawings included all types of sporting and recreational aeronautics; for example, ballooning, gliding, parachuting, aerobatics, hang gliding, paragliding, microlight/ultralight flying, model aircraft, light aircraft and helicopter flying.

There were three first place winners from Texas, one in each category, and a first place national winner.



Lauren Zimmerman

Each First Place winner received a certificate and recognition from their state; and their drawings were advanced to the national competition in Washington, D.C. where national winners were selected. The national winner received a certificate, ribbon, framed photograph of his entry and a professional work of art from the American Society of Aviation Artists.



Joshua Flores

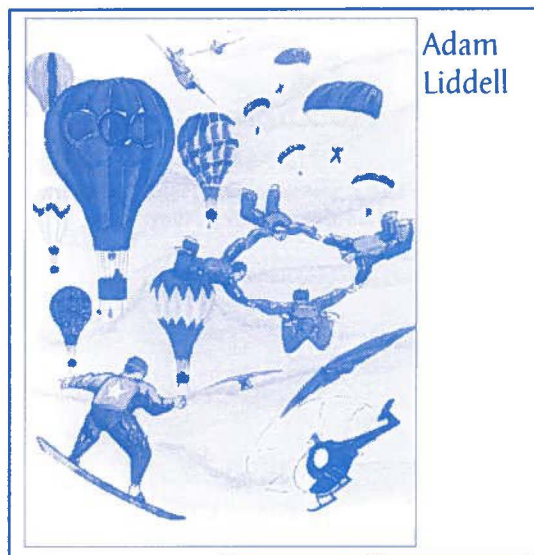


*And the winners were:*

Lauren Zimmerman, 9 years old, from West Elementary School in White Settlement, Texas won first place in Category I (Ages 6-9).

Joshua Flores, 10 years old, from R. L. Martin Accelerated School in Brownsville, Texas won first place in Category II (Ages 10-13).

Adam Liddell, 17 years old, from Fort Davis High School in Fort Davis, Texas won first place in Category III (Ages 14-17) and third place national winner.

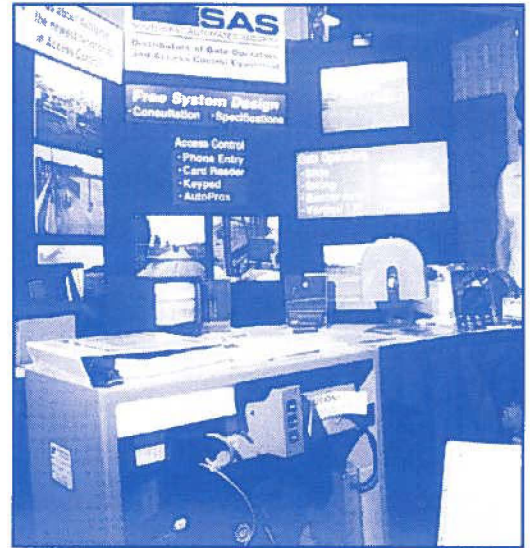


Adam Liddell

Although color markers, brushes, and ink have been put away for another year, the celebration continues for the winners of the 1998 International Aviation Art Contest.

*Congratulations again to our winners!*

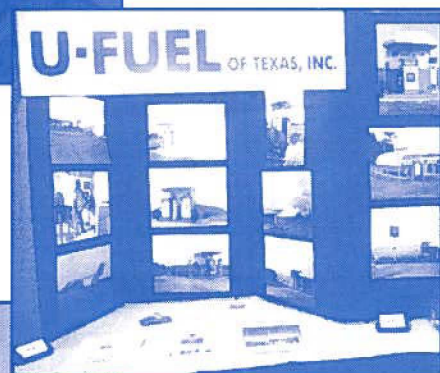




**Exhibitor**



**Aviation Advisory Committee: Left to Right - Mark Huffstutler, John Schwab, Corky Pledger, Bill Knowles, Blair Bisbey.**

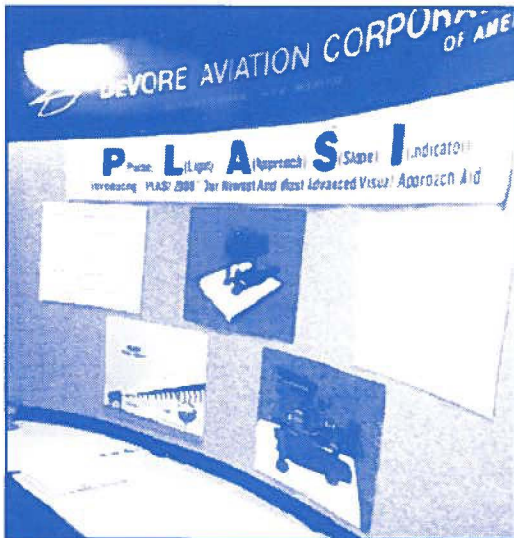


**Exhibitor**



**TAC Registration Desk**





**Exhibitor**



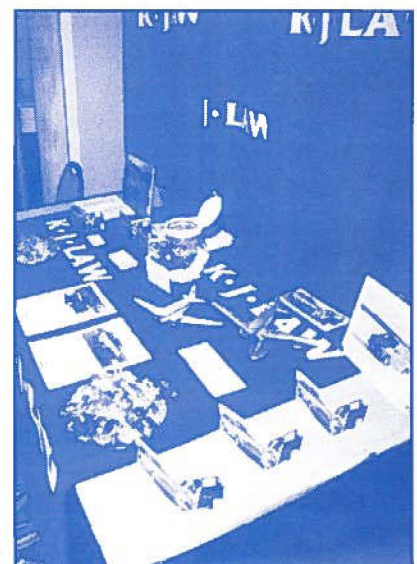
**Margarita Garcia, Aviation Division,  
displaying TAC raffle prize.**



**TAC participants socializing.**



**Loretta Scott, Grand Prairie**



**Exhibitor**



In the 1998 International Aviation Art Contest, there were three first place winners from Texas, one in each category, and a first place national winner. And the winners were:

- ★ **Lauren Zimmerman**, 9 years old, from West Elementary School in White Settlement, Texas won first place in Category I (Ages 6-9).
- ★ **Joshua Flores**, 10 years old, from R.L. Martin Accelerated School in Brownsville, Texas won first place in Category II (Ages 10-13).
- ★ **Adam Liddell**, 17 years old, from Fort Davis High School in Fort Davis, Texas won first place in Category III (Ages 14-17) and third place national winner.

After all the photo-poses, handshakes, and congratulations, the crowd moved slowly out of the big room; saying their farewells and making plans for next year. April sounds good for next year's conference. Yes, maybe, perhaps.

A very special thanks to all co-hosts/exhibitors and party sponsors at TAC; and to everyone that contributed to the success of this conference, in particular to conference coordinator, Yolanda Alvarez. ➔



## CITIES SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO AIR SERVICE PROBLEMS

AUSTIN-Texas airport officials from small and mid-sized cities-Abilene, Corpus Christi, San Angelo, Waco, Brownwood, Laredo, Texarkana, Sugar Land, Lufkin-and officials from the State of New Mexico met in Austin recently to discuss a wide range of air service problems.

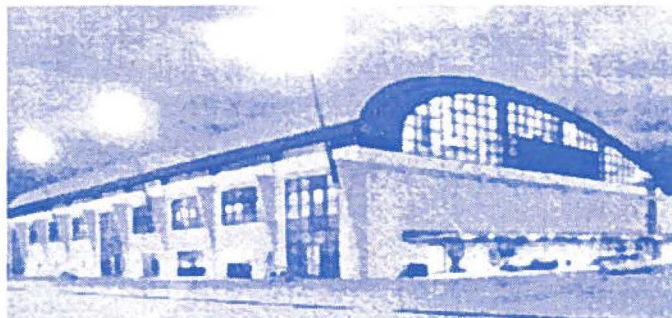
A recent U.S. Department of Transportation study on rural air fares shows that travelers in small communities pay higher fares than travelers in large hub airports. The cost per mile of travel can be up to 20 percent higher for rural travelers according to the study, partly because there are fewer travel options available, so airlines charge higher prices.

Congress is considering legislation that would give low-cost loan guarantees to companies planning to serve small communities. The proposed legislation would provide nationwide a total of \$10 million a year for small airports to market their communities and lure new airline service, and require the Transportation Department to determine in 180 days whether a large airline is lowering fares to oust a rival company.

After five hours of intense discussion, airport officials agreed to work together to solve their problems and meet again at a later date with a definite plan of action. Tentatively, a group from seven communities will research possible solutions and report back to the larger group for more input.

**UPDATE:** The next air service meeting will be held in Austin on July 9, 1998.

For more information, contact Suetta Murray, Administrative Assistant, TxDOT Aviation Division, 512/416-4504. ➔



## FESTIVITIES AT A NEW TERMINAL OPENING

BY MARIE C. PEINADO

LAREDO-Cleared for take-off was the definite mood set for the dedication of the new Laredo International Airport terminal opening on Saturday, June 27. The stunning new passenger terminal is certainly ready for passenger service! A jewel in the streets of Laredo, indeed!

The building was designed to resemble a section of an air foil, or aircraft wing, a graceful sweep of the roof line. The wing forms the portico, under which vehicles can drop off departing passengers and pick up arriving passengers; all shielded from the elements. Earth colors abound-Terra cotta, tans, browns, yellows, with blazes of deep blues. Plenty of passive lighting with "walls of windows" doing their job. Spacious entryways move visitors through automatic sliding glass doors to the "Sala de las Banderas" so named for the depictions of Laredo's seven flags inlaid in the terrazo floor. This airport has everything, cosmetically compact and well planned.

There are ample airline counters on the main floor, as well as dining areas. At the center of the big hall is the stainless steel escalator which rises to the departure lounge on the upper floor, and offers a panoramic view of airport activities. The second floor also holds a small newsstand and the most exquisite airport gift shop I have ever encountered in my travels. Charlotte Bergfeld and I graced that gift shop by being their "first" customers. Photographed and all... another sacrifice for TxDOT; and we are hoping or anticipating that the owner will frame Charlotte's check for posterity! As you can see, we enjoyed our trip!

Most impressive is the outside entry to the passenger terminal which features seven tall flag poles. Each pole flies the flag of one of the nations under which the City of Laredo has served: Spain, France, Mexico, Republic of the Rio Grande, Republic of Texas, the Confederacy and the United States of America. Truly, a preservation of Laredo's history greets you through their flags as you arrive at their airport.

Among the many dignitaries at the ribbon cutting ceremony were guest speakers, U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson and Laredo Airport Advisory Board Chairman, Jorge L. Trevino. Delivering the welcoming remarks was Laredo Mayor Elizabeth G. Flores. We congratulate Laredo International Airport Manager Jose Luis Flores on his achievement-new passenger terminal-at this airport and its portents for the future-regional economic growth and expanding international trade. Amid, the music and cake, flag formations and rituals, stands majestically a "great economic opportunity" for the City of Laredo. (More photographs in the next issue.) ➔



## FOURTH NATIONAL AVIATION SYSTEM PLANNING SYMPOSIUM

HOUSTON-The Fourth National Aviation System Planning Symposium was held in Houston in late March. The symposium was co-hosted by The Transportation Research Board and Texas Department of Transportation's Aviation Division; and was held in conjunction with the FAA's Annual General Aviation Forecast Conference. Texas Aviation Director David Fulton, along with the division's Planning and Programming Director Linda Howard and her staff, contributed significantly to making this symposium a great success.

Participants included consultants, researchers, airport managers, industry representatives, state officials from 17 state aviation agencies, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO).



David S. Fulton, Director, Aviation Division, TxDOT, Linda Howard, Planning and Programming Director, Aviation Division, TxDOT and NASAO's Henry Ogradzinski.

The event covered a wide range of aviation system planning topics—current issues facing system planners today, to the challenges as well as the opportunities they will face in the 21st century. Specific presentations included forecasting challenges and techniques; how funding is addressed in the system planning process; state aviation challenges and opportunities; aviation growth challenges; regional airport systems; the national priority system; military base closures; and capital investment case studies. Panel sessions and workshops were also held throughout the conference.

Gordon Bethune, President and CEO of Continental Airlines, was the luncheon speaker and gave participants an inside view of some of the challenges and issues facing the airline industry.

For additional information, contact Linda Howard at (512) 416-4540 or [lhoward@mailgw.dot.state.tx.us](mailto:lhoward@mailgw.dot.state.tx.us). ➔

### AUSTIN ... A QUICK LOOK!

Founded in 1839. ♦ Location: Austin is 225 miles from the Mexico border, San Antonio, Houston and Dallas are all within 200 miles. ♦ Austin has 11,800 acres of greenbelt, areas of uncultivated land used for recreation around the community. ♦ Largest urban bat colony in North America. ♦ Central Time Zone. ♦ Austin's average annual temperature is 70 degrees. ♦ Dress: Spring, summer, and fall are suitable for shorts, cotton, short sleeves and light dresses; in winter, a sweater or light jacket might be needed. A few days of the year during the coldest months, a heavy coat might be needed. ♦ Smoking is prohibited in public buildings except where authorized. ♦ Sales tax: 8.25 percent. ♦ Area code: 512 \*TAC Golf Outing was held at the Bluebonnet Hills Golf Course: 18 holes, 6,503 yards, par 27; driving range at 9100 Decker Lane, Austin, Texas.

SOURCE: Experience Austin/Spring 1998.

June-July 1998 - Aviation Division TxDOT

## DID YOU KNOW?

### The Texas Aviation Hall of Fame

- ★ honors and recognizes Texans, Texas-based companies, and aviation events in Texas that have made outstanding and lasting contributions to the advancement of aviation,
- ★ promotes and encourages scholarly research and academic inquiry in the field of aviation,
- ★ increases public understanding, appreciation and awareness of the role of Texas and Texans play in the advancement of aviation,
- ★ preserves, protects and presents Texas' aviation heritage for future generations, and
- ★ maintains and operates a fleet of historic flying aircraft known as the Lone Star Flight Museum.

Texas has fostered a remarkable history of flight, from heroic pioneer aviation to events that altered the course of aviation. Names like Wiley Post, Katherine Stinson, Howard Hughes, Bessie Coleman and "Wrong Way" Corrigan are part of Texas' aviation heritage, along with thousands of other men and women who came to Texas to train and fly during the war years. History, rich with remarkable people and incredible aviation feats, is preserved in the Texas Aviation Hall of Fame for future generations to explore and honor.

The Texas Aviation Hall of Fame, confirmed by the Texas Legislature, maintains a comprehensive repository of documents, letters, photographs, technical papers, artifacts and other materials. The library, and its valuable archives are available to students and scholars of aviation. Moreover, TAHF is the home of The Lone Star Flight Museum, which adds another educational resource for the future of aviation. The challenge of TAHF is to record Texas aviation history, as well as to honor the spirit of flight through greater insights into our history.

For more in-depth information, please write to Ralph Royce, Texas Aviation Hall of Fame and the Lone Star Flight Museum at 2002 Terminal Drive, Galveston Island, Texas 77554. ➔



## Aviation Milestones

- ➔ July 12, 1957 - Dwight Eisenhower was the first President to fly in a helicopter.
- ➔ July 17, 1989 - The B-2 Stealth Bomber makes its first flight.
- ➔ July 22, 1933 - Wiley Post, flying the Winnie Mae, lands in New York after having made the first solo flight around the world in a record time of 7 days, 18 hours, and 49 minutes.
- ➔ July 27, 1938 - Northwest Airlines pioneered the first practical aviation oxygen mask.
- ➔ July 31, 1964 - A. H. Parker establishes a world distance record for sailplanes, covering 647 miles from Texas to Nebraska.

SOURCE: Minnesota DOT, Office of Aeronautics, 1998 Calendar.



## AIRPORT DIRECTORY NOW AVAILABLE

The 1998 Texas Airport Directory of Open To The Public Airports, which includes airport layouts and services available at these airports, is now on sale for \$5.75 per copy. For a copy, please mail a request and enclose a check or money order made out to TxDOT/Aviation Division, P.O. Box 5020, Austin, Texas 78763. For more information or comments about the directory, contact Yolanda Alvarez at 1/800/68-PILOT. ➔

## VIDEO LIBRARY CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

The Aviation Division Video Library continues to be closed to the public, however, it is providing lending services to patrons through the mail. Construction throughout the main floor of Building 150 Annex is scheduled for completion sometime during this summer.

**POLICY:** any resident of Texas can check out 3 video tapes at a time for 2 weeks at no charge, only return postage is necessary.

To enroll in the membership database, write to Aviation Division, TxDOT, 125 E. 11th Street, Austin TX 78701; give your name, address, telephone number, as well as driver's license number. After membership enrollment, a video directory listing tapes available will be sent to you for your review. For further information contact Donald Brown at 1/800/68-PILOT. ➔

## FAVORITE WEB SITES

- ➔ OOPS! Sorry... Confederate Air Force should be [www.avidigest.com/cf/cf/html](http://www.avidigest.com/caf/cf/html)
- ➔ Careers in Aviation in Aviation [www.tc.faa.gov/ZDV/careers.html](http://www.tc.faa.gov/ZDV/careers.html)
- ➔ Aviation Organizations [www.aviation.org](http://www.aviation.org)
- ➔ Landings ("the busiest aviation hub in Cyberspace") [www.com/aviation.html](http://www.com/aviation.html)
- ➔ The Weather Channel [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)
- ➔ Women in Aviation, International [www.wiai.org](http://www.wiai.org)

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



July 24-25, 1998 ..... Hot Air Balloon Festival, Mesquite, TX  
 July 29-Aug 4, 1998 ..... EAA-Oshkosh, Wisconsin  
 Aug 8, 1998 ..... Air Fair, Borger, TX  
 Aug 28-30, 1998 ..... Ballunar Ltoff Festival, Houston, TX  
 Sep 7-13, 1998 ..... Farnborough Intl., ENGLAND  
 Sep 11-13, 1998 ..... Fayette Air Show, La Grange, TX  
 Sep 12, 1998 ..... Fish Fry Fly-In, Ranger, TX

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