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PROFILE: LONE STAR EXECUTIVE AIRPORT

By David Rivers

CONROE (Nov. 2005) – Nestled picturesquely among the thick pine and oak forests that surround it on the northeast edge of Conroe, Texas, the Lone Star Executive Airport is enjoying healthy growth as a primary reliever General Aviation (GA) airport for Houston's bustling George Bush Intercontinental Airport 25 miles to the south.

Lone Star Executive's Airport Director Jeff Bilyeu said the Federal Aviation Administration's "reliever" status confers a lot of responsibility on airports such as Lone Star Executive. Bilyeu pointed out, "Primary airports like Houston Bush Intercontinental were designed to facilitate passenger and cargo traffic, and similar heavy-use operations. It's not always convenient or easy for general aviation, military, corporate and business users to utilize such airports. Our purpose as a reliever is to take pressure off the primary airport. Of course, with that, comes a lot of opportunity for us."

Lone Star Executive's proximity to Houston and the Houston Metropolitan Area, including the I-45 growth corridor that extends northward from Houston, has provided many opportunities in terms of economic growth and development in the area over the past several years. This steady growth, in turn, has attracted a variety of aviation businesses and services to Lone Star Executive, including Fixed Base Operators (FBOs), →

flight schools, and support services such as aircraft maintenance, aircraft and Thangar rental, fuel sales, and a steady stream of small general aviation aircraft and corporate jet operations. Since 1988, the airport has also played host to a U.S. Army Reserve base for Apache helicopters and support vehicles.

FIXED BASE OPERATIONS

Lone Star Executive Airport is the home of three FBOs and an air medical helicopter service.

- *General Aviation Services* has operated at the airport since 1982, providing aircraft maintenance, flight training, aircraft and hangar rental, tiedown facilities, and other services. The company has a 30,000 square foot facility on the field.
- *Holley's Jet Center* caters to general aviation, corporate and government contract aircraft. The FBO provides fuel, maintenance and avionics service. The MVP Aero Academy flight training school is also on site at the facility.
- *Wing Aviation* relocated its facility and its fleet of Gulfstream aircraft to Lone Star Executive from Houston William P. Hobby Airport. The FBO has two hangar complexes and provides comprehensive aviation services including charter service, sales and management, corporate aircraft maintenance, painting and detailing, interior aircraft refurbishing, and avionics installation and troubleshooting. Wing Aviation's corporate charter fleet includes the King Air 200, Astra 1125, Challenger 600, Embraer Legacy, and three models of the Gulfstream II.
- *PHI Air Medical helicopter service* is a newcomer at Lone Star Executive. It initiated service in 2004 and is based at the General Aviation Services facility.

AIRPORT MASTER PLAN

As a result of the vision and careful long-term planning efforts of the City of Conroe and of Montgomery County, which owns and operates Lone Star Executive, the airport is currently implementing several key improvement projects designated in its Airport Master Plan. The plan calls for lengthening the runways, building an airport traffic control tower, improving taxiway access, constructing additional Thangars, and reconstructing and improving taxiways. These projects will further enhance the airport's utility and value to its customers and to Conroe.

Currently, the airport has two runways. Primary runway 14-32 is 6,000 feet long and 150 feet wide and has a partial parallel taxiway. Runway 14 is served by a Medium-intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway alignment lights (MALSR). It currently handles all of the jet traffic as well as any smaller general aviation aircraft that wish to use it. Crosswind runway 1-19 is 4,000 feet long and 100 feet wide.

In 2003, Montgomery County officials approved an Airport Master Plan Update, which identified a number of modernization projects to be completed in the short term. These projects range from the construction of an Air Traffic Control Tower to the extension and reconstruction of runways and taxiways.

Bilyeu outlined the near term current highest priority improvement projects for the airport.

- *Reconstruction and extension of the 4,000 ft. crosswind runway 1/19 to extend it to 5,000 feet, usable length.* The runway extension is the highest priority because, when complete, it will allow most of the current jet traffic to continue operations when the main runway 14-32 undergoes its extension project, is down for maintenance or is otherwise temporarily unavailable. Bilyeu said this short extension project is in the final stages of development now and is expected to be completed early in 2006.
- *Construction of an Air Traffic Control Tower.* "We're in the final concept stage right now," Bilyeu noted. "We're just about to move into the final design stage of it, and we hope to complete the design soon and start construction in late spring. We want to have the Control Tower on-line by the end of next year [2006]."
- *Rehabilitation of the taxiway on the south end of the airport that supports Thangars and other hangars.* The pavement is breaking apart. "We're going to reconstruct the asphalt, repair any base problems, build a nice taxiway," Bilyeu said.
- *Structural overlay of the main 14-32 runway.* The project will include some drainage and lighting work. The development of a new access taxiway will open up a 10-acre development area to accommodate additional tenants, including a restaurant.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AIRPORT AT CONROE

According to a Conroe historian who wrote a very brief account of the airport's original development, the Lone Star Executive Airport started life as a Naval Air Station! The author wrote that in 1943, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) built the Conroe airport on 1,277 acres provided by the county. After the CAA had spent \$1.5 million constructing three 4,600-foot runways, the Navy arranged to lease the facility. The Navy built a hangar and other buildings, and commissioned the station as an auxiliary Naval Air Station, patterned along the lines of the NAS auxiliary in Durant, Oklahoma. According to the historian, "... for all practical purposes, nothing happened at Conroe's NAS station during the war." The author reports that, "At the most, the station had 100 [enlisted] men and three officers. The men kept themselves occupied with the locally good deer, quail, and dove hunting." It was reported that the base commanding officer, "... had an SNV (Vultee Basic Training aircraft) that he used 'for what he saw fit!'" In March 1945, the base was reduced to caretaker status and eventually returned to the county, "along with the hangar, a fire truck, a grass cutting tractor, and other equipment."

In the end, the author wryly observes, "The most lasting result of the Navy's presence at Conroe was the marriage of at least six of the base's men to local girls." ♦



Terminal

Future projects include new road access, a 1,500 foot extension to runway 14-32 to initially bring it to 7,500 feet, and later to 8,000 feet to better accommodate large jet traffic on hot days. ♦



Funding for FAA's Airport Improvement Grant Program Approved:

Congress has passed, and the President has signed, a bill that includes funding for airports for Fiscal Year 2006. Earlier it had appeared that there could be a reduction in federal funding for airports this year. However, the amount approved by Congress is \$3.55B or 98.6 percent of the amount authorized in the program for this fiscal year. This compares with a national funding level of \$3.472B for last year. As a result, we should be able to meet most funding needs for general aviation airports in Texas as identified in our program for the year.

This is the last year of authorization for FAA funding. Congress will be undertaking a review of all of the FAA's programs which could result in some overall changes. One of the most notable is how the FAA is funded. Currently, most of the funds for the FAA come from an airline passenger ticket tax and a tax on aviation fuel. The FAA's authority to collect aviation ticket and fuel taxes expires in 2007. FAA Administrator, Marion Blakey, has stated that the agency is about to run out of money and that, "A change in our funding system is not only necessary, it is warranted." This is viewed in some

quarters as a move toward direct charges to the user for aviation services.

Southwest Airlines Gains New Service Authority From Love Field; American Airlines To Resume Local Service:

With the signing of the Transportation Bill by President Bush on November 30, 2005, Southwest Airlines received approval to begin direct service from Love Field to cities in Missouri. Southwest has been lobbying hard to rescind the Wright Amendment thereby allowing service from Love Field to any destination in the country. This makes Missouri the ninth state that can be served by nonstop flights from Love Field. The original "Wright Amendment" limited direct flights from Love Field solely to states adjoining Texas. Congress added Alabama, Kansas, and Mississippi in 1997. American Airlines has already announced that it intends to resume flights from Love Field as soon as it can "obtain and prepare appropriate facilities."

Modifications to the Environmental Protection Agency's Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures (SPCC) Requirements:

On Friday, December 2, the Environmental Protection Agency announced that it has proposed modifications to the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures (SPCC) regulations to exempt airport mobile refuelers from some secondary containment requirements. This comes as good news as most aviation industry groups felt that containment for fuel trucks is an expensive and unnecessary requirement. EPA should soon be releasing a "guidance document" containing additional information on their rules and regulations. ♦



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SLIPSTREAMS . . .

Brownwood Municipal Airport – New Manager, as of November 15, 2005, Sharlette Bain replaced Mike Wilson who retired in July. Bain was the previous airport manager at La Grange-Fayette Air Center. ♦

PROFILE: MOUNT PLEASANT REGIONAL AIRPORT

By Jay Carpenter
Texas Aviation Association

MOUNT PLEASANT (Nov. 2005)—Paul Henderson has been the Mount Pleasant Regional Airport manager since 2002, and a close associate, Randy Presley, has been chairman of the airport advisory board since 1959. This state-of-the-art facility was named Airport of the Year at the Texas Aviation Conference in the spring of 2005.

The first airport for public-use in Mount Pleasant was built in 1945 by E.P. Hendricks. Then in 1947, Gus Hoffman built another airport that over time became known as the "old airport." Hoffman sold the airport in 1953 to the City of Mount Pleasant.

The first Texas Wal-Mart store was established in Mount Pleasant in 1975 and according to the Dallas Morning News, Sam Walton, Wal-Mart owner, chose this city as its premiere Texas store because Mount Pleasant had "a better than average airstrip." Walton was often quoted saying that he would not build a store in any community that did not have a good airport. Consequently, he refused to drive to any location in his territory, instead he flew his business aircraft.

The city owned the old airport until August 2002 when the new Mount Pleasant Regional Airport was completed by Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for approximately \$10 million. Construction for this new facility began in 2000. Presently, there are 51 airplanes based at the airport and 20 percent are corporate aircraft. "To be honest, there were some of us who were skeptical," explains Henderson. "We were settled in at the old airport. We had hangars that were modest, but functional. We would have been satisfied to see the runway lengthened there, however, city officials had more vision than ourselves and they wanted a new facility."



KOSA Terminal Building

Henderson, Presley and the airport advisory board interviewed three engineering firms for the design of the new airport. "I gave [them] my ideas about the layout," said Presley. "I suggested placing the Thangars on one side, the terminal building in the middle and the corporate hangars on the other side. All areas would be connected with streets for easy access. I was surprised when they accepted my ideas."

Currently, there is a vestibule located near the front door of the terminal building containing a restroom, telephone, water fountain, and a place to sit down. If someone arrives when the terminal is closed, they can use these facilities. "The first thing passengers want to do after landing is to use the restroom," said Presley. "So many airports do not provide this simple necessity once the terminal is closed." Inside are the general-use lounges, pilot's lounge, flight planning room, conference rooms, rest rooms and the Fixed Based Operator (FBO) area. There are two courtesy cars available for transient traffic.

Henderson explained that the local city government is very supportive of the airport. Presley and the entire

airport board attend every city council meeting whether there is an airport agenda item or not. The mayor and the city council see this large contingency of aviation support every time they meet and reciprocate with favorable legislation. Moreover, the airport board is there to educate the public about the economic benefits of general aviation and the airports that they use.

"One thing that keeps city officials on our side is that the airport is 'in the black'," said Henderson. The airport makes money for the City of Mount Pleasant. Therefore, if any new project comes along, the city council usually votes favorably toward airport improvements such as the addition of new Thangars or the lengthening of the existing runway. The city plans ahead. There are facilities available for aircraft mechanics and avionics shops to locate should such new businesses come along.

"The local economy is doing well," said Henderson. There is a Pilgrim's Pride Deli Meats facility located in Mount Pleasant along with one of the largest mobile home manufacturers in the world. He continues, "In this day and time, if someone wants to locate a new business or industry in our area they are going to fly here as opposed to driving or riding the bus. Not many want to drive from the Dallas/Fort Worth area all the way to our community when they can simply fly here in corporate aircraft. For industries, this airport provides the perfect port of access to our town."

"Since 9/11, corporate executives today are not interested in going through the security mess associated with the hub airlines. As we all know, to fly commercial airlines, one must arrive two hours early, use remote and expensive parking, plus go through long lines for security checks," said Henderson. However, he continues, "Corporate jets are able to land here with minimum security checks and free parking right at our doorstep. Presently, there is no Part 135 charter services operating here, but it will probably come soon." →

In the year 2000, the airport sold 26,000 gallons of Avgas and 63,000 gallons of Jet A fuel. Henderson explained that when Pilgrim's Pride bought their first turboprop, they flew it enough times that they paid for the airport's new fuel truck and storage tank in two years. The company now stores two Hawker 800XP jets and a King Air 300 turboprop in their own hangars. These aircraft fly several times a day. "Pilgrim is our best customer," adds Henderson.

For fiscal year of 2005, ending last September, the airport sold 43,482 gallons of 100LL Avgas and 215,136 gallons of Jet A fuel, a 340 percent increase in five years.

The corporate hangars are built and owned by the companies using them, although corporations lease the land from the city. Henderson explained that these hangars are presently full, but that there is more land available for future expansion. The T-Hangars are owned by the city and rented to the local aircraft owners. Presently, a local lawyer is debating on purchasing a new Gulfstream IV or V jet. And this aircraft will need a new storage hangar and the city is prepared to meet that need.

"Our present runway length is 5,000 feet," said Henderson. "A CIP [Capital Improvement Program] program is doing test drilling now to determine, if the runway can be extended to 6,000 feet. This will allow each flight to take on full fuel for takeoff which translates to more money for the city airport."

The City of Mount Pleasant funded a study done by KSA Engineering to determine what it would cost to lengthen the runway. The ultimate goal of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) was to add 500 feet to the existing 5,000 foot runway. Then, a city council meeting was scheduled to determine if the cost was justified. Henderson and other aviation advocates got busy. "We called everybody, organized and got everyone 'who's who' in the county to attend that meeting," said Henderson.

At the meeting, KSA Engineering stated that it would cost \$2.3 million to add 500 feet to the runway length. Mitch Fortner, KSA Vice President, gave a presentation complete with photographs and graphics to justify this expenditure. Henderson said, "When it came time for the mayor to speak, the mayor said, 'Well, \$2.3 million is entirely too much money to spend for 500 feet of runway.' There was a collective moan in the council chambers. But, the mayor continued, 'I think we ought to do 1,000 feet.'"

Additionally, Henderson and his associates convinced executives at Pilgrim's Pride to write a letter of recommendation for the expansion. He also enlisted every business person with jets and aircraft that could use that extra length of runway to write letters. He took those testimonials along with performance figures, plus daily operation figures and submitted the proposal for the extra 1,000 foot runway extension to TxDOT.



A month later David Fulton, TxDOT Aviation Director, wrote saying that the runway extension project was "justified." "Funding would have to be worked out," said Henderson, "but that the city is behind the project and doing their part." Henderson explained that their persistent campaigning is paying off little by little.

Presley concluded that the most important thing an aviation community can do is to get a person—a champion—elected to the city council who is pro-airport. "This city went for years when no one cared about the airport," said Presley. The airport board and aviation enthusiasts' involvement changed that situation.

Henderson was asked about the trend of restrictive minimum standards that some airports are imposing against the operation of smaller piston aircraft and flying clubs. "There are no plans to restrict the housing or operation of any general aviation aircraft at the airport. There are no landing fees. There is a tie down fee, but we don't charge it for just a night or two stay," said Henderson.

"We've stayed with a city employee running the show as opposed to an FBO," explains Presley. "It means better service for the customer if a city employee is servicing their needs. An FBO sometimes finds it hard to stop what they are doing to pump eight gallons of gas to a Piper Cub, whereas a city employee is working by the hour and will deliver good service no matter what needs to be done. We like it that way," he adds.

Henderson elaborates that they have developed many repeat customers from other cities that stop off at Mount Pleasant on cross-country flights because of the great service they provide. The courtesy car is always available. If the car is not there, Henderson will find other transportation to use. Pilots will find a clean restroom, soft drinks and a candy machine fully stocked, plus a telephone to call friends and business associates. These repeat customers tell others and the 'word of mouth' referrals add up over time to a significant amount of revenue for the airport and the city.

Mount Pleasant Regional Airport represents what can go right when people cooperate in working toward a common goal. Local aviation advocates have created a jewel in the crown of general aviation in Texas by working together with local government agencies. The next time you find yourself in Northeast Texas, stop by Mount Pleasant and have a cup of coffee with Paul, Randy and the staff of the Mount Pleasant Regional Airport. You'll be back! ♦

TEXAS COUPLE HONORED FOR HURRICANE RELIEF EFFORTS

By Mark Grady

LAGO VISTA (Oct. 2005) – When Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, Bob and D'Anne Gloris were moved to do something to help.

But the couple, who own Lakeview Aviation at Rusty Allen Airport (5R3) in Lago Vista, Texas, weren't sure what to do. D'Anne proposed adopting a family left homeless by the storm, but Bob pointed out that was impractical as the couple live in a home behind the hangar that houses their aircraft repair business. The answer came the next day when two pilots, Steve Watkins and Derrick Pollock, who keep their planes in the Gloris' hangar, flew 1,500 pounds of food donated by their church to hurricane victims in Tylertown, Mississippi.

When a church volunteer brought the food to the airport, he asked, "If we brought more food, do you think you could get more pilots?" That was all the couple needed to hear. Within moments, D'Anne was on the phone with Tre Deathe, executive director of the Texas Aviation Association (TXAA). Deathe immediately sent an e-mail to all TXAA members, asking for volunteers. Within a few hours, pilots from Texas and many points beyond were calling to volunteer their time and flying machines.

Some pilots networked even more, posting messages on Web sites dedicated to their particular aircraft or type of flying. One of those postings, on a site for Cirrus SR22 pilots, brought volunteer pilots from as far away as Washington State and Monterey, Mexico.

As of Sept. 29, the couple's efforts had resulted in more than 170 flights and the delivery of more than 35 tons of food and supplies to hurricane Victims in Louisiana and Mississippi.

That same day, D'Anne accepted a special certificate of appreciation from the TXAA and the Texas Department of Transportation, Aviation Division (TxDOT).

Jay Carpenter, TXAA president, says he was amazed at the total dedication the family put into the effort.

"Since they started this effort, they have put their entire business, their income on hold."

Carpenter, who made relief flights in his Grumman Tiger, was initially surprised when he found his first flight carried bathroom tissue and feminine products. He felt these were low on the priority list until he saw how appreciative the recipients were.

"That's when I realized that what I was bringing was important," he said. "It made me imagine what it would be like to go days without bathroom tissue. The simple things are really important at times like this."

D'Anne agrees. "We spoke with one church that was preparing 2,000 meals a day in a really small kitchen and it was incredibly hot. When the pilots delivered the fans, you could almost hear a collective sigh," she says.

The Gloris' attention to detail made the relief flights a safe endeavor, Carpenter notes. "When pilots arrived, Bob came out and asked, 'How much can you carry?'" he says. "They had already weighed each package of items and had them marked."

Bill Gunn, director of systems and training for TxDOT's Aviation Division, was not surprised it was the Gloris' who created such a successful mission.

"Aviation is like a family," he says. "Pilots who wanted to help were like the guy in the tuxedo in the desert – all dressed up wondering where to go. What Bob and D'Anne did was become the touchstone to make this work, at no small sacrifice to themselves in time and revenue from their business. It's the kind of people they are." ♦

(Reprinted with permission: Mark Grady and the Southern Aviator, Nov. 2005)

SPCC PLANS FOR AIRPORTS – UPDATE

By Megan Caffall
Aviation Division

Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan requirements were originally issued in 1973 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the authority of the Clean Water Act. The SPCC Plan requirements include airports that have a storage capacity that exceeds 42,000 gallons in underground storage; 1,320 gallons in above ground storage (or greater than 660 gallons in a single container), or could reasonably be expected to discharge oil in harmful quantities into navigable U.S. waters or adjoining shorelines.

In July 2002, the EPA amended 40 CFR Part 112 which governs the SPCC rules, and incorporated deadlines for amending current Plans and implementing changes. Additional amendments to 40 CFR Part 112 were issued in April 2003 and again in August 2004 further extending deadlines.

Currently, the Rule states a facility in operation on or before August 16, 2002, must maintain its SPCC Plan and amend it if necessary to ensure compliance with the new rules on or before February 17, 2006, and must implement the amended SPCC Plan as soon as possible, but no later than August 18, 2006. A facility that becomes operational between August 16, 2002, and August 18, 2006, must prepare and implement an SPCC Plan on or before August 18, 2006.

The EPA SPCC Rule requirements have always included provisions requiring secondary containment for mobile or portable oil storage containers, and include aviation refueler trucks in their definition of mobile or portable storage containers. Because of the impracticability, safety concerns and expense of providing containment around aviation refueler trucks, the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), National Air Transportation Association (NATA) and other aviation groups have petitioned the EPA for clarification of requirements and extension of deadlines for meeting and implementing the necessary changes to airport SPCC Plans.

The SPCC Plan must be certified by a licensed professional engineer and is intended to be a user-friendly living document. The map and facility code are key elements that should enable anyone who discovers a spill to quickly locate the spill on the map, determine type of spill, the maximum volume of the spill, the capacity of secondary containment, the location of clean-up or containment materials, and reporting and record keeping requirements. The SPCC Plan is also an agreement among the owner, operator and regulators regarding proper oil storage and transfer activities that will be conducted to prevent harmful oil spills.

A complete description of the required elements of an SPCC can be found at the EPA Web site www.epa.gov/oilspill/spccmust.htm. Professional services for preparation, annual updates and education are eligible expenses under the Routine Airport Maintenance Program (RAMP) grant program. If you need assistance with your Plan or need to implement a Plan, contact Megan Caffall at 800/687-4568 or mcaffall@dot.state.tx.us for grant information. ♦

2006 TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE

**Sponsored by The Texas Department of Transportation
Co-sponsored by Texas Airport Management Association
& Texas Aviation Association**



Location and Date

The 2006 Texas Aviation Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 208 Barton Springs, Austin. The dates are March 22-24, 2006.

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. The fee is \$100 through February 22, 2006. A \$25 late fee will be added to registrations received after February 22, 2006. A \$50 fee will be added for all on-site registrations. Note: TxDOT employees are exempt from registration fee, but still must register in advance for the conference. You are encouraged to register online OR you may choose to complete the registration form (one form per registrant; photocopy if necessary) and return it with payment to the TTI, Event Management and Planning (EM&P) to the address listed on the form. Only cancellations received in writing by EM&P by 5:00 p.m. CST on February 22, 2006 will be refunded, less \$25 handling fee. No refunds will be issued after this date. You may pay your registration fee by check, money order or credit card. If you have any questions or need additional registration materials, please contact the Aviation Division at 1-800/68-PILOT. *The registration fee covers conference handouts, break refreshments, and Thursday evening activities, including the awards banquet.*

Hotel Reservations

The Hyatt Regency is holding a block of rooms for our use at the nightly rate of \$130 for single and double occupancy. We encourage everyone needing a room to call immediately since we anticipate the rooms will be booked quickly. Deadline is February 22, 2006. After this date rooms are subject to availability and may be at a higher rate. To receive this rate, please call the Hyatt Regency at 512/477-1234 or 1-800/233-1234. Remember to ask for reservations for the Texas Aviation Conference to receive special rates on rooms. The Hotel has over 500 self-parking spaces available at a discounted \$5.00 overnight rate. If you are staying at the hotel, the \$5.00 rate will automatically show up on your bill. If you are parking only for the day please get a sticker at the Aviation registration desk. Valet parking is also available at a \$12.00 overnight rate with "in and out" privileges.

Special Activities

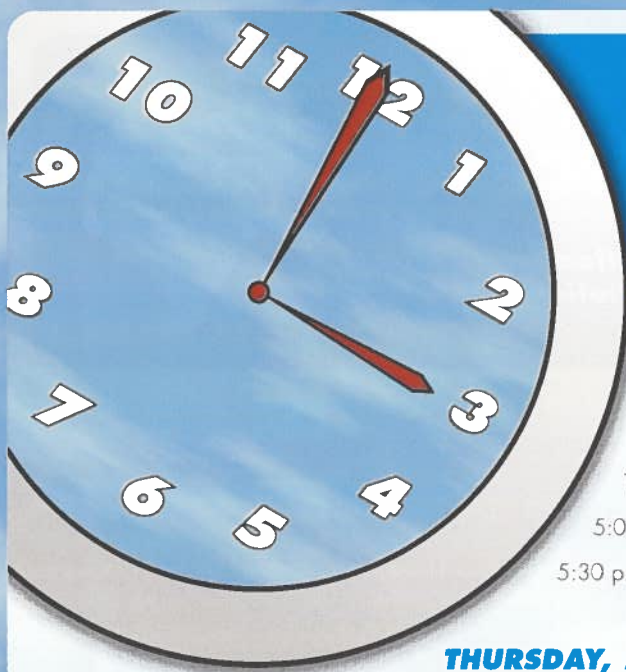
On Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., a golf tournament is scheduled at the Riverside Golf Course. Sign up early, limited to first 40 participants. All golfers must be registered to attend the conference. If you are interested in playing, please contact our office at 1-800/68-PILOT, for further information as there will be a small fee. A get acquainted reception is planned for Wednesday evening from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The Award Banquet is schedule for Thursday evening. A Social will take place immediately following the Awards Banquet downstairs in the Big Bend Foyer and La Vista Patio.

Shuttle Service

If you need transportation from Austin Bergstrom International Airport, there is a Super Shuttle available. Upon arrival proceed to the lower level and collect your luggage, check in with the Super Shuttle agent at the counter located next to the baggage claim area. 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 phone: 979/862-1219, toll free 888/550-5577, or fax 979/862-1225, at least five working days prior to the conference.



2006 Texas Aviation Tentative Conference Program

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Golf Tournament** (Riverside Golf Course)

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Exhibitor Set-up**

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Registration/Check-in**

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. **Exhibits Open**

5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. **Get Acquainted Reception Hosted by Sponsors** (in Exhibit Hall)

THURSDAY, MARCH 23

7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Registration Desk Open

7:30 a.m. - 8:20 a.m.

Continental Breakfast (in Exhibit Hall)

8:20 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

Opening Music

8:30 a.m. - 8:40 a.m.

Welcoming Address

8:40 a.m. - 8:50 a.m.

Words From the Sponsors

Dave Fulton, Director, TxDOT, Aviation Division
Cynthia Godfrey, President of Texas Airport Management Association (TAMMA),
and Airport Director, Mesquite Metro Airport, Mesquite, Texas
Jay Carpenter, President of Texas Aviation Association

8:50 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Introduction of Aviation Advisory Committee Members

Dave Fulton, Director, TxDOT, Aviation Division

9:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.

State of Aviation Division

Dave Fulton, TxDOT, Aviation Division

9:15 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Coffee Break (in Exhibit Hall)

9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Debby Rihn-Harvey (Tentative)

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 a.m.

Emergency Evacuations- Lessons Learned

Jack Colley, Governor's Division of Emergency Management
Jeff Bilyeu, Airport Manager, Lone Star Executive Airport
Phil Savko, Airport Manager, Sugarland Regional Airport
Louis Jones, Airport Manager, Brazoria County Airport

11:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Aviation Education Opportunities in General Aviation

Jeff Borowiec, Ph.D., Texas Transportation Institute

11:15 a.m. - 12 noon

Financial Assistance from other State Agencies

Larry Silvey, Aerospace & Aviation, Office of the Governor
Kaki Leyens, Texas Workforce Commission
Robert Wood, Texas Department of Agriculture
Theresa Goetz, Office of the Governor

12 noon - 1:30 p.m.

Texas Aviation Advisory Committee Meeting

12 noon - 1:45 p.m.

Lunch on Your Own

1:45 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Workshop I

How to perform daily maintenance for your AWOS, PAPIs and lighting systems
Megan Caffall, TxDOT Aviation

ation Conference

rogram as of 12/2005



1:45 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Workshop II

Consultant Selection Program: Tips and Hints for
Airport Sponsors and Consultants
Bill Fuller, TxDOT Aviation

2:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Break in Exhibit Hall

3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Workshop III

Attracting Business Aircraft to Your Airport
Bill Gunn, TxDOT Aviation
Paul Smith, NBAA

3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Workshop IV

Methods of Increasing Revenue for your Airport.
Jeff Borowiec, Ph.D., Texas Transportation Institute

4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Texas Airport Management Association (TAMA) Meeting

Approval of minutes from previous meeting
Election of 2006 Officers
TAMA Goals for 2006
General Discussion

5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Awards Banquet

General Aviation Airport Manager of the Year, Most Improved Airport,
Airport of the Year, Reliever Airport Manager of the Year

7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Evening Social (Co-Sponsored By TAMA)

FRIDAY, MARCH 24

7:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Exhibits Open

7:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Registration Desk Open

7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast (Exhibit Area)

8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

EPA Compliance/Spill Prevention and Counter Measure Plan

Megan Cafall, TxDOT Aviation

9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Jamail Larkins - Dream Launch Tour

Spokesman of EAA Young Eagles Program
At age 14 became one of the youngest pilots in the United States.

9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Economic Impact Study Update

Bruce Ehly, TxDOT Aviation
Scott Sanders, Wilbur Smith & Associates

10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Checkout Break (Exhibits Breakdown)

10:30 a.m. - 10:50 a.m.

'Your Community and Your Airport'

Paul Smith, NBAA

10:50 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Corpus Christi Convention and Visitors Bureau

Jean Woellner Bonner

11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

TxDOT/DOT-FAA AIP PROGRAM & LISTENING SESSION

*Dave Fulton, TxDOT; Mike Nicely, FAA Airports Development Office,
SWV Region, Questions & Answers*

2006 TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

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

To register for this conference, complete this form below and return with \$100 check made payable to: TTI-Avtn06, 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 you must register on-line at <http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/tac06/>. 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. February 22, 2006 will be refunded less \$25 handling fee.

Name _____
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____ 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 _____

I will be attending the following functions during the conference:

For TTI Use Only:

Circle One

Wednesday	Golf Tournament	Yes	No
Wednesday	Get-Acquainted	Yes	No
Thursday	Awards Banquet	Yes	No
Thursday	Evening Social	Yes	No

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 \$25.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Now available on the TxDOT Aviation Web site at www.dot.state.tx is a report documenting the results of a recently conducted survey of airport operators on methods for increasing on-airport revenue. The purpose of the study was to create a document to be used by airport sponsors that includes viable and plausible activities and ideas to be considered for implementation to increase activity and ultimately increase airport-related revenue. The study intended to take ideas from larger general aviation airports and make them known to smaller general aviation airports in the hope of moving them forward on a path of revenue generation and self-sufficiency. The ideas noted in the survey results may be useful for some of the larger general aviation airports as well.

TEXAS AIRPORTS, GENERAL AVIATION AND HURRICANE RITA

By Jay Carpenter
Texas Aviation Association

EAST TEXAS (Nov, 2005)—Hurricane Rita slammed into the East Texas coast on Friday evening, September 23, 2005. The storm brought destructive winds, hail, rain and flooding that enveloped hundreds of square miles. Recovery efforts are ongoing and will continue for some time to come. Texas airports and general aviation played a vital role in the evacuation of people prior to the hurricane's arrival and recovery efforts in the wake of the storm.

Government agencies had received a preview of the destructive force that a Category 4 Hurricane can deliver when Katrina hammered Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama a few weeks before. In Texas, a mandatory evacuation was declared from Corpus Christi to the Louisiana border. Highways out of the Galveston/Houston area became slow moving parking lots as hundreds of thousands made their way inland in the Texas heat.

Texas general aviation aircraft vacated area airports and many provided critical transportation to the elderly and hospitalized citizens. Charter flights departed from the Orange County and Beaumont Municipal Airport as late as Friday morning, the day of the hurricane's arrival.

Rita's motion slowed down after reaching landfall. Hurricane force winds buffeted communities like Jasper, Pineland, Hardin County, Beaumont and Orange for as long as nine hours. This hurricane caused more damage than the average storm because of the duration of these strong winds. Many tornadoes were spawned adding to the destruction of cities and countryside. Trees snapped like twigs and power lines were downed; thousands of homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed.

Hurricane Rita moved slowly northeast toward New England on Sunday, September 25. Governmental agencies and volunteers started recovery efforts immediately. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Red Cross, National Guard and Salvation Army began setting up command centers. Several of these hubs were located at Texas airports. These aviation facilities were used to import and then distribute food, water, supplies and personnel to most affected areas. Among the more affected and vital airports were Jasper County, Hardin County, Beaumont Municipal-Southeast Regional Airport and Orange County.

JASPER COUNTY AIRPORT

Steve Seale operates the Fixed Base Operator (FBO) at Jasper County Airport. He is captain of the Jasper Fire Department, a juvenile defense lawyer and owns LEMA Aviation at the airport. Although the airport is over 60 miles inland from the coast, this hurricane still delivered strong winds. Seale recounts his story of encountering Rita. "For over nine hours, we registered 80-130 mph of northeast winds", Seale said pointing his finger toward the horizon. "The AWOS system was indicating 58 knots before an electrical failure stopped the automated reports in the early morning hours of Saturday." The weather reporting system was still in operating condition, but simply did not have the electrical power to send its report. The Non-Directional Beacon (NDB) station and the satellite system located on top of the FBO were also out.

On Sunday, September 25, Steve was back at the airport. Using portable generators and cell phones, volunteers began the long hard work of recovery. Remnants of the storm delivered winds gusting to 40 mph 48 hours after making landfall. These gusts prevented ambulances and fire trucks from traveling that Sunday. Local volunteers with chain saws and tractors began clearing the road from town to the airport. The National Guard delivered food and water in Chinook helicopters from late Saturday into Sunday. Fixed wing aircraft began arriving on Monday bringing back residents and relief supplies. "There were about three flights per hour landing and taking off," said Seale. "Most were medical evacuations and various business aircraft".

Seale explained that the airport played an important role in relief efforts. "Although security was low, we made out well," said Seale. "I was asked over and over again if a C-130 Hercules cargo transport aircraft could land and take off here. With a 5,500 foot runway it is no problem for one of those planes to land. However, full of fuel, the range of that aircraft is exactly 5,500 feet." As with all airport managers, their runway length is usually considered too short.

HARDIN COUNTY AIRPORT

A little closer to the gulf coast is the Hardin County (Hawthorne Field) Airport. This facility became a major launching point and Base of Operations for repair companies like Progress Energy out of Florida and North Carolina. Progress Energy hired Bodie Myer who owns KAM Services, who arrived on Sunday along with a fleet of 12 tractor trailers from Progress Energy. These trucks delivered tents, generators, lighting fixtures and other equipment to begin repairing the downed power grid. →

"Hardin County Airport was the perfect place to base our operations," said Myer. "There are a lot of hard working men and women that had to be housed and fed. We provided air conditioned tents for sleeping, showers and three hot meals a day to 400 workers. Within two days electrical power was restored to the entire area."



Miscellaneous equipment being set up after Hurricane Katrina.

Merf Kaufman, proprietor of Big Thicket Aviation, said that the folks from Progress Energy built a small "city" at Hawthorne Field. The team of professionals numbered up to 800 restoring power energy needs. "The city began on Saturday afternoon with a food facility. Kaufman estimated that 14-18 trucks were on the road at any given hour of the day. A 24-hour security operation was also in place. "I cannot say enough about these fine folks," said Kaufman.

Kaufman explained that Hawthorne Field-Hardin County Airport supplied the perfect location for these companies to base their operations. The tarmac provided excellent areas to set up their tents and trucks. The airstrip furnished access for military, corporate and other general aviation aircraft assisting the evacuation and recovery efforts.

Bob Burgiss, a Hardin County Commissioner, said that both the city and county cooperated extremely well. Burgiss recounted that the county also enlisted help from the local prison. "As many as six prisoners a day were provided and they played a valuable role in helping the recovery effort. They worked hard and contributed to the relief effort without any financial benefits."

BEAUMONT MUNICIPAL-SOUTHEAST REGIONAL AIRPORT

Further south on the coastline is Beaumont Municipal Airport. Gary and Barbara Giarraputo own and operate Beaumont Wings, Inc. Gary said that the evacuation for Hurricane Rita

got into full swing at 6 a.m. on Thursday, September 22. "We started pumping gas at sunrise and ran out at 3 p.m." There were many charter flights transporting people out of the area as late as Friday, the day of the storm. "I estimate that we saw 200-300 people departing that day, mostly in Citations and twin props."

Apparently, the eye of the hurricane passed right over downtown Beaumont. Fuel was shipped to the airport by the following Tuesday morning. Portable generators were brought in for emergency power to run the airport functions. Notice to Airmen (NOTAMS) were given by the Flight Service Station (FSS) that the airport was for Visual Flight Rules (VFR) daytime use only. "The phone service was never down," said Giarraputo, "and we were able to process credit cards immediately."

Giarraputo recounts, "The city had its hands full elsewhere with the clean up so we at the FBO did the major chores here at the airport. There was metal everywhere. Giarraputo explained that they hauled about 10 trailer loads of twisted steel out of the area. The airport was also utilized by the city and county as a depot for the mountains of trees and other organic debris being gathered from around the area.



Aerial view of hangar damage after Hurricane Katrina.

When asked about the economy of general aviation at his airport Giarraputo replied, "I think it's going to be drastic in the not too distant future. A lot of people are not going to be flying because of the losses they've had. And, general aviation will slow down because of the cost. The guy that uses his plane for business is not going to change, but personal flights and training flights will be out."

Giarraputo explained that the city was talking to their insurance companies about replacing the 14 damaged hangars. "It has been a pretty hectic time for everybody here. None of the people based here area are flying. They've got other concerns," said Giarraputo. →



Hangar damage after Hurricane Katrina.

The recovery at Beaumont mostly consisted of helicopter transports for returning personnel and medical evacuation. MedTran Corporation ran helicopters every day for the medical needs. These aircraft were bringing people back in that had been evacuated a few days earlier. "All in all, the evacuation and recovery went very smoothly," said Giarraputo. "Security was good throughout the entire area. And talk about 'dark,' this area was a ghost town on the day of and the days after the storm."

ORANGE COUNTY AIRPORT

Orange County Airport is a smaller airport than the others mentioned before, however, the facility was utilized as though it was a major hub. As the hurricane approached, Orange County Judge Carl Thibobeaux recognized the value of this airport's location as a staging area for evacuation and especially in the relief efforts to come. The judge remembered the devastation to his neighbors in New Orleans from Hurricane Katrina, and knew that immediate action would be required to help relieve the suffering and contribute to the recovery of his county.

County government contacted FEMA, the Red Cross, the National Guard and the Salvation Army well in advance of the approaching storm. Together, these agencies coordinated their actions to become an efficient tool for the recovery efforts needed in the following days and weeks.

Tom Forman owns Sabine Aviation and operates the FBO at the Orange County Airport; and working for him is Jim Trahan who is the local flight instructor, lineman and merchandise salesman. Trahan kept the aircraft parking ramps and fueling areas clear of clutter and running smoothly in spite of the semi-chaos caused by uncontrolled civilian and government vehicles running around all over the airport. He designated the amount of ramp space he needed to park and service the airplanes that were

expected. Trahan spent most of his day protecting that space from people who wanted to use it for other purposes and which required a lot of tact, diplomacy and patience.

This airport is perfect for this type of project because it is centrally located. Interstate 10 is only five miles away and the airport is close to every point of distribution. A Logistical Support Area, set up by Elgin Browning, consisted of a white trailer where everything from food and water to baby diapers could be distributed in the most efficient manner.

Trahan left Orange, Texas at 4:50 a.m. the day before the storm and drove to Denton, Texas. He kept calling the Orange County AWOS (Automated Weather Observation System) where computers gave weather reports until 12:45 a.m. Saturday morning. At that time the winds were reporting 39 mph, gusting to 51 mph out of 020 degrees when the power went out. A ship, USS Orleck, was docked at the nearby bay. A seaman who remained onboard the ship throughout the storm clocked the highest winds at 165 mph. The ship was turned 180 degrees in its mooring during the storm. Trahan recalls, "Once power was restored a week and a half later, the AWOS began its weather reporting again. After returning on Tuesday, we ran this building, the beacon, the windsock lights and the runway lights off of generators."



Aircraft damage inside hangars after Hurricane Katrina.

The smaller Thangars at the Orange County Airport survived intact, while the two larger main hangars received major damage. The reason for the damage to the larger hangars had to do with their orientation to the storm's winds. While the smaller Thangar doors face east and west, the larger Brown Hangar and the Orange Hangar doors faced north and south. The wind came out of the north and those big doors blew right off. When asked if the planes located inside these large hangars were blown out of the hangar Trahan replied, "No, they stayed in the hangar and danced." →

County government set up the logistics for trucks to begin arriving on Wednesday. It was a system needed in order to get the job done. FEMA, Red Cross and Salvation Army equipment arrived in force bidding for precious space on the airport tarmac. "I don't want to say that there was animosity among the various agency leaders. It was more like a pecking order that was established to determine where the equipment was to be located," said Trahan.



Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) truck fleet positioned at airport.

Tom Forman, owner of the FBO added, "I just did whatever everyone needed done. Some truck drivers complained about how bossy some FEMA representatives were but in the end, it all worked out."

The first airplanes to arrive after the storm were owned by corporations—McCoy's, Temple Inland and others—that had

interests in the area. Unfortunately, these aircraft were not able to take on fuel because the runway, at 4,396 feet, is not long enough for their insurance requirements. The peak time of activity was on the Monday after the storm. Two Falcon 50's, Citation Bravos and King Air 200's all arrived with executives to examine the situation.

Pipeline patrol pilots also arrived with frequency. These aircraft played an important role in evaluating the condition of the petroleum infrastructure. "Those pilots became regular visitors as we were in a perfect location for refueling and resting between patrol flights," said Trahan.

Trahan recalled his personal circumstances saying, "All in all, I consider myself very fortunate. First of all, I got out of here safely. Secondly, when I returned I found that my house was not leveled. That was truly miraculous. My airplane was kind of dinged up, but like that Carly Simon song says, 'Two out of three ain't bad'."

The important role that airports and general aviation played in this natural disaster is obvious. Local airports became staging areas for evacuation and relief efforts. Aircraft using local airfields helped transport the sick and elderly out of harm's way and then, brought back the personnel needed to begin the recovery efforts. Airports became essential areas for the deployment of repair crews and supply distribution. The progress of recovery from Hurricane Rita would have been much slower and more expensive without the utility of general aviation and the airports they use. ♦

HURRICANE KATRINA AND FORT WORTH-MEACHAM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

By Mark Cross
TxDOT

FORT WORTH (Oct. 2005) – It's Wednesday, August 31. Katrina made landfall a couple of days ago and the Gulf Coast region is reeling. The 26-person staff at Meacham Airport in Fort Worth has received word that the facility has been selected to serve as one of six potential evacuation shelters in the city for evacuated residents.

Work begins immediately to convert an almost empty terminal, once used by Mesa Airlines, and a concourse into a shelter where people can live for, not just a few days, but a few weeks, if necessary.

Mike Feeley, director of the City of Fort Worth's aviation operations, is the pilot for this journey.

Feeley is manager of three of the city's airports – Meacham, Alliance and Spinks. His experience in spearheading aviation operations comes in handy because coordination and quick-thinking skills are suddenly in very high demand.

By Thursday, confirmation that the site will be used as an evacuation shelter still has not come. That doesn't stop the staff at this general aviation facility from getting things ready for the building's transformation.

Restrooms are quickly converted – soft plumbing is completed to add showers and privacy areas – to bathrooms. Partitions are erected to provide living space and, at the same time, maintain an area where regular aviation operations can continue.

A donor for inflatable mattresses is found and hundreds are delivered to the airport almost immediately.

"Blowing up 132 air mattresses might have been the most difficult task for us in the beginning," Feeley said. →

The airport receives \$4,500 worth of blankets, which are donated to compliment the mattresses that would become the only sleeping surfaces many would have for days and maybe weeks to come.

Friday afternoon the confirmation for putting the shelter into operation comes. The city informs the Meacham staff they will receive 146 evacuees - lovingly referred to as "guests," not evacuees by the airport staff. About 1:30 a.m. six buses arrive delivering the guests.

The individuals arrive having been routed from the New Orleans Superdome to the Houston Astrodome to Meacham Airport. They come with literally nothing in hand.

Panic ensues almost immediately upon arrival for many, especially teenagers, once they discover they have been separated from parents or other relatives who were sent to Dallas' Reunion Arena.

Unexpectedly, Feeley and his staff quickly discover they must become comforters for those who appear distraught from Katrina-related events experienced during the days leading up to this one.

Several individuals are somewhat traumatized by the recent events - losing their homes and jobs, being evacuated to another state, experiencing separation anxiety, and trauma suffered in general as a result of Hurricane Katrina.

Feeley and staff began registering the guests and getting them situated in their new temporary living space.

While registering the guests, Feeley and his staff soon realize some basic items needed have not yet been purchased, procured or even thought of.

"I remember going with Mike at 2:30 in the morning to Wal-Mart to buy pillows, towels, etc. for 200 plus people," said Angie Highland-Martin, Meacham's fiscal coordinator.

By Sunday Feeley and his staff each have put in more than 40 hours of overtime.

Yet their job was not done yet. There were special needs individuals in the mix and things like wheelchairs, diapers and medication had yet to be procured. Even dumpsters had to be acquired to handle the increase in trash generated by the sudden increase in airport population.

Not a problem. Feeley and staff were able to procure these things and more almost immediately.

The private community responded quickly and greatly.

At daybreak Saturday, citizens began bringing needed items to the airport. The donations became so numerous and voluminous that airport staff had to redirect donors to the American Red Cross - which had committed to providing three meals per day for the guests - because of storage limitations.

A second load of 146 individuals arrived later Saturday.

By Sunday things began to settle down a bit. The guests were beginning to get comfortable in their new, temporary quarters.

Late that night several women from the group of guests approached "Mr. Mike" (the quickly adopted nickname for Feeley) with a suggestion.

The next day would be Labor Day.

The group inquired about holding a celebration during the holiday to

celebrate life and all the birthdays occurring during this memorable time. They even offered their government food allocations as sustenance for the celebration.

Feeley, who at this point had already proven he was one to exceed expectations, agreed they should hold some sort of event celebrating survival. The only disagreement he voiced dealt with the expenditure of the guest's small food allocations. He insisted on taking responsibility for providing the party favors.

Labor Day, a media-covered event was held in the Meacham Airport evacuation shelter. Local area mayors and other elected officials attended the gala event. While this may not have seemed like an ideal time for celebrating to the rest of the world it was just the opposite for those involved in this celebration.

Businesses, churches and city employees provided everything needed. The city's public information office even supplied a sound system for the event.

Tuesday, business as usual, for some, was to resume. The airport staff still had their normal duties to take care of in spite of the fact they had been working around-the-clock for the last several days.

Even school-age children were sent to area schools in yet another attempt to keep things as normal as possible for these airport guests.

By this time, many of the guests were getting settled in while others made arrangements to travel in hopes of reuniting with family members.

Feeley wasn't through performing what seemed like miracles yet.

There was a guest who appeared to be having a really difficult time being separated from her family.

Determined to make all of his guests happy, Feeley asked the young lady what it was she needed to make things easier for her. Doubting it would ever happen, she replied that she would like to join her relatives in another state. It wasn't long before Feeley was able to give her the departure time for the flight he had arranged to take her to the desired destination.

"It's not often aviation gets involved," said Feeley. "Our stakeholders really stepped up to the plate."

The amazing stories about this little airport shelter go on and on and are far too numerous to be detailed in one sitting. But they are a testament to the hard-working devotion of not only a small airport staff, but of a whole community that showed up when it counted most.

The architects of this aviation facility probably never imagined it would one day serve as a temporary home for some.

The employees probably never imagined having to perform work tasks requiring such humanitarian skills.

Nevertheless, these things were accomplished at a time when people seemed to need them most.

The experience was life-changing for both hosts and guests. One adolescent told Feeley that she plans to return to Fort Worth to live as an adult because the impression they made on her was unlike any she'd ever experienced.

Sure this could be viewed as just another story that we hope has a very happy ending. But it's more than that - it's a story that provides proof of the existence of individuals in our society who care just as much for strangers in need as they do their own. ♦

FAVORITE WEB SITES

Aviation Directories:

www.aeroseek.com

Aeroseek – Aviation Search Engine and Directory

www.aero.com

Aero.com – Future of Aviation, includes links to flight planning software

www.risingup.com

Rising Up Aviation Resources, FAA Regulations, practice FAA tests, etc.

www.aerolink.com

Aerolink.com. The Internet's commercial aviation directory

Employment:

www.nationjob.com/aviation

Aviation/Aerospace Jobs Page (NationJob Network)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Feb 25

62nd Fighter Pilot USA Flyoff, Orlando Florida

Feb 26-28

HAI: Heli-Expo 2006, Dallas, Texas

Mar 22-24

Texas Aviation Conference, Austin, Texas

Mar 23-25

Women in Aviation Conference,
Nashville, Tennessee

Apr 4-10

Sun 'n Fun Fly-In 2006, Lakeland, Florida

May 12-14

EAA Southwest Regional Fly-In (SWRFI),
Hondo, Texas

May 16-18

Transport & VIP Interiors Group, TVI Expo,
Dallas, Texas

May 22-25

Regional Airline Assn. Annual Convention,
Dallas, Texas

Editor's Note: For most recent entries, check our Texas Aviation Calendar of Events at our Web site, www.dot.state.tx.us.

Deadline for article submissions for the May/June *Wingtips* is April 7, 2006.



Texas Department of Transportation

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