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2008**

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2008 TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

By Jeff Borowiec,
Texas Transportation Institute

The 2008 Texas Aviation Conference marked not only a return to the Capitol in Austin but a record-setting attendance on the heels of last year's successful conference in Corpus Christi.

Some 567 aviation leaders attended, including airport sponsors, TxDOT employees, consultants and contractors along with other industry representatives. A record 70 exhibitors sponsored the event, ensuring the conference's success.

And so it begins

The conference opened Tuesday, April 15, 2008, with a Get Acquainted reception hosted by the Associated General Contractors in the exhibit hall. TxDOT's Aviation Division Director Dave Fulton opened the next day's session and was followed by Tim O'Krongley, president of the Texas Airport Management Association (TAMA) and Assistant Director of Aviation at San Antonio International Airport. Jay Carpenter, secretary of the Texas Aviation Association (TAA), offered remarks as well. TAMA and TAA co-sponsored the event.

After introducing the Aviation Advisory Committee members, Fulton gave his "State of the Aviation Division" address and recapped the achievements over the last year and detailed the challenges ahead. Valero's Senior Vice President of Human Resources, Mike Crownover, spoke next, giving a corporate perspective of the value of general aviation aircraft. Valero owns a fleet of aircraft based in San Antonio that is not restricted to senior management and views its aircraft as business tools. The company allows any employee to use the aircraft if there is a need and flying will save the company time and money. → *continued on pg. 3*



TxDOT Aviation Division Director Dave Fulton during his opening session remarks.



26TH ANNUAL TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE

The recently completed 26th Annual Texas Aviation Conference held in Austin was a huge success. The conference attendance set an all-time record of 557 participants, many of whom had glowing comments about the program and hotel accommodations. The presentations given were first rate and we are deeply indebted to all of the vendors and conference attendees who made this conference one of the best ever. Be sure and hold the dates of May 11 through 13 next year for the 27th Annual Texas Aviation Conference, which will be held at the Hilton Hotel in Austin.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION MAKING PROGRESS?

The expectation for FAA Reauthorization has been low for the past several months, with most experts predicting no new

FAA program until late next year. The primary stumbling blocks have been: (1) How to pay for FAA in the future (continuation of the passenger ticket tax and fuel tax or switch to a system of "user fees" for air traffic control services) and (2) A bitter fight over granting additional bargaining rights for air traffic controllers. With almost everyone giving up on resolving these issues anytime soon, lo and behold, a compromise was reached on the funding and labor issues and the proposed FAA reauthorization legislation looked to be on the fast track.

As often is the case in Congress, as the bill moved forward, it became weighted down with several amendments, most of which had nothing to do with air transportation, such as one favored by the highway lobby and an amendment to fund a \$1.6B elevated train to John F. Kennedy Airport.

Needless to say, the bill came to an abrupt halt with no immediate resolution in sight. Prognosis? Poor. The Senate has already moved to other issues. It has a lot of contentious items on the legislative calendar that it wants to get out of the way before the summer recess. With elections in the fall, there is not much hope at this point for reauthorization of FAA programs until sometime next year.

How does that affect TxDOT's grant program? Under the current continuing resolution, we are to receive 75 percent of the amount of state apportionment funds granted in FY '08. We expect to receive those funds soon. We are hopeful that we will receive the remaining 25 percent of the program funds prior to the end of the fiscal year. In all probability, we expect project delays for bidding and construction for the FY '08 program. Additionally, with the ever increasing petroleum costs, our bid prices continue to escalate. Airport sponsors need to be aware that their construction prices could very well come in higher than original estimates and may require a larger local matching share. In all likelihood, we will have to delay some projects from one year to the next to remain within our budget of available funds. ♦



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continued from pg. 1

Sessions with substance

The morning concluded with sessions on air service and marketing from Ron McNeill and Rob Mark, respectively. McNeill, a former airline executive now with Mead & Hunt in their St. Louis office, spoke on the current state of the airline industry and how it might affect air service across Texas. Intrastate service in Texas appears particularly vulnerable to cutbacks. A large number of smaller commercial service airports in Texas are served by aging, turboprop aircraft and the current airline economic environment makes serving these small communities more difficult.



Attendees of the 2008 Texas Aviation Conference listen to a speaker during the main session.

Rob Mark, a nationally known aviation journalist, blogger and public relations/marketing expert, made a return trip to the Texas Aviation Conference. Mark's presentation focused on understanding your market and included interesting information on generational differences when it comes to consumer behavior and habits. He also addressed the new and emerging media elements that airport managers should be aware of when promoting their airports and associated businesses.

Following the Tejano Fiesta lunch, the conference format moved into workshop sessions where participants had a choice of topics to choose from. During the latter half of lunch, the Texas Airport Management Association held a meeting that was attended by approximately 40 people. During this meeting, the group reviewed their budget, discussed goals for 2008, held elections for new officers and voted to change the name of the organization to the Texas Airports Council.

Three different workshop sessions were held in the afternoon and included topics concerning

- Asphalt vs. Concrete;
- Wildlife Management;
- Maximizing the Potential of Your AWOS;
- Risk Management and Insurance for Municipal Airports;
- Airport Lighting and Basic Troubleshooting;
- General Aviation Airport Security; and
- Airport 101 for RAMP Coordinators.

Winners among us

After an evening reception sponsored by TAMA, aviation leaders and facilities were recognized at the annual awards banquet, a perennial favorite among attendees.

A new award, Aviator of the Year, was added this year. Wayne Collins of Mineola, Texas, was the first to earn the prestigious new award. Fulton, reading from the citation said, "Beginning 25 years ago, Collins was instrumental in the establishment of a new airport for his county. Since that time he has led the effort for every one of the many improvements made to his airport including a runway extension to 4,000 feet, a new parallel taxiway, a new terminal building and an automated weather system. He began an annual airport recognition day. Presently, this annual celebration attracts some 75 to 100 leaders of his community, including his state representative." Collins, a Rice University graduate and World War II veteran, has flown around the world twice as a member of the Earthrounders. →

2008 AVIATION CONFERENCE AWARD WINNERS:

- **Aviator of the Year**
Wayne Collins
Mineola, TX
- **RAMP Coordinator
of the Year**
Mike Reagan
Tyler District
- **Most Improved Airport**
Del Rio International Airport
- **Airport of the Year**
Draughon-Miller Central Texas Regional
Airport, Temple
- **General Aviation Airport Manager of
the Year**
Paul Henderson
Mount Pleasant Regional Airport
- **Reliever Airport Manager of the Year**
Ken Wiegand
Collin County Regional Airport, McKinney

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2008 AVIATION ART CONTEST WINNERS

CATEGORY I (AGES 5-9)

1st Place

Shaylan Rounds
Haynes Elementary

2nd Place

Sachi Khemka
Hayes Elementary

3rd Place

Kimberly Chavez
Maple Lawn Elementary

CATEGORY II (AGES 10-13)

1st Place

Alexia Bueno
Clark Middle School

2nd Place

Nirali Desai
Garland McMeans Jr. High

3rd Place

Eleana Gruen
Clark Middle School

CATEGORY III (AGES 14-18)

1st Place

Hannah Holmes
Fredericksburg High School

2nd Place

Valeria Reveles
Clark Middle School

3rd Place

Kayla Joo
Coppell Middle School East

The winners of the art contest were also presented with their awards. The theme of this year's contest, sponsored by Southwest Airlines, was "Commercial Aviation." The number of entries in the contest was also a new record with 1,430, a significant increase over previous years. The winners were selected according to three age categories and they received two round-trip tickets on Southwest Airlines.

The evening ended with a fabulous social complete with a dessert bar and refreshments sponsored by Rodriguez Engineering.

The home stretch

The final day of the conference began with breakfast followed by the morning general sessions. The first two morning sessions focused on reauthorization and current federal issues affecting airports. Henry Ogrodzinski, the President of the National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO), spoke about reauthorization, the importance of general aviation and NASAO's recent activities, including the nationwide general aviation alliance they were instrumental in creating.

Spencer Dickerson, the Senior Executive Vice President of the American Association of Airport Executives, spoke on other federal issues including funding. He also highlighted his organization's role in keeping general aviation airports informed of current issues and providing professional development opportunities to aviation professionals.

The late morning sessions began with a warmly received presentation of the newest general aviation airport in Texas. Andrew Perry with Houston Executive Airport highlighted the development of the airport from its initial conception thru its current status and into its future plans. The presentation also included the plans for developing Austin's Bird Nest Airport near Manor, Texas. Both airports are owned by telecommunications executive and aviation enthusiast Ron Henriksen.

All good things, must...

The conference concluded with a listening session by Fulton and Mike Nicely, manager of the FAA's Texas Airport Development Office.

In all, TxDOT's 2008 Texas Aviation Conference was well attended and well received by participants and exhibitors. And the conference next year promises even more success.

But, mark the date!

The conference returns to Austin next year but arrives a little later than usual. Please plan to attend May 11-13, 2009 (Monday-Wednesday) at the Downtown Hilton Hotel. Please submit program ideas or suggestions for activities to Becky Vick at: bvick@dot.state.tx.us. ♦

For information about TxDOT's Aviation Division and information about next year's conference, visit: <http://www.txdot.gov/services/aviation/>

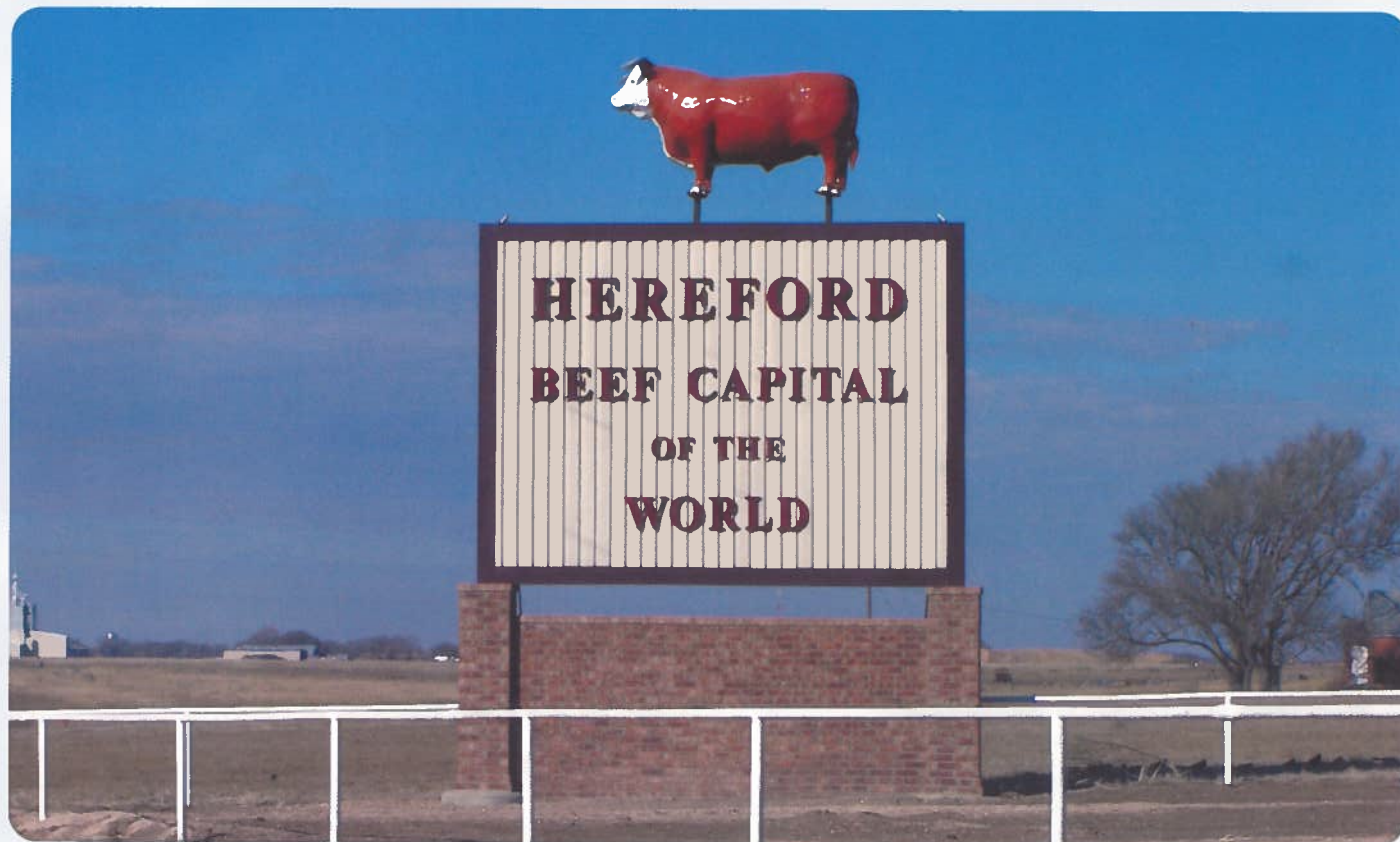
For information about the TAA, visit: <http://www.txaa.org/>

To learn more about TAMA, visit: <http://www.texasairports.org/>

For a listing of the conference presentations, visit: <http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/tac08/program/>



TxDOT'S 26th ANNUAL TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE



Hereford reigns supreme in beef cattle production.

FEEDLOTS, FLIGHTS & FUEL TANKS

THE BEEF CAPITAL OF THE WORLD, HEREFORD, TEXAS, IS NOW ON THE MAP FOR MORE THAN JUST THE STEAK ON YOUR PLATE—AND THAT'S WHY AIRPORT DIRECTOR TERESA LYONS LOVES HER JOB.

by Brandon V. Webb,
Texas Transportation Institute

Take a deep whiff in the windy heart of Hereford, Texas, and you're bound to come up with more than a snoot full of Panhandle grit. That certain something in the air, what locals call "the smell of money," suggests there may be one or two head of cattle nearby. Try 3.5 million or so in the surrounding area—with a million head fed each year in Deaf Smith County alone, where Hereford is the county seat.

The town is at the center of the cattle feeding industry in Texas and dubs itself the "Beef Capital of the World." But it's also at the leading edge of the quest for alternative energies. In Hereford, they're turning corn into gold and cow patties into a prize worth premium pay. Smack dab in the middle of the emerging Texas "new energy" boom sits the Hereford Municipal Airport and Director Teresa Lyons.

"When I got here four years ago less than half of our hangars were filled, and we would go days without even a single plane landing," says Lyons. "We might sell 1,000 gallons of Avgas every two months and less of Jet A. Now we're up to about 2,000 gallons each of Avgas and Jet A—every month. One month I sold 4,000 gallons of Jet A."

A sure measure of an airport's air traffic volume, fuel sales in Hereford have risen sharply to accommodate the growth in travel for ethanol energy executives and contractors traveling to their new facilities at Panda Ethanol and White Energy. Texas' open embrace of agriculture has also invited a boom for cattle dairy executives seeking to move operations and flee states with soaring taxes, land prices and regulations.

"The ethanol plants have brought in so much traffic, but the dairies and feed yards bring in traffic, too," acknowledges Lyons. "We recently saw a study showing →

that for 30 years Hereford averaged one new house built per year, and that was true through 2003. In 2005, there were 17 built. In 2006, 17 more were built. Then 25 were built in 2007, along with two apartment complexes completed and a third on the way. Things are exploding."



Airport Director Teresa Lyons with a Cessna 172.

The Lyons Family

Lyons, a second-generation pilot and graduate of Texas A&M University, is a passionate advocate of flying, airports and her husband—a tall, patient figure answering to "Kevin," who is an instructor and corporate pilot. The two live in a city-owned home on the airport property, which allows Teresa to work five days per week, each a 24-hour on-call shift. Kevin proved an exceedingly patient teacher during our post-interview flight, where yours truly seemed bent on running our nose into the nearest feedlot. I felt certain an extra pattie or two was deposited when unsuspecting cattle looked up to see our Cessna 172 lurch toward them while under my control. His patience, steady hand and humor made an impression on me, but nothing like the impact his wife Teresa has made on the city of Hereford.

Within a year of her employment at Hereford Municipal Airport, the facility had increased revenues by 400 percent. The perfect storm created by Lyons' affable and professional management style, the Panhandle's energy boom and a fortuitous turn in the agriculture markets—with no end in sight—has drawn attention to the airport's need for growth. →

A terminal fit for living

Dwain "Pitt" Pittinger, a retired spray pilot who serves as the airport's unofficial/official Ambassador, Greeter and Chief Historian, gave *Wingtips* a guided tour of the terminal upon arrival.

The terminal is an architectural jewel comprised of two four-corner boxes, one inside the other, to form an eight-sided building. It is timeless, thirty-something, with great bones and solid wooden doors from New Mexico. The interior is inviting, fresh, spotless and is undergoing improvements to add a lounge and update equipment. But most of the real blood, sweat and dollars are being dedicated to the meat-and-potatoes part of any airport—the flat stuff outside.



Classic and clean, the terminal at Hereford Municipal Airport.

Big help for Hereford

With funding from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the airport and the City of Hereford are undertaking an \$8 million improvement project that comprises a new runway, created from scratch, that will lengthen the airport's overall runway space from 5,378 feet to 6,100 feet. The new runway will widen the existing space from 75 feet to 100 feet. In addition, the airport will get new runway lights, a parking area in front of the fuel pumps and the taxiways will get a facelift.

The new runway will replace the existing runway that, upon inspection, is deeply cracked and slowly sliding apart in layers. The city plans to demolish and recycle the old runway once the new asphalt strip is stretched.

The new runway will be "double-strength" and sufficiently wide enough and long enough to meet insurance take-off and landing requirements for large corporate jets. In addition, the longer runway allows jets to take on more fuel, which always helps an airport's bottom line.

"I've heard stories where the airport is the redheaded stepchild of a city," says Lyons. "I've heard cities don't like to spend money on the airport, or they begrudgingly spend money on it. But the city manager here, especially, and the mayor and city council all seem to know how important this is. Anytime I tell them we need something, they get it for us." ♦

WHAT THE AIRPORT MEANS TO...

Panda Ethanol— "[During site selection for the new ethanol plant] we found out in a lot of cases being the first one there, you're the one that gets it. That's a big reason for having and keeping an airplane. Teresa Lyons does a phenomenal job. I would throw that airport up with some of the biggest FBOs (fixed base operator) out there as far as how it's run for its size. The quality is high. The service is high. We have fun going in and out of there."

Vince Dumas, Chief Pilot of Panda Air Corporation, a division of Panda Energy

Champion Feeders— "A lot of the places we need to go are rural...and it benefits us to have access to a local plane and make a one-day deal out of it. It's a nice airport, too."

Kevin Buse, General Manager, Champion Feeders of Hereford, TX. Champion currently feeds about 36,000 head of cattle.

Deaf Smith County Chamber of Commerce— "The airport is an absolute necessity. It's well equipped for small jet traffic. Communities of our size—about 15,000 people—don't often place priority on an airport, but ours does."

Sid C. Shaw, Executive Vice-President Deaf Smith County Chamber of Commerce

For more information about Hereford Municipal Airport, visit:
<http://www.airnav.com/airport/KHRX>

To learn more about Panda Ethanol, visit:
www.pandaethanol.com/

For a more complete picture of the Texas feedlot industry, visit:
<http://www.tcfa.org/>

FROM BULL-SCRAP TO BIO-FUEL—THE ETHANOL EFFORT IN HEREFORD

- Two plants have located near the airport—White Energy and Panda Ethanol. Each plant is expected to produce more than 100-million gallons of ethanol annually.
- Kevin Buse estimates that Champion Feeders removes between 45 and 55 tons of manure from his feedlot each year. Panda Ethanol alone expects to use up to 1 billion pounds of cow manure each year.
- Ethanol plants like Panda's use a technique called "gasifying" to process manure into a gas which can then fire the boilers needed for the enormous corn stills that produce ethanol. Except for the manure, the process is much like making moonshine.
- Hereford, Texas, is extraordinarily well positioned for manufacturing biofuels. It sits within the largest conglomeration of cattle in the world—who happen to produce the largest manure/ethanol energy resource on the planet; it is at the crossroads for railcars bursting with grain for both cattle and energy production; and, a lucrative co-product of ethanol production is "distiller's grains," a corn leftover from ethanol production that cattle thrive on eating. The cyclically efficient corn→cattle→energy→corn→cattle relationship is alive and well in Hereford.

WINGTIPS PROFILES

AVIATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JIM SCHWERTNER

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 Chairman James E. Schwertner.

Jim Schwertner was exposed to flying at a young age when he accompanied his father on business trips aboard a private plane. Although his father was not a pilot, he nevertheless encouraged Jim to start taking flying lessons at age 14. Schwertner completed his first solo at 16, and by 1968, he was a licensed pilot. He eventually was able to fly his father to meetings for the family's cattle business. In 1987, he established the Aviation World Speed Record in a Piper Navajo, a record that still stands today.

Although Schwertner struggled between staying in his family's cattle business or becoming a professional pilot, the family business won out. His decision was partly influenced by his family's long and distinguished history of working in agriculture. His great-great-grandfather came to Central Texas from →



Schwertner with a Gulfstream Turbo Commander.

Germany in 1875. He began farming the dark, fertile soil six miles east of Jarrell, growing corn, cotton and milo. Named after his ancestors, Schwertner, Texas, is still home to the family's farm, which is now 18,000 acres. After making his decision to pursue the family business, Schwertner attended Texas Tech University and, in 1975, he received a bachelor's of science degree in agriculture economics.

Jim's father began a cattle business in 1946, becoming the largest livestock dealer in the nation. Jim Schwertner is now president and CEO of both Capital Land and Livestock and Schwertner Farms, Inc. His family is also in the banking business. He is the chairman of the board of Schwertner State Bank and the past chairman of the board of Cattleman's State Bank in Austin.

Despite his occupational choice years earlier, Schwertner's love for flying never faded. He pilots his own Gulfstream Turbo Commander and Robinson R-44 helicopter. It's his love for aviation that prompted him to accept an appointment on the Texas Aviation Advisory Committee in 2002, becoming chairman last year. His current six-year term ends on August 31.

Wingtips: Judging from your bio, it does not seem like you have a lot of free time. What was your motivation in accepting the appointment on the Texas Aviation Advisory Committee?

Jim Schwertner: My father taught me at a very young age how important aviation was to business. Since then, I have always had a passion for aviation. So, I was honored to be recommended to this committee by Governor Rick Perry.

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

Jim Schwertner: Personally, I have been amazed at how hard the TxDOT Aviation Division staff works to meet the demands of all the airports and communities in Texas. They are available at a moment's notice to meet every airport manager's needs. It has been rewarding to work with Dave Fulton and his staff. These folks work tirelessly everyday to ensure Texas spends its money wisely. Having the best airport system in the nation is the result of their work. It has been very satisfying to be a part of this major undertaking.

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

Jim Schwertner: User fees are going to be the biggest challenge we face in the years to come. General aviation already pays its fair share of the cost to support the aviation system through fuel taxes.

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

Jim Schwertner: Aviation in Texas provides more than 61,000 jobs with \$8.7 billion in economic output each year. We are a big state, so traveling long distances is a requirement in order to conduct business. Every community in the state is a beneficiary of the state's general aviation network. The citizens of Texas should always support aviation to ensure we will always have a strong economy. ♦

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

STERLING STUDENTS SPREAD THEIR WINGS AT HOBBY AIRPORT

BY THE TIME MOST TEENAGERS ARE LEARNING TO DRIVE, THESE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE WORKING ON OBTAINING THEIR PILOT'S LICENSE

HOUSTON AIRPORT SYSTEM JANUARY 12, 2008

Although learning to fly is no small feat, in Houston, students as young as 14 years old are getting a head start on their lifelong ambition of becoming pilots. William P. Hobby Airport is providing the training field for their curriculum and exposing them to real world aviation scenarios.

Through a partnership with the Houston Independent School District (HISD) and airport tenant Flying Tigers, Hobby Airport is providing access to their airfield for students enrolled in the aviation magnet program at Ross Shaw Sterling High School. These students are enrolled in a specialized curriculum that enables them to obtain their pilot's license before or shortly after graduating from high school.

Roughly 160 teenagers are currently enrolled in the program, which has been in existence for more than 16 years in the Houston area. Hobby Airport is one of the few commercial airports in the country that allows student pilots to train in their Class B-rated (commercial) airspace.

"We're happy to be able to contribute to the future of these students' lives and career goals by providing a safe flying environment to learn in," says Mary Case, Hobby Airport manager. "At Hobby, students have the advantage of flying in and out of the same runways that commercial aircraft use to transport the major airlines' passengers."

Through the HISD magnet program, students are offered a number of specialized educational programs that provide both strong academic studies and a specialty enrichment program, such as Sterling High School's aviation program.

Roger Thompson has been teaching students at Sterling about the world of aviation for more than a decade and a half and has enjoyed seeing his students excel in the field.

"It's fascinating working with these kids who are interested in learning to fly," says Thompson. "We're preparing them to develop a career in the Air Force, corporate aviation and private aviation and at the same time, (having) fun." →



Students soar. Facilities at Hobby Airport allow area high school students to spread their wings and learn to fly.

According to Thompson, one of Sterling's standout students is Cory Shepard. A graduate of the high school and currently a first officer on a 737 Continental Airlines aircraft, Shepard is also a part time teacher for the magnet program at Flying Tigers.

The licensed pilot confesses to feeling a special connection to the students at Sterling High School.

"My flying career started at Sterling and working with these kids is just great. It gives me a chance to reconnect with them," says Shepard. "Many of the students are already ahead of the game and further along in training than I was at their age. So, I want them to get where I am and beyond; I want them to do better than I'm doing."

While most high school students spend their extra time shopping, hanging out with friends or going to parties, the advanced level students — which consist mostly of seniors and juniors — are spending their extra time gaining flight hours, and inching forward towards their goal of obtaining a pilot's license.

Clayton Wilkinson, a junior at Sterling High School, says he has known he wanted to fly since he was a child.

"It's a great opportunity to fly here at Hobby. You have to have a lot of responsibility and determination, but it's worth it," he adds. "Not everybody gets to say they have a pilot's license. Some kids my age don't even have a driver's license."

Robert McCorvey, owner and operator of Flying Tigers flight school, is very impressed with the students from Sterling's aviation program and encourages anyone who wants to learn how to fly, to make use of the commercial airspace training provided by his school.

"We at Flying Tigers are happy to help with this program that exposes high school kids to opportunities in aviation," says McCorvey. "I'm able to enjoy training students young, old, rich, poor and everything in between. It's great to see future aviators come out and eventually become pilots."

Students learn to fly in ground school and flight training. They have the opportunity to earn 30 hours of actual flight time and take the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) written exam. Their curriculum consists of learning the theory of flight, computer science and aviation management.

To participate in the aviation magnet program students must meet certain criteria including maintaining a top grade point average, and demonstrating a keen interest in aviation. For more information on the aviation magnet program at Sterling High School, call 713/991-8125. ♦

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GRANTS RECEIVED

A.L. Mangham Jr. Regional Airport	\$4,100,000	The aviation construction work consists of construct new parallel taxiway to runway 18-36.
Angelina County Airport	\$2,150,000	The aviation construction work consists of overlay runway 15-33 asphalt pavement; reconstruct portions of taxiway B and D using concrete pavement, construct concrete AG ramp and asphalt access taxiway, pavement markings and seeding.
Terrell Municipal Airport	\$166,667	The Aviation construction work consists of taxiway C reconstruction and construct parking apron.
Clark Field/Stephenville Municipal	\$530,000	The aviation construction work consists of rehabilitate north hangar access TW, mark RW 14-32, rehabilitate connecting TWs, rehabilitate & mark TW "A," rehabilitate RW 14-32, rehabilitate south hangar access TW, and rehabilitate apron.
Sugar Land Regional Airport	\$3,034,000	The aviation construction work consists of Phase 2 construction of terminal apron.
Hutchinson County Airport/Borger	\$528,334	The aviation construction work consists of installing deer proof fencing.
Dalhart Municipal Airport	\$2,293,900	The aviation work consists of rehabilitate and mark taxiways, reconstruct taxiway "B" from taxiway "A" to RW 3 end, reconstruct taxiway "A" from RW 3-21 to RW 35 end, rehabilitate and mark runway 17-35, rehabilitate and mark runway 3-21.
Eldorado Airport	\$611,920	The aviation work consists of pavement and electrical airfield improvements.
South Texas International at Edinburg	\$600,000	The aviation work consists of construct 4 box hangar units with bi-fold doors.

SNYDER SUPPORTS USAF BOMBER TRAINING

By J Carpenter,
Texas Aviation Association

A loud warning horn cracked through the otherwise silent air at the Scurry County Airport in Snyder, Texas. Then a large antenna known as a MUTE (Multiple Threat Emitter System) began to swing toward the Northeast sky. "That must be the B-52 inbound from Louisiana," said Dwight M. Williams, Airspace Manager for the 7th Bomb Wing based out of Dyess Air Force Base (AFB), pointing to a tiny white contrail high in the cloudless blue sky. The Snyder facility was then bombed and destroyed in a simulated attack by the B-52H Stratofortress.

Since 2002, the Snyder Electronic Scoring Site (ESS) at the Scurry County Airport in Snyder has provided "real world" airpower threat reaction training to United States Air Force aircrews, thus ensuring the survivability of personnel and equipment in actual battle.



ESS Radar Screen Showing Bomber Echo Information.

located directly overhead where as other airports are on the periphery of the airspace," said Williams. "Also, the infrastructure of the city of Snyder provided an adequate amount available land at this airport. The city was very cooperative in helping to establish the facility." The Air Force works closely with the city manager and the local utilities. "It's a pretty neat deal. We bring approximately 1.2 million dollars into the local economy," said Williams.

Williams helped to develop the Lancer MOA back in 2002. "When Reese AFB located west of Lubbock closed in the early 90's there were three separate MOA's, the Reese Four and Five and the Roby MOA. I worked with the Federal Aviation Administration to develop one MOA out of three," said Williams. "Since this condensation gave approximately 3,000 square miles of airspace back for non military use, the FAA was very cooperative in developing the Lancer MOA."

Bring 'em home

The Snyder ESS facility site manager is Bill Clingenpeel, employee of AHNTECH Corporation, the private contractor for operations. Bill explained that his facility provides precision tracking of the aircraft inbound for a simulated bombing run. His job is to provide electronic warfare in the form of a hostile threat environment that the bomber crews might encounter while penetrating a foreign airspace. "We're the bad guys on the ground," said Bill. "We send up signals that simulate tracking radar, anti aircraft artillery and surface to air missiles. It is the aircrew's job to avoid us, get in there and do their damage."

Bill added that the results of this intense training are worth the investment in money and time. "It is extremely rare that you →

The location

The Lancer Military Operation Areas (MOA) is located in West Texas between Abilene and Lubbock. MOAs are airspaces provided by the federal government to allow military pilot training in various aircraft. The primary customers of the Lancer MOA consist of B-52H aircrews of the 2nd Bomb Wing from Barksdale Air Force Base in Bossier City, Louisiana, and B-1B aircrews of the 7th Bomb Wing from Dyess AFB in Abilene, Texas. The airspace is also used for training aircraft like the F-15 Eagle and the EC-130 transport plane. It is used on a "real time basis," meaning Lancer is only activated when an airborne aircraft requests its use and is on the schedule.

In a rare civilian tour, Williams explained why Snyder was picked as the location for the ESS system. "The Lancer MOA is



Site Manager Bill Clingenpeel Demonstrating the Size of the MUTES Radar Dish.

hear of a bomber being shot down. Our job is to bring 'em home," said Bill. "The B-1B bombers normally operate below 26,000 feet while the B-52's operate above 30,000 feet," said Williams. "The base of the Lancer MOA is 6,500 feet, but we restrict our operations to 12,000 feet and above. This is for noise considerations and for general aviation traffic avoidance."

Meanwhile, back at the ranch:



Lineman Bob Snedeker and Manager Roger Sullenger Personally Greet Guests At Winston Field.

Things are considerable quieter at the Snyder Winston Field terminal building where airport manager Roger Sullenger and his associate Bob Snedeker greet arriving aircraft. There is no self-serve fuel farm here. Instead, a personal, friendly smile and West Texas "Howdy" welcome each pilot landing there. Snyder has become a popular stop off for transient pilots wanting to refuel on long cross-country flights. Word travels fast among pilots about the friendly atmosphere, free courtesy car and reasonably priced fuel, which are all valuable commodities for general aviation. Roger says that the ESS facility and the folks that run it are good neighbors. "We are always asked what the strange looking building and radar dishes are about," says Roger as he parks his fuel truck next to a newly arrived Mooney.

Transient pilots arrive from all over the state. The Mooney driver was from Houston on his way to catch the last of the snow skiing season in Red River, New Mexico. Another Grumman Tiger arrives. This pilot was on his way to Colorado from La Grange to visit his family. Both pilots say they have made Snyder their preferred stop off because of its location in the state, easy access, friendly service and fuel prices.

Local pilot and aviation enthusiast John Rogotzke was at the terminal building promoting his upcoming 8th annual Snyder Fly-In scheduled for June 21. The Texas Air Museum and the local Chamber of Commerce sponsor the event, which features static displays of GA aircraft, Warbirds, an antique car show and of course, plenty of food and soft drinks. Fuel is sold at cost and the food is free to fly-in pilots.

Snyder Winston Field has a lot going for it. Besides being a great place to stop off for a visit, the city of Snyder and Scurry County enthusiastically support the airport and the ESS facility located on the airfield. "We even have movie stars stop by from time to time," said Manager Sullenger. Stop by when in the area. Roger will have on a pot of hot coffee accompanied by plenty of hangar talk.

For more information about the Snyder Electronic Scoring Site, call Dwight Williams at 325/696-3666. E-mail John Rogotzke about the fly-in at John_Rogotzke@oxy.com. Visit <http://www.airnav.com/airport/KSNK> or call Roger Sullenger 325/573-1122 for information about Snyder Winston Field. ♦

FLIGHT SAFETY

OWNERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the most overlooked considerations in private aviation is the owner's responsibility to maintain the aircraft, and ensure both plane and pilot are up to the task. Owners can avoid the slippery slope of bad maintenance and operational decisions by

- Flying procedures as charted, with proper equipment and authorized clearances.
- Recognizing when you are applying work-arounds to your maintenance or flying, and fix the underlying problems now.

- Recognizing that medications and fatigue do affect decision-making and motor skills.
- Honestly evaluating whether you can afford to own the airplane, or if you need to step back in airplane type or performance to be able to maintain it safely within your budget. (The pilot of a turbocharged, single-engine retractable once told me he feels you can't afford an airplane unless you can fund replacing the engine at any time. That may be true, especially with harder-to-maintain older airplanes.)
- Seeking out a mechanic that will help you maintain your airplane as inexpensively as is safe, but who will not enable your decisions and deferrals that are blatantly dangerous.
- Heeding the warning signs. If other pilots or aviation professionals are warning you about your unsafe behaviors, they may be trying to save your life, and those of your family and friends.

SOURCE: Aviation Safety, 2007

THE SOUTHERN FLYER DINER: SLOWLY GETTING FAMOUS IN THE BIRTHPLACE OF TEXAS AWARD-WINNING AIRPORT RESTAURANT TAKES HOME TOP PRIZE

How much would you pay for a hamburger? How about \$100? Believe it or not, there are a lot of pilots that have been doing just that for years.

The phrase "The \$100 Hamburger" was made famous with the general public in 1996 by private pilot John Purner, who used the name for a Web site he created to let fellow pilots know of good places to eat at general aviation airports across the country. When he started the Web site, the hamburger was about \$3 and the fuel or plane rental was about \$97.

"Going to lunch is a great idea for pilots who want to keep their flying skills sharp," Purner says. "It's a good excuse to get some air time. Everyday, pilots across the country are buying \$100 hamburgers, chicken fried steaks and barbecue dinners."

Purner's Web site evolved into a book of the same name in 1998. Since then, he says it's been through 67 reprints and is on its third edition. Three years ago, Purner began a restaurant survey conducted by his Web site subscribers who rate the top-ten airport eateries. Each year, the Southern Flyer Diner—located at the Brenham Municipal Airport—has made the list.

By Rick Davenport,
Texas Transportation Institute

It was easy for non-aviation enthusiasts of Washington County to grow up without ever knowing where the Brenham Municipal Airport was located. They may have heard that race car driver A.J. Foyt houses two of his planes at the airport, but chances are they couldn't tell you how to get there. After all, it's nestled in the trees off a once seldom-traveled county road that intersects Highway 105 about five miles north of the city's historic downtown. That rural highway intersection is home to an expansive and visible junkyard that almost begs you not to turn there. But in October 2002, something changed all that.

The grand opening of the Southern Flyer Diner put the Brenham Municipal Airport on the map, not only for the residents of Washington County, but for pilots across the country, too. In fact, it was the pilots who helped first spread the word about the good food and the 1950s atmosphere, complete with a checkerboard floor, jukebox, old fashioned malts and the young waitresses who wear authentic, colorful poodle skirts. An elevated, airy dining deck that seats 80 overlooks both a section of the runway and a tranquil pond, dubbed Lake Brenham by the poodle girls.

The Southern Flyer Diner became an instant hit with the pilots, who already have a romantic spirit embedded in their DNA. Many of the flyers who attended the restaurant's grand opening nearly six years ago regularly make the flight from their home base to →



The Brenham Municipal Airport terminal, home to the Southern Flyer Diner.

sample the homemade Brenham wings, cheeseburgers, onion rings, chicken fried or hamburger steaks, numerous dinner selections (the chicken parmigiana and fried catfish are among the favorites) and made-from-scratch sides.

Pilots, who have long flown to airport restaurants to eat, call their lunch or dinner excursions "\$100 hamburgers" (see sidebar). They voted the Southern Flyer Diner the #1 "\$100 Hamburger" fly-in location in the country for 2008. The top ranking is courtesy of "The \$100 Hamburger" Web site subscribers, who have propelled the Brenham Airport diner into the top-ten list every year since the survey began in 2006. That's a pretty tall order, considering all 1,675 airport restaurants are in the running. (For more on "The \$100 Hamburger Web site, see <http://www.100dollarhamburger.com/>.)

It all started in 2000, when Jack Hess approached the city with the idea of opening an airport restaurant. But in order to make it work, it had to be a package deal—he had to manage the airport, too. "We went through a lot of trials and tribulations in getting the terminal and the restaurant built under one roof, but it finally happened," he says. "The day of the grand opening, there were planes flying in from all over, and the automobile traffic was lined up down the road."

Although both have aviation backgrounds, Jack and his wife, Janet, had no restaurant experience. So, the idea of operating one in an isolated location—known to just a handful of residents—added to the gamble. "I just went along with Jack because anything he decides to do is successful," says Janet. "But, I was a bit worried."

Janet had a right to be apprehensive. Food and beverage distributors delivering products to the airport restaurant had to call to get directions. The Hesses tell stories of "people stopping by the Chamber of Commerce for directions, and even they didn't know where we were. And we were members!" It was clear that the Hesses had a lot of competition among visitors: Blue Bell, bluebonnets and "The Birthplace of Texas."

Thanks to the consistently good food and word of mouth, most Washington County residents know exactly where the airport is now. Many of them join the pilots for lunch or dinner everyday except the four days the restaurant is closed: Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day and Easter. The clientele is evenly divided between flyers and those who drive to dine.

Before the restaurant came along, Washington County residents had little reason to travel to the airport. Now, starting around 11:00 a.m. every day, cars begin turning off Highway 50 at the junk yard, down Airport Road and onto Aviation Way. They travel past the A.J. Foyt hangers on the left, hoping to beat the crowd to the Southern Flyer Diner. ♦



Jack and Janet Hess are putting the Brenham Municipal Airport on the map thanks to their 1950s era restaurant.

WEB SITES TO VISIT

Both sites offer free practice FAA written exams.

www.mywrittenexam.com

<http://mypilottests.com>

An online directory of airports, navigational aids and flight-planning aids, all free.

www.airnav.com

This aviation portal is a gateway to all things aviation.

www.landings.com

Live ATC feeds allow you to listen to real communications between pilots and some of the country's busiest controllers.

www.liveatc.net

This fantastic resource has free online ground-school courses and much more.

www.faa-ground-school.com

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Regional Planning Meetings

July 24 Tyler, Texas, two sessions, 9-11am, 1-3pm

July 25 Madisonville, Texas, 9-11am

August 19 Pharr, Texas, 9-11am

August 19 Hebbronville, Texas, 2-4pm

August 20 Harlingen, Texas, 9-11am

For *Wingtips* newsletters: www.txdot.gov/publications/aviation.htm
If you have upcoming airport events that you would like added to our calendar, please send to wingtips@tamu.edu.



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