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# Oklahoma Aviator



Vol 20, No 4

Your window to Oklahoma Aviation...Past, Present, Future

April 2002

## Biplane Bash in Bartlesville May 30-June 1

by Charles W. Harris

An Oklahoma aviation original, the nationally recognized Biplane Expo scheduled for Bartlesville's Frank Phillips Field on May 30-June 1 is one of the most colorful and unique airplane events in the entire world.

The 16th annual Expo is the largest gathering of biplanes in the world. The biplanes have come to Bartlesville from literally all corners of the U.S.A, as well as Canada and Mexico. With good weather, upwards of 150 biplanes and over 350 non-biplane aircraft are expected to attend the three-day aviation conclave.

The Expo features most all of the legendary biplanes of the last 75 years, including the traditional Stearmans,

Wacos, Great Lakes, Navys, Travel Airs, Standards, Staggerwings, as well as the beautiful custom-built experimentals such as the Skybolts, Stardusters, Pitts, EAA Biplanes, and the neat little Hatz which are skyrocketing in popularity.

The Expo has long been one of the leaders in honoring high-profile national aviation personalities. The event has recognized and honored such outstanding aviation people as George Gay, Torpedo Squadron Eight's sole survivor at the Battle of Midway in June of 1942; Curtis Pitts, famed designer of the world class American aerobatic biplane, the Pitts Special; Texan Frank Price, America's first competitor in World Aerobatic Competi-

tion; Robert S. "Bob" Johnson, Lawton native, who led all the Eighth Air Force fighter aces in aerial victories with 28 at the time of his rotation back to the states in June of 1944; Paul Poberezny, Founder and Chairman of EAA; Travis Hoover, one of Jimmy Doolittle's Tokyo Raiders, who flew the #2 B-25 off the deck of the Carrier Hornet, right behind the legendary Doolittle, April 18, 1942; Brigadier General Paul Tibbets, who flew the most famous airplane of WWII, the B-29 Enola Gay, to Hiroshima to drop the war-ending atomic bomb on August 6, 1945; and Colonel "Bud" Anderson, one of the Eighth Air Force's great 16 victory P-51 aces of WWII.

This year's honored guest is scheduled to be Norman native Robert Ragozzino who captured the attention of the biplane world when, in the summer and fall of 2000, he became the first pilot in history to fly an open cockpit biplane solo around the world.

Robert will display and discuss his famous custom "around the world" 450-hp Stearman during the three-day event and will describe his flight for the aviation public. He will be prominently featured at "An Evening with Robert Ragozzino" on Thursday evening May 30, and will be honored Friday evening May 31st, during an "on the field" honorarium.

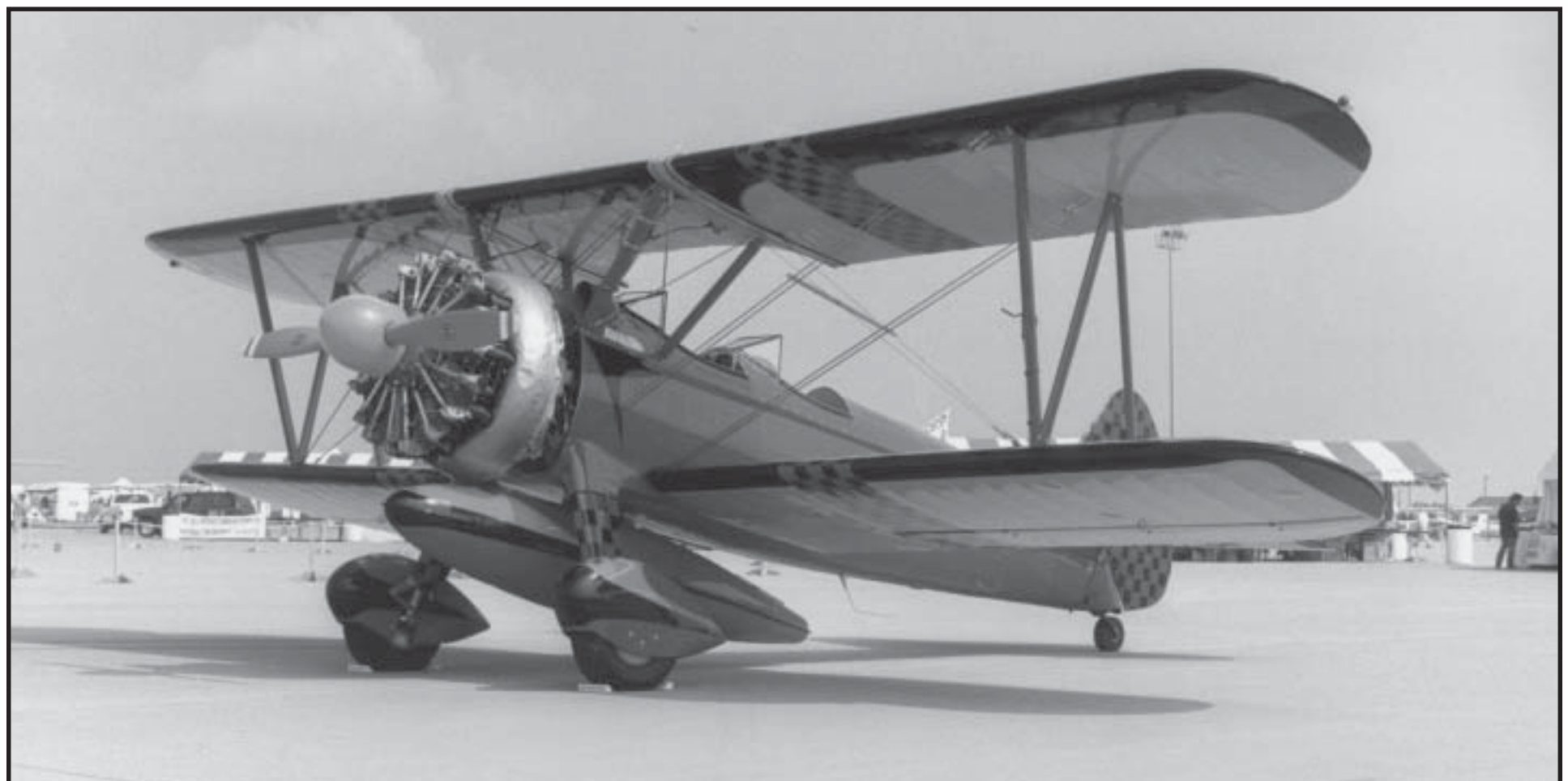
The aviation public is

invited and encouraged to attend the Expo. Admission prices are \$1.00 for children and \$3.00 for adults on Friday and \$3.00 for children and \$5.00 for adults on Saturday.

The taxiway construction project which caused the cancellation of the Expo in 2001 was completed in November 2001 and the airport is now being finely prepared for the big biplane bash.

If you love airplanes, especially biplanes and airplane people, Bartlesville's Biplane Expo is the place to be on May 30-June 1.

For information, Call (918) 622-8400 or Fax (918) 665-0039 or access the Biplane Expo website at [www.biplaneexpo.com](http://www.biplaneexpo.com).



*Robert Ragozzino's magnificent 450-horsepower Stearman, which carried Robert all the way around the world in the Fall of 2000.*

# EAA "Spirit of St. Louis" Flight Brings Back Memories



"The EAA Aviation Foundation's replica of one of the world's most famous airplanes, Charles Lindbergh's *Spirit of St. Louis*, will be in the national spotlight this spring during the 75th anniversary of Lindbergh's historic solo flight from New York to Paris.

"EAA's replica airplane will be part of The Lindbergh Foundation's national schedule of events in May 2002 commemorating the 1927 flight that captured the world's imagination. On May 10-11, the airplane will be in St. Louis, MO to re-create the arrival of the original airplane in that city from Ryan Aircraft Company in San Diego, CA. It will then fly to New York City to participate in reenactment festivities on May 18-20, marking the 75th anniversary of Lindbergh's departure from New York's Roosevelt Field en route to Europe.

"Following its appearances in St. Louis and New York, the *Spirit* replica will stop at the U.S. Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio (May 25-26) before returning to Oshkosh for EAA's Family Flight

and Balloon Festival. After that event, the aircraft will travel to West Bend, WI (June 14-16); a St. Louis, MO air show (July 4-7); EAA AirVenture Oshkosh (July 23-29); Lindbergh's boyhood home in Little Falls, MN (Aug. 9-11) and the Kansas City, MO Aviation Expo (Aug. 17)."

As I read this information from an EAA press release, I was reminded of the time in 1977 when the *Spirit of St. Louis* replica came through Tulsa as one stop on its 50th anniversary recreation of Lindbergh's 1927 North American tour. At the time, I was president of our local EAA Chapter 10 and my partner Mallie Norton and I had just completed our Steen Skybolt. When the Chapter learned of the planned stop in Tulsa, we decided to organize an airborne welcoming committee for the flight. Besides its historic significance, one of the *Spirit* pilots was Tulsa's own Gene Chase, who had just gone to work at EAA Headquarters in Oshkosh. The *Spirit* was to be accompanied on the flight by the EAA's Stinson SM-8A, which carried supplies, tools, and parts. The other members of the spirit crew included Vern Jobst (the other pilot), Jim

Barton, and Tony Goetz, both mechanics.

The *Spirit* was to fly to Tulsa from Oklahoma City, its previous stop. Dan Diehl in his newly-completed KR-2, Hurley Boehler in his Ryan PT-22, and I in the Skybolt were elected as the welcoming committee. The plan was for our three airplanes to fly to Bristow, join up with the *Spirit*, and escort it to Riverside Airport. As President of the Chapter, I had written a grandiose welcoming speech that I planned to read over the radio as we joined up.

On September 29, 1977, after talking with the *Spirit* crew by telephone and assuring that they were headed our way, the three of us took off headed for Bristow. My son Steve was in the Skybolt with me. It soon became apparent that we would not be the only three airplanes sharing in the glory-- the media were of course covering the story and other interested pilots joined the fray. Pretty soon, we had a veritable flotilla of airplanes headed out for the meeting. Somehow, we were able to locate the *Spirit*, join up, and head back toward Riverside. In the excitement and media frenzy, my welcoming

speech never graced the airways.

Back at Riverside, everybody landed and made their way to the Eagle Aviation FBO hangar (now Aeromet's facility) for a welcoming ceremony. The airplane was in Tulsa for the next several days, as it underwent a 100-hour inspection.

Charlie Harris recently reminded us that, during the same time, the new east-west runway at Tulsa International was scheduled



**Part of the Spirit crew and us.**  
From left to right: Gene Chase, my son Stephen Huffman, and Vern Jobst, the other Spirit pilot.

to be opened by a group of visiting American Airlines dignitaries who were scheduled to fly to Tulsa from the Big Apple. However, a mechanical problem prevented them from departing New York.

In desperation, the Chairman of the Airport Authority had called begging Charlie for alternatives. Charlie talked with the crew of the *Spirit* and the situation was saved. What could be better-- the new runway opened by the *Spirit of St. Louis*!

Also by happenstance, the *Spirit*'s visit coincided with the EAA Chapter 10 Fly-In in Tahlequah and a stop there was planned. Thus, on October 1, 1977, my son and I flew the Skybolt in formation with the *Spirit*, along with Hurley Boehler in the PT-22, from Tulsa to Tahlequah. Notes in my logbook indicate that I gave Gene Chase a ride in the Skybolt at Tahlequah. However, we cut the timing a little short and got caught away from the airport when it closed for the airshow, so we flew over to Whitehorn Cove on Ft. Gibson Lake.

These experiences were, of course, very interesting and exciting to me and I remember them well to this day. As the new *Spirit* tour takes place, things seem a lot more formal and political these days, but I cannot help but wonder if some young person might still have a similar experience to mine. I sincerely hope so.



**The Skybolt and me next to the Spirit of St. Louis replica at Riverside.**  
Note the relative size of the two airplanes-- the Spirit is not small!

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## Up With Downs



Earl Downs

### Saturday at the Airport

My twin brother Ed and I were eleven years old in 1952 when our parents finally gave their approval for us to ride our bicycles out of our local neighborhood. We were not even allowed to have a bike until we were ten years old because Mom and Dad feared the dangers of children sharing the streets with automobiles. At the time, Ed and I were sure we were being unduly held back in our quest for freedom but we endured their "unjust" restrictions.

With our "local only" restriction removed we were then free to roam the planet. Well, sort of. It seemed to us that a great way to celebrate our new independence was to take a bike trip to our favorite place-- the airport. Van Nuys airport was a common destination for our Sunday afternoon drives with our Dad so at least we stood a good chance of not getting lost. It was sort of like making your first solo cross-country flight over the same route as one of your dual instruction flights. By being on our own we could explore at will. We started our planning to spend a Saturday at the airport.

Van Nuys airport was located about eight miles from our home and we prepared for an all day adventure. The weather would be a typical sunny Southern California day but we planned for every contingency. Our travel kit included basic bicycle tools, a tire air pump, a tire patching kit and most importantly, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. We plotted our route to stay off the busy streets as much as possible. That would take a little longer but it was safer. Maybe some of my parents' concerns for caution had rubbed off on us.

Van Nuys airport, situated in the middle of the San Fernando Valley, was located in the countryside in those days. The main north-south runway was bordered on the east side by the industrial area, which included the Lockheed plant, and on the west side by open

fields. We arrived at the airport after a few rest stops and decided to explore the less-developed west side of the field. Havenhurst Avenue ran along the west boundary for about half the length of the airport. It dead-ended at a gate not far from the fenced off old abandoned control tower. The active tower was located on the north end of the airport and was not accessible to the public. The airport authority had done the right thing by fencing off that old tower-- the temptation for two eleven year olds to climb into that old structure would have been too much to resist.

An old house located on the airport side of Havenhurst Avenue had a sign outside that read "Valley Pilots Flying Service". The house was surrounded by a fenced yard that separated it from the airport ramp, which was the home of many small planes. We parked our bikes in the parking lot and pondered whether or not we were allowed to go into the fenced yard. We worked up the courage to enter the front door, which had an "Office" sign painted on it. A very large and somewhat intimidating man welcomed us. We asked if we could sit in the yard under an inviting shade tree and watch the airplanes. Fred Murphy, owner of Valley Pilots, said we could hang around as long as we wanted to, provided that we didn't go out onto the ramp area. Sandwiches in hand, we entered the inner sanctum and planted ourselves in the back yard.

We sat in that yard for hours and watched the activity. Students and instructors were going out and returning from lessons. Mechanics worked on the planes on the open ramp. Valley Pilots had six or seven Aeronca Champs, a couple of Cessna 120s, and one Ercoupe. Ed and I thought the Ercoupe was the neatest looking of all the planes. The school planes were all painted yellow with a stylized "VP" painted in brown on the sides of their fuselages. Van Nuys airport had an Air National Guard unit stationed on the field that flew the mighty F51 Mustangs. The Valley Pilots' backyard was only about fifty yards from the taxiway. We stood at the fence and waved to the Mustang pilots when they taxied by. With the canopy rolled back, they returned our frantic motions with a jaunty wave or salute. Every now and again the shriek of an F80 Shooting Star fighter or a T33 jet trainer would shatter the tranquility of the small planes that monopolized the airport. The Lockheed plant on the other side of the airport was the final assembly facility for these planes. Their test flights provided some noisy excitement.

In the years that followed, we

## Aeronautical Decision Making



By Dave Wilkerson

No pilot examiner expects perfection from an applicant, but we do look for excellence. The fount of applicant excellence rests on Aeronautical Decision Making (ADM). ADM is the backbone of every pilot's performance. On checkrides, examiners watch it vary from hazy nebosity to impact-clarity, depending on the applicant.

The FAA has in recent years begun to address ADM specifically, granting it official acronym status. ADM includes what pilots have long called 'common-sense,' but involves more. Common sense relies on general knowledge, but ADM demands general knowledge wedded to a broad spectrum of aeronautical knowledge.

Some time ago an instrument-rating applicant amazed an Oklahoma examiner by prepping his light-single for flight as the sodden sky, sagging at minimums, dropped light freezing rain onto most of central Oklahoma. To ascribe this to lack of common sense is tempting, until one learns that such operations were the norm for the Fixed Base Operation that

would spend many other Saturdays at the airport. Four years later, equipped with new three-speed bikes (high tech in those days), Ed and I took our first flight lesson in a Valley Pilots Aeronca Champ. Even after earning our private pilot licenses on our 17th birthday, we continued to ride our bikes to the airport. After all, flying was expensive (airplane rental had climbed to \$8.00 per hour) and choices had to be made. For us it meant that we were teenagers without a car. It was worth it!

Ancient history? Maybe not. My wife Mimi and I operated our own FBO a few years ago and we frequently sponsored a "visit to the airport" for children. We worked with the local schools and even some pre-

trained the applicant.

Poor common sense is equally observable. Consider the private pilot aspirant whom the examiner found preflighting the airplane in a foggy 1/8 mile visibility under a 100-foot obscured sky. When questioned by the examiner, the applicant explained that he expected the examiner to fly the aircraft to a point above the offending mists, then to bring them back when "my maneuver" (as he put it) was done.

Besides the obvious weather issue, the applicant's expectation that the flight test consisted of only one maneuver is striking. This event took place when it was easy to find examiners who would verify a practical test as complete and satisfactory while omitting much of the test. Sound preparation enhances ADM, and one needs only to read the "examiner responsibility" section of the Practical Test Standards to find in the "use of the practical test standards" section clear admonishment to testing in "ALL TASKS." The second fellow could take into the air only what he'd been told to expect, with little knowledge on which to base decisions.

Strong ADM must be well founded. Fortunately, this is probably easier to achieve in aviation than any other endeavor. Bookstores abound with volumes discussing the how-to's of every aeronautical stripe. The FAA publishes definitive works on nearly any subject one might dream, abounding with explanations of how pilots might approach these subjects, their effects on safety and efficiency, and whether or not the issue is legal, wise, or fattening. ADM is one of life's few skills enhanced more by reading than by firsthand experience.

You can reach Dave Wilkerson via e-mail at: [dwilkrns@mail.gorilla.net](mailto:dwilkrns@mail.gorilla.net).

school kids got the royal tour of our airport operation. EAA chapter 1046 in Ponca City works in concert with the Ponca City Aviation Booster Club to provide airport tours and aviation activities for youth of all ages in that region. The EAA Young Eagles program takes it a step further and helps young people experience the adventure of flight itself. My 46 years in aviation started with a day at the airport. It started when Fred Murphy let my brother and I sit under a tree and watch airplanes. It started when a fighter pilot waved to me. Could my actions or your actions have such an effect on a young person? You bet they can!

Comments or questions? [earldowns@hotmail.com](mailto:earldowns@hotmail.com)

# TASM Announces Land Lease for New Museum Facility



TULSA - The Tulsa Air and Space Museum (TASM) recently announced that the Tulsa Airport Authority has approved the lease of a 17.8-acre plot of land on Tulsa International Airport, for the construction of TASM's planned museum facility. Since 1997, TASM has been located in the Spartan School of Aeronautics Hangar 5 at 7130 E. Apache.

The new location is on the north side of Tulsa International south of the intersection of 36th Street North and North 74th East Avenue. The architect for the project is Grabel and Imel, a local firm with expertise building educational facilities around the state. Preliminary drawing and cost estimates have been done, with final architectural and engineering drawings to be completed in 120 days.

The lease is the result of a cooperative effort among TASM, the Tulsa Airports Improvement Trust (TAIT), and the Tulsa airport Authority (TAA), including Mayor Susan Savage. The length of the lease is a function of Museum building square footage; the initial lease term will be 40 years based on a 40,000 square foot Phase I, the main building. Phase II, a space exploration and planetarium theater, will be another 20,000 square foot addition, which will extend the lease to 60 years.

The new museum will be highly visible from main arterial streets and will have easy access from expressways. Its location, across 36th Street North from the Tulsa Zoo and the Oxley Nature Center will provide a full day's activi-

ties for visitors in one general area. The substantial ground and parking area will accommodate large numbers of visitors, including area school children transported in buses.

The architectural design of the Museum building will maintain the "art deco" look of the original Tulsa Municipal Airport Terminal, which was located nearby at Apache and Sheridan. Phase I of the new facility will encompass four times the floor space of the current facility and will provide state-of-the-art interactive computer labs for children to access NASA and other learning institutions around the world. Meeting rooms and conference areas will be available to individuals and companies. The building will also include an observation deck that will allow visitors to view the active area of Tulsa International Airport.

The new Museum will provide many benefits to Tulsa, including the following.

**Education** - over 110,000 school age children and 6,000 teachers will have access to supplemental, educational 'hands-on' activity facility.

**Economic Development** - young people will have the opportunity to experience an aerospace environment to explore a career in one of almost 300 Tulsa aerospace companies.

**Tourism, Convention, Conferences and Special Events** - additional revenue will be generated as tourists extend their stays and spend money in Tulsa.

**Aerospace Higher Education** - the new Museum will reinforce the fact that Tulsa is a "Mecca" of aerospace and aviation education institutions, including Tulsa Community College, Tulsa Technology Center, Oklahoma State University-Tulsa, and Spartan School of Aeronautics.

**History** - Tulsa's rich aviation history will be preserved for future generations.

For more information, call the Museum at 918-834-9900.



Officials display an artist's rendering of the new TASM facility. Left to right: Julius Pegues, Chairman Tulsa Airport Authority; Mayor M. Susan Savage; Lee Raney, Chairman, Tulsa Air and Space Museum; and Brent Kitchen, Tulsa Airport Director.

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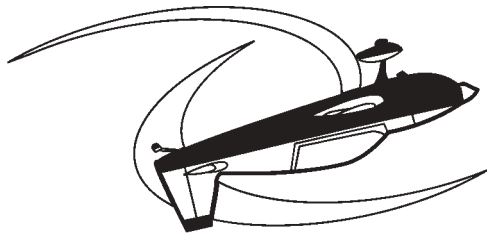
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# ASK THE DOCTOR

BY DR. GUY BALDWIN

Senior Aviation Medical Examiner  
ATP, CFII-MEI



The chart stated that Xanax was prescribed not only for occasional insomnia, but also for stress-- implying a little more frequent use than airman had stated.

By that time, almost two weeks had elapsed and we had run out of time to pursue options-- I was forced to send the Form 8500-8 to the FAA. At the moment, he is now disqualified from flying.

My plan to get his medical renewed-- if that is possible-- is to have him evaluated by a psychologist to see if he has significant anxiety or depression. We all have days when we are either anxious or slightly depressed but, for the most part, they do not require medication. In his case, since he has already taken a disqualifying medication, the only way to get his medical back would be for him to be off the medicine for more than 90 days and have a good report from his family physician indicating no ill effects. With that in hand, we can probably get his medical reinstated with a phone call to the FAA.

In Tulsa, we are lucky to have a psychologist who is also a pilot. Her examinations and evaluations are accurate and complete and she has the trust of the FAA. I anticipate that, if our airman truly does not have significant anxiety or depression requiring medications and discontinues using Xanax, he will probably be all right.

The Form 8500-8 must be filled out accurately and completely. If you are not sure of an entry, leave it temporarily blank and discuss it with your AME during his or her examination.

If you have any questions regarding this article or any other subject matter related to aviation medicine, do not hesitate to contact our office and we will discuss it with you.

### Bag of Worms

Recently, a mid-30s commercial pilot and flight instructor came to my office for renewal of his Second Class Medical. As with every other applicant, we asked him to fill out the FAA Form 8500-8 "Application for Airman Medical Certificate or Airman Medical and Student Pilot Certificate." Under Item 17 of that form, he stated that he was taking a prescription medication called Xanax (a benzodiazepam). Xanax is chemically related to Valium and is used to treat anxiety.

Although his medical examination uncovered no significant issues, the Xanax entry on his application form was a problem, because taking Xanax, (particularly on an ongoing basis) disqualifies an aviator from obtaining a medical. Xanax works on a person's central nervous system and, as such, could affect one's ability to fly.

The FAA requires AMEs to submit the completed 8500-8 forms as filled out, within two weeks of the examination. Thus, his use of Xanax would have to be explained to have any hope for renewal of his medical. I questioned him about the medication; he said his family doctor had prescribed it as an occasional sleep aid.

I suggested he get a copy of his medical chart from his family doctor.

## Aerobatics at Claremore on First Saturdays



Tulsa IAC Chapter 10 and the Claremore Regional Airport have teamed up to offer an unique opportunity to view airshow-quality aerobatics on the first Saturday of each month (weather permitting, of course).

Claremore Airport has an "aerobatics box" that, when opened through the FAA, allows aerobatics to be done over the airport.

The idea behind the first-Saturday event is that pilots can fly to Ponca City early, partake of the magnificent breakfast served there, and then fly to Claremore for lunch and aerobatics. Grilled hamburgers have been a Saturday feature at Claremore for some time now, and will continue for the aerobatics events.

The first such event will be held April 6 and will hopefully feature a preview of Bobby Younkin performing in his freshly-painted Lear 23 executive jet. Bobby has a tremendous smoke system on the Lear-- it goes through 110 gallons of smoke oil during a 10-minute airshow performance!

# Oklahoma-Built Douglas C-47A "Gooney"

By Ray Cunningham

In 1942, with World War II in full swing, the Douglas Aircraft plant in Oklahoma City (now Tinker Field) was at "war-time" production turning out C-47s in droves. In late November of that year, C-47A serial number 42-92277 rolled off the assembly line in Oklahoma City.

Her new home would be in England flying with the Royal Air Force. Arriving there in February of 1943, she was one of thousands that would serve in the European Theater. Douglas "277" made the D-Day Invasion, Operation Market Garden, and managed not to become a victim of the ground flack or German ME-109s. In the early 50s during the Korean War, she pulled a brief tour of duty with the RAF.

In 1954, 277 returned to England and was given to the French Air Force, where she was sent to Viet Nam to help evacuate the French army after their defeat at Dien Bein Phu. Somehow, 277 made her way back to France to serve as a peacetime warrior and was later mothballed in the late 1960s.

But 277's military service was not over yet. In 1970, the Israeli Air Force needed a few C-47s, and she began a new life. Equipped with surveillance equipment, she became a mini-AWAC. And, once again, she managed to survive.

Finally in 1994, after serving 52 years

of active duty with three different countries, 277 was finally mothballed and stored on the military section of the Tel Aviv airport. Outdated, slow and old, from another time and place, she no

longer had a mission. Like a gallant old soldier, 277 had done her duty with valor and honor, carrying countless soldiers into harm's way and always returning safely. But in 1994, her future was extremely dim.

In late 1999, I attended a meeting in

was to locate an original C-47 to use as a jump aircraft to perform at air shows and historical functions, honoring WWII paratroopers. Dr. Bruce O'Brian, M.D. of McAlester had agreed to sponsor the project if I could locate a suitable aircraft.

After calling dozens of prospects, I learned that finding an original C-47 was going to be difficult. Then, I discovered an aircraft salvage dealer in Canada who had made a deal to purchase six C-47s from the Israeli government for scrap. Five of the six were supposed to be flyable. A real plus was that the aircraft had been maintained by Israel Aircraft Industries, which was very good news.

Since I was first in line to buy one of the "scrapped" aircraft, the dealer gave me my choice of the lot. The airframe times ranged from 7,000 to 20,000 hours, and the engines ranged from low- to mid-time. For some unknown reason, I picked 277, which had 14,437 hours on the airframe and 150 hours on each engine. At that time, I did not realize the airplane had been manufactured in Oklahoma.

Although I had not flown a C-47 since 1985, I was determined to be the pilot who flew her back to Oklahoma. I calculated that the flight time would be between 50 and 60 hours. I figured I could travel to Israel and fly the C-47 back within a couple of weeks. However, I have always underestimated the



Douglas Aircraft C-47A Serial No. 92277, built in OKC in 1942, with the members of the Airborne Demonstration Team at Airshow Oklahoma 2001.

Oklahoma City held by the WWII Airborne Demonstration Team. Their goal

longer had a mission. Like a gallant old soldier, 277 had done her duty with valor

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# "Bird" Returns After 58 Years of Service

time it takes to move "war birds" after they have been sitting for a few years, and 277 was not the exception.

Weeks of delays soon turned into months, caused by government red tape on both sides and failure of the mechanics in Israel to get the aircraft ready to fly. Finally, in early February of 2000, I was notified that 277 was ready to fly.

However, my window of opportunity to bring the aircraft back to Oklahoma had passed; I had to find another flight crew. I contracted Ron Archer, 67, and Canadian mechanic Ray Cox, 66, to fly the aircraft home. Archer is a real-life mercenary pilot who has flown for dozens of questionable "airlines" with links to clandestine operations carried out by the U.S. and foreign governments. Some of Archer's exploits simply cannot be discussed here, but if you need an aircraft moved, he will get the job done.

Cox had spent his entire life retrieving and rebuilding aircraft that had crashed in Canada and the Arctic. He was the first person to install a PT6 turbine engine on a Beaver, only to watch it crash during an unauthorized test flight.

Once Archer and Cox arrived in Israel, they checked out 277 and installed another 750 gallons of fuel tanks in the cargo area. With the 800 gallons of fuel in the wings, they would have about 15 hours of flight time, more than enough to cross the longest over-the-water leg.

These notes are from Cox's flight log: "Flight Crew: Pilot: Ron Archer, USA, Co-pilot: Shomo Zelkine, Israel, Crew Chief: Ray Cox, Canada.

"February 25, 2001 - Tel Aviv, Israel. Test flight 1.5 hours; all systems and aircraft functioned normally; waited for VFR ferry permit.

"March 2, 2000 - Tel Aviv to Malta; 9.5 hours.

"March 3, 2000 - Malta to Nice, France; 4.75 hours.

"March 4, 2000 - Nice to Wick, Scotland: 4.75 hours. Grounded four days because of bad weather.

"March 8, 2000 - Wick, Scotland. After takeoff, left gear would not retract. Returned and landed in 30-knot crosswind-- gear would not lock down; stopped on runway and pinned gear. While taxiing back, gusty 60 knot wind damaged the lower rudder torque tube, bearing pillow block, and fabric. Took

nine days to repair.

"March 17, 2000 - Wick to Reykjavik, Iceland; 6.25 hours. Encountered severe turbulence and icing. Right engine ran extremely rough. Weathered in four days by ice storm.

"March 21, 2000 - Reykjavik to Sondrestrom, Greenland; 5.25 hours. Right engine still rough, weather getting worse. Sondrestrom to Frobisher Bay, Northwest Territories; 6.5 hours, engine still extremely rough, told Archer to shut it down, he didn't. Arrived at 9:15 pm, another ice storm grounded us. New carb arrived on March 23; changed it at -25 degrees and 45 knot winds; it was the coldest I've been in a long time- could only work 15 minutes at a time.

"March 28, 2000 - Frobisher Bay to Thompson, Manitoba; 6.40 hours

"March 28, 2000 - Thompson to Edmonton, Alberta; 4.25 hours."

While 277 was at Edmonton, both props and carbs were sent out for overhaul. Also, Cox discovered that the flap actuating rods were bent, so they were replaced. Continuing with the flight log:

"Pilot: Ron Archer, USA Co-pilot: Ray Cox, Canada

"July 6, 2000 - Edmonton to Great Falls, Montana; 5.25 hours. Cleared customs and refueled. Weather getting bad; spent the night.

"July 7, 2000 - Great Falls to Akron, Colorado; 3.00 hours. Left engine vi-

brated and lost manifold pressure. Landed at Akron; discovered that No. 1 cylinder had blown the head off and metal went through engine. Flew to Alberta and removed QEC from the second C-47 that followed us. Drove QEC to Akron and installed it in 106 degree temperature.

"August 5, 2000 - Akron to Lawton, Oklahoma; 3.00 hours. Delivered aircraft to Ray Cunningham; he took us out for dinner and adult refreshments."

Almost 58 years after she left, Douglas C-47A serial number 42-92277 was finally back in Oklahoma, after six months of fighting weather and mechanical problems. However, 277's problems were not over. On May 28, 2001 (Memorial Day), only a few days after 277 received her new Airworthiness Certificate, 100-mph winds roared through Lawton and ripped 277 from her moorings. Both wings, the tail, an aileron, and the tail wheel mechanism were severely damaged. It took another two months to repair the wind damage.

Today, 277 wears its fourth uniform of military paint. She is now dressed in WWII U.S. Army Air Corp olive drab with D-Day stripes to commemorate June 6, 1944. The aircraft is sponsored by Dr. Bruce O'Brian and Regional Air, Inc. Look for her at aviation events this summer where the WWII Airborne Demonstration Team performs.

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# Omniplex To Host *The Lost Spacecraft Liberty Bell 7 Recovered*



OKLAHOMA CITY - Family friendly, interactive and historical, *The Lost Spacecraft: Liberty Bell 7 Recovered* has something for all ages and will make its debut at Omniplex April 13 - June 9.

The 6,000-square-foot traveling exhibit and 1961 Mercury space capsule recovered in July 1999, tells the story of the second manned space mission for the United States. Liberty Bell 7, flown by astronaut and U.S. Air Force Captain Virgil "Gus" Grissom on a mission that lasted 15 minutes and 37 seconds, sank to the floor of the Atlantic Ocean, where it lay undetected for nearly four decades.

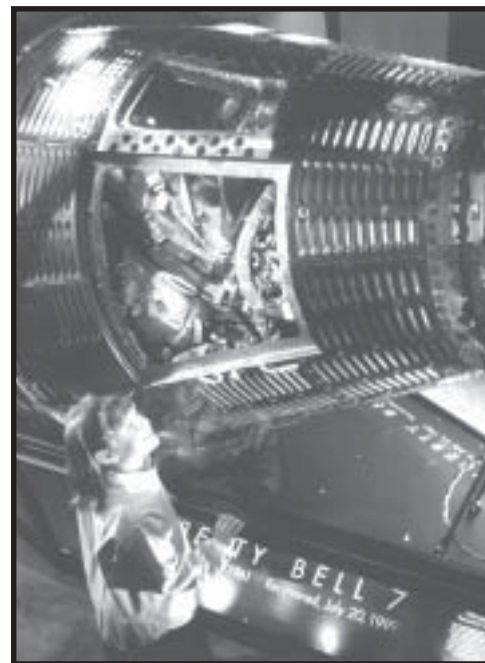
Museum goers can journey on a virtual ride with Grissom 118 miles into space and then 3 miles below the ocean's surface, engage in astronaut training, spacecraft technology and launch sequences circa 1961. Then, fast-forward to follow the exciting events surrounding the rescue of the spacecraft, including the personal triumph by deep-sea search and recovery expert Curt Newport and his expedition team.

"For those who remember when the world stood still to watch a Mercury launch, the exhibit will evoke marvelous memories," Stuart Howard, curator of the Kirkpatrick Air and Space Museum at

Omniplex, said. "For the younger audience, the exhibit dishes up an extraordinary, engaging piece of history sure to fascinate all ages."

## The Mission: Hands-On

Several interactive stations make this



*An avid visitor experiences The Lost Liberty Bell 7 capsule.*

experience of early space flight something to remember. Visitors can:

- Climb in the pilot's seat of a capsule simulator and perform a pre-flight task.
- Look through a periscope and select from a series of rocket launch videos to

discover each rocket's fate.

- Climb into a real-life centrifuge and test themselves against the powerful G-forces.

- Use a remote control arm to maneuver a small helicopter model and attempt to recover a miniature version of the Liberty Bell 7.

- Test underwater piloting skills just like the explorers who found the Liberty Bell 7 on the ocean floor.

*The Lost Spacecraft: Liberty Bell 7 Recovered* plunges visitors into the Cold War era when the United States competed with the Soviet Union in a race to the moon, and contrasts that environment with state-of-the-art technology that, in 1999, enabled explorers to raise the capsule.

## At Home in 1961

An early 1960s living room, complete with wood paneling, a brown Naugahyde sofa, bi-level coffee table, floor-to-ceiling lamp and console TV with "rabbit ears", welcomes visitors to the exhibit. Guests can experience this place in history when Project Mercury was getting under way through video, vintage publications, and period artifacts.

## The Expedition: Hands-On

The exhibit allows visitors to enter into lifelike environments complete with the sights and sounds of the times. Guests can:

- View actual NASA footage including audio and video accounts of Grissom and the other astronauts of the Mercury Program.

- Witness the actual attempt to rescue the capsule via a splashdown theater complete with a partial replica of the Sikorsky recovery helicopter, whose window provides the view.

- Enter the modern-day portion of the exhibit via a gangway onto a replica of the expedition ship, Ocean Project.

- Listen to Curt Newport, renowned underwater search and recovery expert, speak about the goals and challenges of the expedition.

- View mission logs and artifacts that detail the recovery and restoration of the capsule.

Listening, looking, locating, and lifting kiosks take visitors on a step-by-step tour of the technology that allowed the recovery team to pinpoint the capsule's location and raise it from its 38-year resting place on the ocean floor.

*The Lost Spacecraft: Liberty Bell 7 Recovered* is sponsored by The Discovery Channel, Cox Communications, and Clear Channel Radio. Restoration of the capsule was a collaborative effort of Discovery Channel and the Smithsonian-affiliated Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center, which will serve as the permanent home for the capsule after its three-year, nationwide tour.

For more information, visit the Omniplex Web site at [www.omniplex.org](http://www.omniplex.org) or call (405) 602-OMNI (6664). Omniplex is located at 2100 NE 52nd Street in Oklahoma City.

## Flight Destinations- Sulphur Springs Inn: A Rejuvenating Experience

by J. Thomas Pento, PhD

Late December and early January were not my idea of great flying weather. Grounded for most of a long, weary month, I searched for the appropriate reason and weather to fly. I do not need an excuse to fly; my wife, on the other hand needs more encouragement-- usually in the form of an interesting overnight destination. With the approach of our 33rd wedding anniversary in late January and a weekend with clearing skies, we decided to test the myth of mineral bath rejuvenation. Maureen agreed that a relaxing trip to the soothing mineral waters of Sulphur Springs Inn B&B would make the perfect destination.

The day of our departure was a typical gusty winter day, a low-pressure area pushing off to the east and a high to the west. We lifted off into a mostly sunny sky with broken high cirrus clouds that looked like fields of gray cotton. At our cruising altitude of 5,500 ft, we bumped slowly southward into lumpy waves of turbulence. In spite of the bumps, crystal clear winter skies provided a wonderful view of shimmering farm ponds, the meandering path of the South Canadian River, and the brown quilted Oklahoma countryside with occasional patches of green where winter wheat had begun to grow.

The Sulphur Municipal airport has a 3500 x 60 ft. runway which has been resurfaced fairly recently and is in very good

condition. Tie-down ropes and self-service fuel are available. The Sulphur Springs Inn is located approximately 3 miles from the airport. If you call ahead, the Inn will have someone waiting at the airport when you arrive. The airport is kept locked at all times, so plan to pack lightly for the 200 yard hike from tarmac to the entrance gate.

Early in the 20th century, hot mineral baths were thought to have profound therapeutic value and people flocked to places like Hot Springs, AK and Sulphur, OK for their healing and rejuvenating properties. Modern medicine has dispelled most of the mineral bath myths, which resulted in a steady decline in the bathhouse business during the 1940's and 50's. In its heyday, Sulphur had 14 active bathhouses. Since then, all of them have closed.

In 1996, the last surviving bathhouse building, which was built in 1905 and known originally as the Caylor Bathhouse, was restored and is now operated by Cheri and Charlie Wright as the Sulphur Spring Inn Bed and Breakfast. This bathhouse is still listed in the National Historical Registrar. The Inn is directly across the street and near one of the main entrances to Chickasaw National

Park and Recreation Area. This bathhouse features seven bedrooms, decorated in a whimsical, early 1900s décor. Most importantly, the Inn contains an indoor spa room with two large and interconnecting hot mineral spring spas. A separate room is available for additional spa services such



*The "outdoor" mineral spa at the Sulphur Springs B&B.*

as total body massage, body wraps, and clay facials. As time and resources permit, the Wrights plan to open an antique/curio shop next door. For more information or reservations call 580-622-5930 or check out their web site at: [www.sulphurspringsinn.com](http://www.sulphurspringsinn.com).

Soon after our arrival, we headed

out for a walk in the Park. Wandering through the Park we came to Bromide Hill on the south side of the stream which courses through the Park. Bromide Hill Trail begins at a low water bridge crossing. Our hike up the scenic trail switched back and forth up the side of the steep bluff to the top of the plateau. Arriving at the top, we were well rewarded with a spectacular view of Sulphur and the airport to the north.

Back at the Inn, we were soon in our bathing suits and robes and headed to the mineral bath spa. Relaxing in the warm spa is a good place to begin the rejuvenation process. These hot mineral baths have pulsating jets that enhance the soothing process. The spa room has an open countryside mural that wraps around the back walls and gives the feeling of an outdoor experience. Sulphur Springs Inn has its own bromide mineral well, which provides the water for the spas. Following our hike up the Sulphur bluffs and a 45-minute soak in the hot mineral water, I was well primed for my late afternoon nap.

Later that evening we dined at

*continued on p. 9.*



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continued from p. 8.

Bricks, a popular local restaurant, which has a menu of steaks, catfish, and burgers. I found the fried zucchini appetizer to be a very special treat. Other recommended restaurants include Aubello's Mexican, the Secret Garden Tea Room, and Michael's Fine Dining which was restored from the old Sulphur train depot.

After a restful night's sleep, hot coffee and tea were available early in the upstairs hallway. Breakfast, served from 8:00 to 10:00 AM in the lobby/game room, was a combination of seasonal fruit, Danish, bagels, and homemade breads served with coffee, hot cider, and juice.

Cheri likes to reminisce about a group of ultralight pilots that flew up

from Texas with arrangements to spend a night. When a gusty low-pressure area moved into central Oklahoma, they spent the entire weekend and had a great time.

Following a smooth takeoff, we turned homeward. My wife's eyes were closed as we flew northward over the beautiful brown winter landscape. During the descent and approach into our home airport traffic area, she stirred and her bright eyes and warm smile told me that the flight and the mineral water spa had worked their rejuvenating wonder. Maureen has the bags packed for our next flying trip. I'll keep you posted.

For information, consult the author's web site at: <http://moon.ouhsc.edu/jpento/>



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## Sport Aviation Association to Hold 1st Annual "Gathering" in June

by Paul Poberezny

We have often been asked when SAA would have a fly-in. We prefer to call it a gathering of grass roots lovers of aviation -and it will be happening June 15-16.

SAA member, Rudy Frasca, of Urbana, Illinois has offered his private airport to SAA for this gathering. He has a beautiful east/west 4000'x 57' concrete runway, with a parallel sod runway and a north/south sod runway of 2853'. There is camping on site and motels in the area. The listing is Urbana, Illinois -Frasca Field -C-16.

Rudy is well known worldwide for the Frasca aircraft simulators, the factory being located on his airport. He also has an air museum on the field. Son, Tom Frasca, is the Airport Manager. See you there!

For more information, contact the Sport Aviation Association, PO Box 2343, Oshkosh, WI 54903-2343

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# Calendar of Events

For a free listing of your event, email us at [OklahomaAviator@cox.net](mailto:OklahomaAviator@cox.net) or call 918-527-0429. To allow time for printing and publication, try to notify us at least two months prior to the event.

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	CONTACT	DETAILS
1st Thursday	Dinner Meeting- Oklahoma Pilots Assoc dinner and meeting	Wiley Post Airport, Oklahoma City, OK	Helen Holbird- 405-942-6308	
1st Saturday 7:30AM-10:00AM	Fly-In Breakfast- Ponca City Aviation Boosters Club	Ponca City Airport, Ponca City, OK	Don Nuzum- nuzum@poncacity.net Bruce Eberle- 580-762-5735	Held rain or shine
1st Saturday	Aerobatics	Claremore Municipal Airport Claremore, OK	Dave or Sheri McKenzie 918-343-0931	Go to Ponca City for breakfast, then come to Claremore for hamburgers and aerobatics!
2nd Tuesday 6:30PM	Meeting- Women In Aviation	Spartan School of Aeronautics Jones/Riverside Airport, Tulsa	Laura Yost- 918-831-5354	
2nd Tuesday	Meeting- Spirit of Tulsa Squadron- Commemorative Air Force (formerly the Confederate Air Force)	Tulsa Technology Center Jones/Riverside Airport, Tulsa	Jim Dagg 918-224-6293	Restoring 1942 PT-19. Hangar space and workers needed
2nd Tuesday	Meeting- EAA Chapter 24	Aviation Tech Center OKC Airport	Martin Weaver- 405-376-5488 pacer59f@juno.com	Start 7:00PM
2nd Wednesday 7:30PM	Meeting- Tulsa Cloud Dancers Balloon Club	Contact Frank Capps	Frank or Cheri Capps- 918-299-2979 aerosportballoon@hotmail.com	
2nd Thursday 7:00PM	Meeting- Oklahoma Windriders Balloon Club	Metro Tech Aviation Career Center, Oklahoma City, OK	Ron McKinney- 405-685-8180	For all balloon enthusiasts
3rd Saturday	Meeting- Green Country Ultralight Flyers Organization (GCUFO)	Call 918-632-6UFO for location and details	Bill Chilcoat- 918-827-6566	
3rd Sunday	Tulsa Cloud Dancers Balloon Flight	Contact Frank Capps for time/location	Frank or Cheri Capps- 918-299-2979 aerosportballoon@hotmail.com	
3rd Monday	Meeting- IAC Chapter 10	Contact Joe Masek for time/place	Joe Masek- 918-596-8860 jmasek@tulsacounty.org	
3rd Monday 7:30PM	Meeting- EAA Chapter 10	Gundy's Airport, Owasso, OK	Bhrent Waddell- 918-371-5022 bwaddell@tulsa.oklahoma.net	
3rd Thursday 7:00PM	Meeting- EAA Chapter 323	Sherman Municipal Airport Sherman, TX	Billy Dollarhide- 903-868-7609 dollarhide@ti.com	For more information, visit our website: <a href="http://www.eaa323.org">www.eaa323.org</a>
Saturday following 3rd Monday	Pancake Breakfast- EAA Chapter 10	Gundy's Airport, Owasso, OK	Bhrent Waddell- 918-371-5022 bwaddell@tulsa.oklahoma.net	
4th Tuesday 7:00PM	Tulsa Chapter 99s Meeting	Robertson Aviation, Jones/Riverside Airport, Tulsa*	Charlene- 918-838-7044 or Frances- flygr17102@aol.com	*Unless otherwise planned. All women pilots including students are welcome to attend.
4th Thursday 7:30PM	Meeting- Vintage Airplane Association Chapter 10	South Regional Library, 71st & Memorial, Tulsa, OK	Charles Harris- 918-622-8400	
Thru Aug	IMAX Film- "To Be an Astronaut"	Omnidome Theater Kirkpatrick Center Oklahoma City	405-602-3689	Go inside the gates of NASA to experience the rigors of astronaut training. Includes "Maximum Velocity: The French Precision Flying Team"
Apr 11 6:30PM	OU Student/Alumni Aviation Banquet	Commons Restaurant, Norman, OK	405-325-7344	Open to all OU alumnis. Call to get your name on our mailing list!
Apr 13-16	Annual Spring Conference, Oklahoma Airport Operators Association, and South Central Chapter, American Assoc of Airport Execs	Doubletree Hotel 6110 S. Yale Tulsa, OK	Debra Coughlan- 918-838-5018	This year's them is "Securing Our Future."
Apr 20 7:00-10:00AM	Fly-In Pancake Breakfast	William R. Pogue Airport Sand Springs, OK	Ken Madison- 918-246-2605 klmadison@sandspringsok.org	Held rain or shine
Apr 27	Angel Flight Annual Fly-In Meeting and Barbeque	Jones/Riverside Airport Jenks, OK	Doug Vincent- 918-749-8992 DougieVin@aol.com	To be held at the pavilion-- NE corner of the airport. Open to the public-- come learn about Angel Flight!
May 3-4	Small Aircraft Transportation Systems (SATS) Exposition	Thomas P. Stafford Airport Weatherford, OK	Ordis Copeland- 580-774-4505 ordis@nts-online.net	For more info, go to <a href="http://www.weatherford-ok.org">www.weatherford-ok.org</a> or <a href="http://www.SATSExpo.com">www.SATSExpo.com</a>
May 4	Prague Kolache Festival Centennial Celebration	Prague Airport (O47) Prague, OK	Bill or Robin Rowden- 405-275-1129 denrowlc@aol.com	Arts & crafts, parade, street dancing, carnival, fireworks, Czech dancing & food, EAA Fly-In & Young Eagles flights, Free kolaches!
May 31-Jun 1	16th Annual Biplane Expo	Frank Phillips Field Bartlesville, OK	Charlie Harris- 918-62208400	Forums, static displays, seminars, workshops, exhibits. All airplanes and pilots are encouraged to attend. Biplane crews and NBA members get free admission.
May 31-Jun 2	Magnolia Festival Hot Air Balloon Rally	Durant, OK	Frank or Cheri Capps- 918-299-2979 aerosportballoon@hotmail.com	
Jun 10-14	Tulsa Community College Aviation Careers Academy	Tulsa Community College 6111 E. Skelly Drive, Tulsa, OK	youth@tulsa.cc.ok.us	For 9th - 12th grades. Exposure to aviation careers. Includes 3 hours flight time.
Jun 13-14	ACE 2002- Aerospace Convention and Exposition	Westin Hotel Downtown Oklahoma City	Betsy Fry, Exhibit Manager 405-722-4706; ShippieOK@aol.com	Premier regional aviation & aerospace business-to-business convention. Approx. 100 exhibits-- call to reserve space.
Jun 14-16	Aerospace America International Airshow	Will Rogers World Airport Oklahoma City, OK	Aerospace America 405-685-9546	Gates open Aug 14 5:00PM for night air show. Gates open Aug 15-16 at 9:00AM. Fly in for free admission.

# Classified Advertisements

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