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Vol 21, No 2

# The Oklahoma Aviator

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

February 2003

Oklahoma Aviator, 32432 S. Skyline Drive, Cookson, OK 74427

## You're Never Too Old to Play in the Snow!

by Paul D. Jennings

Are we ever too old to play in the snow? Maybe as adults we consider ourselves too dignified, wondering what people might think. Or maybe, as we get older, we begin to think more about breaking bones and tearing cartilage than we do of the sheer fun of snow angels, sleds, and snowballs. Despite such reservations, I believe most of us harbor a secret desire to frolic in the snow like kids again. I sure do! Even though my body says, "Act your age," my brain says, "Go for it!" Alas, I usually listen to my brain in the beginning and later on wish I had listened to my body!

But during Christmas 2002, I experienced an adult way to "play in the snow" that allows me to act my age and have a reasonably good expectancy of not getting hurt: buy a plane, put it on skis, and pray for snow. Getting to fly a ski plane on snow in Oklahoma would seem about as likely as a snowball in hell. But I got lucky this year-- here is the story.

Last year, I went looking for a plane to be used in my side business-- primarily giving airplane rides, but doing other aerial work as well. I live on a private airstrip, the Flying J Ranch, a few miles north of Tahlequah and wanted to keep the airplane there. The east-west airstrip is only 1000 feet long and has 50-ft oak trees at one end and electric wires at the other. Needless to say, one cannot fall asleep on approach!

As imagined, I was limited to a small list of airplanes to choose from. Previously, I had owned and flown a 150-hp Super Cub from the strip and it did very well. However, I wanted to carry more than one passenger, so a four-place airplane was in order. I also wanted it to have excellent visibility from all seats. This stringent set of criteria narrowed the selection down to only four airplanes: a deHavilland Beaver (way too expensive), a Fieseler Storch (nearly impossible to get parts for), a Maule (a good possibility), and a Wilga.



Paul Jennings' 1993 PZL-104 Wilga 80 on its "liftable" skis. Note the adjustable cowling shutters.

Since I am partial to "round motors" but could not afford a Beaver, I decided on the Wilga, a unique radial-engine current-production airplane manufactured in Poland by PZL (Panstwowe Zaklady Lotnicze). The aircraft I wound up buying is a 1993 PZL-104 Wilga 80, licensed in U.S.

Standard Category under Type Certificate Data Sheet A55EU. Some earlier Wilga models available in the U.S. are licensed in Experimental category and thus could not have been used for my planned commercial purposes.

The Wilga 80 is a four-seat airplane equipped with an AI-

14RA supercharged nine-cylinder 260-hp radial engine. The empty weight is about 2000 lbs, with a gross takeoff weight of 2866 lbs. It cruises at about 100 mph, burning about 14 gph.

The engine is basically the same as the M14 360-hp engine used on Yaks and Sukhoi's. The

M14 engine will apparently bolt up to the Wilga engine mount, but, although the extra horsepower would be welcome, the M14 is not type certificated in the U.S. and is not approved on the Wilga 80 Type Certificate Data Sheet. The older Wilga 35 might be a good candidate for the M14 installation, since it is virtually the same aircraft as the Wilga 80, but is licensed in the Experimental category. Wilga 35s equipped with the M14 engines in Eastern Europe are reported to have exceptional climb rates.

Unlike most U.S. engines, the AI-14RA engine is equipped with an air-operated starter, which is actually quite simple. While the engine is running, an engine-driven compressor pumps air into a high-pressure tank. To start the engine, the pilot engages a "start" valve, which causes the stored high-pressure air to be ported to each of the nine cylinders, in firing order sequence, pushing down each piston during its normal power stroke. From a mechanical standpoint, the accessory drive that turns the engine tachometer cable also turns a disc with a hole in it, which distributes air to each of the nine airlines through a check valve. The onboard storage tanks holds enough air for about four start attempts; if the onboard tank runs out, an external fitting is provided by which a SCUBA diving cylinder can be used to start the airplane.

The Wilga 80 comes in several versions, including an Ambulance version and a Military version (which can be equipped with armament!). The most popular version is the AeroClub version, which is equipped with a factory-installed tow hitch used for banner and glider towing.

The AeroClub version can also easily be reconfigured for skydiving: the right-hand door is removed, the rear seats are removed and replaced with a bench-type seat, and the front passenger seat



Paul and the Wilga make a photo pass at the Flying J Ranch airstrip near Tahlequah.

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# The Horizontal Windsock

by Mike Huffman



## My First Airplane Ride

Here is a story I have not yet told, the story every aviator remembers: his or her first airplane ride.

Now, I was not one of those kids who grew up knowing I wanted to fly--with hindsight, I wish I had been. There was no particular focus on aviation in our family. My parents' main wish was for me to get a college education, something neither of them had been able to do. My Dad learned about electricity in the Navy during WWII and, when the war was over, started a school in Dublin, TX to teach ex-G.I.'s how to repair electrical equipment, rewind electric motors, and wire houses (that was the era when the Rural Electrification Association was bringing electricity to farms across Texas and other states).

Starting when I was about five or six years old, Dad would bring home pieces of mechanical and electrical equipment, specifically for me to play with. I loved to see how all the pieces moved-- springs and levers, solenoids and gears. Often I took them apart but seldom was able to put them back together.

Dad was fascinated with electricity all his life; I remember many times when he would assemble the neighborhood kids and have us all hold hands, with the kid on each end holding an output wire from a hand-crank telephone magnet. He would start cranking the handle and we would feel the tingle in

our hands. He'd ask, "Are you ready for more?" Of course, we would all holler, "Yes!" and he would crank faster. Again he would repeat the question and again we would answer the same. This cycle might repeat several times until we were all convulsing like drug-crazed natives dancing around a fire. Finally, somebody would let go and the round would be over. It was great fun for him and us!

So, it was natural that I became interested in electrical and mechanical stuff instead of focusing on airplanes. The only other time I was exposed to airplanes was when Dad worked for Consolidated-Vultee Aircraft in Ft. Worth, TX. We lived near the airbase, and I remember the 10-engine B-36s flying over our house regularly.

At about age seven, I turned down my first opportunity for a ride in what I now believe was a Piper J-5. I was set to ride in the back seat with a young, pretty bank teller (on whom I had a crush) while her boyfriend, the local car dealer, flew from the front. However, at the last minute, I chickened out.

The years went by and I graduated high school in Oklahoma City. Of course, my main interest (which had started with the pretty bank teller in Dublin) was girls, followed close behind by hot rod cars. I was definitely your prototype 50s teenager.

That fall, I found myself in college in Flint, MI, studying electrical engineering (surprise, surprise!). There, a local radio station disc jockey held a contest for young people wanting to model the then-new fashion craze, Bermuda shorts! Since I had a brand-new pair of white shorts, white socks, white shoes, and a paisley shirt (cool!), my roommates dared me to enter. To my surprise, I won! There were two prizes: a new sport coat from a downtown clothing store and a dinner outing for two in Lansing, MI. The transportation was to be the disc jockey's Piper Tri-Pacer.

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# The Higher Plane

by Barbara Huffman



## Towertalkaphobia

Long-term readers of *The Oklahoma Aviator* know of my fear of talking on the radio. The more I share my phobia, the more people I find who have the same concerns. Many good pilots will not fly into towered airports or controlled airspace just because of radio communication fear. Should we coin this *towertalkaphobia*?

Radio talk is not just filled with jargon, short cuts, and language that some pilots do not understand - it is often garbled and hard to hear, especially through tinny speakers in the noisy cockpit environment. Controllers do not always speak as slowly and distinctly as they could. In the past, I have wondered if they somehow derive a wicked pleasure from confusing pilots instead of trying to help them communicate-- which is very important for safety.

One big improvement is to use headsets. By isolating radio traffic from other ambient noises, headsets greatly improve the ability to at least hear what is being said, even if one does not yet understand it. And, since Michael and I retrofitted our headsets with Automatic Noise Reduction kits, we can hear even better.

But how can we learn to understand all that confusing babble? And how in the world can we get past our tongue-tied confusion and embarrassment in knowing what to say in re-

turn?

This week I had the privilege of taking a Radio Communications class with David Koehn and Ron Berger, co-owners of Fast Forward Aviation at Jones-Riverside Airport in Tulsa. As I walked into the classroom, I feared the worst: making a total fool of myself. But David and Ron quickly put me at ease, introducing themselves and my classmates.

First, they assigned each of us a fictitious N-number, which we wrote on our nametags. Then we got down to business. With their easy, humorous communication styles, I relaxed a little more. As the three-hour class sped by, I began to realize that I understood everything

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## Towertalkaphobia

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they were saying. Their prescription for talking on the radio was pretty simple: say who you are talking to, identify yourself, give your location, and give your intention or request. It was really not that hard!

We began practice by listening to Automated Terminal Information Service (ATIS) broadcasts, copying down current conditions at Riverside. It took several times listening through the pre-recorded message to understand it all, but in the process, we got a little more familiar with the terminology and the rhythm of ATC communications. Then we used that information to practice departure and approach communications- and it started to make sense. All you are really doing is allowing someone else to help you be safe; letting another pair of eyes watch you and keep you away from traffic in the air and on the ground. "Maybe I can do this!" I thought.

But when my turn came to practice out loud in front of the class I was terrified - and, yes, I made mistakes. But comfort came in realizing that my classmates were in the same boat. We were all learning together. Ron and David kept reiterating that everyone makes mistakes, that no one can understand and remember everything being said, and that asking controllers to repeat instructions is not just OK, but a very smart thing to do.

We did some role-play where the instructors acted as controllers and we acted as pilots. They threw us a few curves, but by that time, we were conditioned to ask for instructions to be repeated, to request progressive instructions when too much information was being presented, and to question bogus instructions. When we did so, they praised us-- as good instructors should! By then it became evident that we were talking with only another human being at the other end of the

microphone, not some angry deity who would punish us for honest mistakes. I truly lightened up, and could enjoy laughing at myself and my classmates as we moved through our practice sessions.

Besides offering the monthly radio communications course, Fast Forward Aviation provides a full range of ground and flight instruction from Private Pilot all the way through Air Transport Pilot, including Instructor ratings. An FAA-approved ATC-610J Flight Training Device (FTD) is available for initial or recurrent instrument training.

Fast Forward has been in business at Riverside for over a year, though the instructors have many years of experience. All three partners are CFIs and, in addition, David Koehn and Wayne Cothran are MEIs. David and Ron are CFIs with the Gold Seal designation, an award granted by the FAA for a high student pass rate. Wayne is also ATP rated and a corporate and charter pilot.

"Our focus is on covering the material and making it interesting. Anyone can sit alone and watch videotapes, but it is hard to just stay awake, much less learn. There is really no substitute for face-to-face teaching and learning. Being in a classroom with other students is just the best," David explained, "Our target audience includes those who want a head start and those, previously working on their own, who need a jump start. We are a less expensive option than the local Part 141 schools."

These guys made a very scary thing easier for me. As my shoulders relaxed and I stumbled through the practice, and then improved, I began to see that I could really slay the dragon of towertalkaphobia. I learned what I needed to know and had a great time doing it!

If you have towertalkaphobia, I recommend you call Fast Forward Aviation at 918-671-0481 or email them at [ffav8@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ffav8@sbcglobal.net).



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## TASM News



### Kansas Cosmosphere Trip Planned

We're go for lift-off! Experience the overwhelming emotion and thunderous power of a shuttle launch brought to life! Now is the time to reserve your place on TASM's "Intergalactic Schooner" to the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center in Hutchinson, KS.

The Cosmosphere features the Hall of Space Museum, which chronicles space travel from its early rocketry days through the Space Race. The actual Apollo 13 command module "Odyssey" is there, as is planet's largest collection of spacesuits. Other displays of interest include German V-1 and V-2 missiles; an SR-71 Blackbird, the fastest plane ever built; and a full scale Space Shuttle.

More than a movie, the IMAX OmniDome Theatre features a large, wrap-around domed screen and ground pounding sound, immersing you in the largest, most realistic film format ever invented. With breathtaking scenes that will have you searching for a seat belt, the 44-foot dome thrusts you into the middle of the action. Now showing are the films *Bears* and *Shackleton's Antarctic Adventure*.

On the dome of the Justice Planetarium, stars dance and the night sky explodes with detail. Travel through measureless distances to different worlds, brought close by a blend of realism and spectacular special effects.

The Cargo Bay Gift Store is an immense marketplace of space collectibles, artifacts actually flown in space, and apparel.

Ticket prices are \$45.00 for TASM members and \$55.00 for non-members, which includes reserved seating on a luxury, self-contained touring bus, admission to the Cosmosphere, Dr. Goddard lab presentation, planetarium shows, IMAX Theatre presentation, and return passage to the Tulsa Air and Space Museum.

We will depart at 6:00-7:00AM Monday, March 17, 2003, from TASM, 7130 East Apache, arriving

at the Cosmosphere around 9:00AM. Departure from Cosmosphere is tentatively planned for 4:00-5:00PM, with arrival back at TASM around 10:00PM. Parking for vehicles is available at the Museum.

The success of this trip will determine the future of more adventures of this nature for our museum and our friends.

For more information, contact Loretta Jones at 918-834-9900.

### "Mess, Hooch, and Lindy" (Food, Drink, and Dancing) at M\*A\*S\*H Fundraising Event

The museum is having its first M\*A\*S\*H themed dinner, auction, and hangar dance on Saturday, March 29 at the Museum located at 7130 East Apache. Honorary Chairs for this fundraising event are Mayor Bill LaFortune and Dr. Kathy LaFortune. Proceeds from this benefit will ensure that the Museum can continue to provide "hands-on" learning programs for Oklahoma's children.

Guests attending the event will have the opportunity to sit in the cockpit of an F-14 flown in the Gulf War, view vehicles owned by the Antique Military Vehicle Club of Tulsa, and enjoy a delicious dinner, dance and auction. The museum and exhibits will be open, allowing guests to enjoy great food and beverages provided by area restaurants, live music provided by Blue Combo Band, dancing and a silent auction in a unique and interesting 1940's hangar environment. Wine and beer will be provided, with martinis, cognac and cigars available for a fee.

The museum's primary purpose is to educate young people in math, science and technology using an aerospace environment. Our nation's leaders have voiced concerns about declining student interest in math, science, and technology as evidenced by standardized test scores. A major focus of the Museum is to help reverse this alarming trend by partnering with the educational and business institutions in this region.

The Museum also supports the eco-

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# Ask the Doctor

by Dr. Guy Baldwin, AME



## Another Bag of Worms

Last month, an airman applied for a second class medical, stating on the application that he was taking two medications: Flonase, a nasally inhaled steroid; and hydrocodone, a potent pain reliever. Past experience made me ask his reasons for the medications. He explained that they are for allergies and the resulting sinus headaches.

I asked for records from his treating physician, which confirmed what he had said. However, the records also indicated that he was probably taking the hydrocodone once every two or three days, or more. Hydrocodone is a potent pain reliever when used as directed, but it is highly addictive-- more so than codeine used in the old days.

When I asked about his frequency of usage, he stated he shared the hydrocodone with his wife, and that he takes it only three or four times a month. I quickly explained to him that, of course, to share medications is illegal. Beyond that, I told him the FAA is concerned with the amount of medicine dispensed to him; they must assume he is the only one taking it.

In addition to his hydrocodone use, the records also revealed that, on two or three occasions, he was prescribed Wellbutrin for lethargy or "tiredness." Wellbutrin is one of several Selective Serotonin Re-Uptake

Inhibitors (SSRIs), which include Prozac, Paxil, Celexa, Zoloft, and others drugs. None of those are allowable medications for aviators. You can bet that, if the FAA reviewed his records, they would quickly notice the Wellbutrin and hydrocodone use and he would be in trouble.

With that in mind, we had to fully investigate his case. First, we sent him to a psychologist and got a report stating that he was not clinically chronically depressed and was able to function fine without the Wellbutrin. In addition, the report indicated that he had, in fact, not taken Wellbutrin for over 90 days.

Regarding hydrocodone use, we warned him that, if he wants to fly, he needs to find alternate ways to relieve the sinus headaches, such as taking Claritin or Allegra on a daily basis. (Note that other supposedly non-sedating antihistamines such as Zyrtec are not approved for use by pilots.)

Based on the psychologist's report, the airman's promise to reduce hydrocodone use, and his further promise to report any changes in his mental status (such as lethargy), I called the FAA and got an okay to issue his medical. The end result was that he did pass, but only after several phone calls to the airman, his doctor, and the FAA.

My recommendation is that aviators should be very, very careful when going to doctors other than aviation medical examiners, because the doctors may unknowingly prescribe medications that are not approved for aviation. Always explain that you are a pilot and, if the doctor has any questions, ask him or her to call an aviation medical examiner for counsel on which medications are acceptable.

If you have any questions regarding this article or any other subjects, do not hesitate to contact my office (918-437-7993).

# TASM News

*continued from p. 3.*

nometic development of the Tulsa area. Aerospace has been and continues to be a major source of employment and economic growth in Oklahoma, especially in Tulsa. The Museum's future expansion plans include a capital campaign to raise money for a new 60,000 square foot facility and campus across from the Tulsa Zoo on 36th Street North on the north side of the Tulsa International Airport Complex. The new facility,

which is expected to serve 800,000 people annually by 2020, will bring significant new tourism revenue to Tulsa.

"I'd like to encourage everyone to attend this event, to enjoy the evening and experience the fun and excitement of this unique Museum," said JoAnn Schaub, TASM Board Vice-Chairman, M\*A\*S\*H Event Chair, and BOK Trust Division Senior Vice President. For more information, contact Katheryn Pennington at 918-834-9900.

## First Airplane Ride

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So, my girlfriend, the disc jockey, and I (wearing my new sport coat) met at the Flint airport one evening at dusk, flew to Lansing for dinner, and then returned after dark. Once airborne, the disc jockey allowed me to handle the controls and I remember it being a great experience. However, it still did not "grab" me; after the flight was over, my interests returned to 1) girls and 2) school (again in that order).

It would be three or four years later, as I was finishing graduate school, that the love for building things instilled by my Dad almost 20 years before caused me to pause at an ad in *Popular Mechanics* for the Bensen Gyro-Copter.

Suddenly, I was bitten-- bad! After some research, I decided I really wanted to design and build a strap-on-the-back helicopter and I resolved to learn to fly helicopters as soon as I could afford it.

Well, you know the old story: to save money, I started fixed-wing flight lessons, got hooked, and never felt I could justify the cost of learning, owning, or flying helicopters (but I would still like to!). So, although I was a late-blooming aviator, over the intervening 35 years from then until now, I have made up for lost time. In fact, at times I was "eat up" with it. Now, with the mellowing of years, my main interests have settled down to 1) just one girl named Barbara and 2) airplanes of all kinds and descriptions (in that order, honest, Honey!).



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# Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission News



## Victor Bird Appointed Director

At its December meeting, the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission (OAC) appointed Victor Bird as its Director.

An attorney and veteran of state government, Bird was with the OSU Board of Regents for five years, the Lieutenant Governor's office for one year, and the Attorney General's office for almost twelve years. His last four years were as Chief Deputy Attorney General of the Civil Division, overseeing more than fifty assistant attorneys general.

Bird came to the Aeronautics Commission as Assistant Director a year ago, and became Acting Director in September 2002. His emphasis will be on:

- Partnerships between cities, counties, and universities to act as airport sponsors, thus spreading the responsibility for maintaining airports.
- More critical planning for the state's 123 public airports which make-up the statewide airport system.
- Achieving the Commission's objective of making as many of the state's 49 regional business airports jet-capable as possible within this decade (currently, 36 regional business airports are jet-capable, and 4 have ongoing projects to become so).
- Promoting a climate in which aviation and aviation-related businesses, particularly those already within the State, can flourish.

"I am honored by the Commission's expression of confidence in me. Okla-

homa has the fourth largest number of public-use airports in the nation, and is number one on a per capita basis. Maintaining our state's airport infrastructure is, indeed, a humbling responsibility, but it is one I consider essential to our economic well-being," said Bird.

"The airport serving a particular community can make the difference in trying to get a company to locate in that community. Flying has become the preferred mode of transportation for corporate America. If not the top employer in the state, aviation is in the top two or three. Yet, I believe there is so much more we can do to help create more quality jobs in aviation so we can keep our young Oklahomans here," added Bird.

## Oklahoma Airports Receive Record Amount of Federal AIP Funds

In the federal FY02, which ended September 30, Oklahoma received a record \$42.32 million in federal Airport Improvement Program funds for its public airports.

In FY02, only 5 states received more federal funds for their airports than Oklahoma. By contrast, in FY96, 27 states received more federal money than Oklahoma.

The \$42.32 million involved 54 projects at 42 airports. Nine of the projects, totaling \$26.5 million, were at the state's primary commercial service airports (Will Rogers World, Tulsa International, and Lawton-Fort Sill Regional). Those airports have a direct relationship with the FAA and thus handle their own projects.

The other 45 projects, totaling \$15.5 million, were at general aviation airports. Projects at those airports are administered through the OAC.

"We are finally getting to address many needed maintenance issues and making some very beneficial improvements in the state's aviation infrastructure, due to the assistance of the FAA," stated Bird.

Bird noted that with the exception of one year, the amount of federal money received by the state has steadily increased from \$8.15 million in FY96 to \$42.32 million in FY 2002.

"We are very thankful to our congressional delegation and the FAA for this federal money. Our state airport system would have suffered greatly without the attention made possible by these funds," said OAC Chairman Bill Kendrick.



Victor Bird, new OAC Director.

## Oklahoma Airports Benefit from General Aviation Entitlement Program

In FY02, 74 public airports in Oklahoma received General Aviation Entitlement grants totaling \$8.05 million through the General Aviation Entitlement Program from the FAA.

The General Aviation Entitlement Program began in FY01. In the past two fiscal years, Oklahoma has received a total of \$16.1 million by way of the program, more than most other states. In the FAA Southwest Region, only Texas, with 300 public airports, received more grant money through the program.

In FY03, a total of 88 airports (14 more than last year) are expected to receive \$11.66 million in grants through the program. Of those 88 airports, 65 should receive the maximum grant amount of \$150,000.

"The Non-Primary Entitlement Program is just a wonderful program for Oklahoma. Without it, we just would not have been able to address critical needs at

these airports," said Bird.

Bird commented that, in many instances, this is the first time communities have had a dependable revenue stream with which to plan airport maintenance and development, and that the program has really energized many municipalities about their airports.

## OAC Approves Four Airport Grants

At its December meeting, the OAC approved four grants for improving and rehabilitating airports in Guthrie, Guymon, Claremore, and Goldsby.

The Commission approved a \$68,900 grant for the Guthrie Municipal Airport for the first phase of a project to extend the runway and taxiway to 5,200 feet. The grant is half the amount the city must provide to receive a 90% grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Total project cost is \$1.3 million.

Glenn Hayes, Director of Municipal Services, expressed his gratitude to the Commission for its support and funding of this project. "Employment has already doubled at the airport and there is a 25 percent increase in aircraft based there," said Hayes.

Guthrie currently has about 72 aircraft based at its airport, which is classified as a regional business airport. With the runway and taxiway extension, the airport will be business-jet capable, which is critical for economic development.

The Guymon Municipal Airport, also a regional business airport, received a \$46,056 grant from the Commission for the purposes of realigning and reconstructing the parallel taxiway, and improving the runway safety area at the end of runway 36. This grant also represents half of the city match required to receive an FAA grant.

"We believe our airport is a tribute to the regional planning system and the regional airport system, and we thank the Commission for its support," said Ben Kendrick, Guymon Community Development Director.

The \$921,000 project is slated for completion this winter.

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# Playing in the Snow in a Wilga!

*continued from p. 1.*

is turned around backward to provide a seat for the jumpmaster. Since the Wilga does not have wing struts nor a conveniently located wheel on which jumpers can stand, a special jump step and grab bar are installed to make it easier for novice jumpers to exit the airplane. A permanently mounted hook is provided for convenient attachment of static lines.

There are many other interesting details about the Wilga, but we are digressing from our story! When I bought the Wilga last year in Colorado, I negotiated for a set of "liftable" skis as well. The liftable skis, also known as "wheel skis" or "retractable skis," mount on the airplane with the normal main wheels and tires left in place. They can be pneumatically extended or retracted from the cockpit, similar to a retractable landing gear. When the skis are extended, they move downward to a point below the bottom surface of the tire-- the position for landings on snow. When retracted, they move upward to expose the tire for normal landings on grass or pavement. The ski actuators are quite effective and will lift the entire weight of the aircraft as the skis are extended. Besides the main gear skis, a small fixed ski for the tailwheel is also provided.

As winter approached, I optimistically

decided to install the skis to make sure everything worked right. I wanted to be ready on short notice if the opportunity arose to fly on snow. I elected not to install the tail ski since, even with my optimism, it was hard to imagine a snow depth of more than four inches in Oklahoma!

Just by coincidence, I finished installing the skis on December 23. The next day, Christmas Eve, it snowed!

Remember when you were a kid and had trouble sleeping the night before Christmas in anticipation for what lay ahead the next morning? That was me. I woke up Christmas morning and, to my joy, the sky was clear, the wind was calm, and there was snow all over the place. Thank you, Santa!

After spending a wonderful Christmas morning with my lovely wife and teenage boys and, since the Christmas ham would not be ready for a couple of hours, the time was right for playing in the snow. Everyone pitched in to get the airplane out of the hangar and ready to go. After warming up the oil and cylinder heads, it was time to taxi out. It took quite a bit of throttle to get the airplane moving, but very little power to keep it moving.

An important thing we learned quickly is that, with the liftable skis, we had no brakes. After experimenting to get the feeling of taxiing, we made our way to

the end of the runway for the first takeoff on snow. The airplane took off very nicely in about 300 ft. Since I did not know how quickly the airplane would slide to a stop on landing, I flew to Wagoner and made several take-offs and landings. The soft, compressible, snow allowed the airplane to stop in about 400 ft. From there it was off to the Tahlequah Airport, where I fueled-up and did several more take-offs and landings and then proceeded home. Before landing, I made a fly-by for a couple of photos. The landing was great and again,

everyone helped put the airplane back in the hangar.

After that, it was into the house for a great Christmas dinner. With a wonderful family, great flying, and good food, who could ask for more? By the end of the day, temperatures in the fifties had melted much of the snow, so by sheer luck, I had hit it just right. Now I know how much fun playing in the snow in a Wilga on skis can be. So, like the kids, I look wistfully out the window, eagerly awaiting that next big blizzard!!



*Paul Jennings and Barbara in the spacious Wilga cabin. Note the wide upward-hinging door, rear passenger knee room, and comfortable contoured seats.*



*A plume of snow flies behind as Paul Jennings makes his first takeoff on snow.*

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# Up With Downs

by Earl Downs



## News Release!

Horse Apple Airport (HAA) has launched an airport improvement program. Earl Downs, owner and operator of HAA has initiated the improve-

ments in order to provide better service for the 2003 flying season. The terminal/office complex is being renovated to provide a spacious 96 square feet as a convenience for fellow aviators and their passengers.

The 450-foot long by 25-foot wide turf runway is also being improved. Downs is experimenting with a new runway improvement product known in the industry as Horse Improved Recycled Grass (HIRG). He states that HIRG is easy to obtain in Oklahoma and requires no special skills or training to apply. He has found that licensed pilots seem quite adept at spreading HIRG.

All that is required to obtain a good supply of HIRG is a horse and a field of

grass. The horse then provides the HIRG (also known as horse apples) and deposits the finished product, which simply requires that the HIRG user pick it up. A wheel barrow and manure fork is all that is needed to retrieve the HIRG. No special powered equipment is necessary. The same equipment used for retrieving the HIRG is also used for applying

the product to the runway surface.

Downs, a highly experienced pilot, author, and aviation lecturer said that he found spreading HIRG came naturally. He said he had a strange feeling that he had been involved in this process for his entire aviation career. He concluded that perhaps it was from a past life experience.



The newly remodeled HAA terminal building. The "courtesy car" awaits at the rail.



Marshall Dillon supervises, as Downs demonstrates HIRG harvesting techniques.

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# Calendar of Events

For a free listing of your event, email us at OklahomaAviator@earthlink.net or call 918-457-3330. 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	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- 918-850-1499	
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 pacer31a@earthlink.net	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- EAA Chapter 1005	Ada Municipal Airport Ada, OK	Terry Hall 580-436-8190 or adairprt@wilnet1.com	Call or email for exact location for monthly meeting. We occasionally meet off airport.
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: www.eaa323.org
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- flygrl7102@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	
Mar 3-Mar 14	Registration for Spring II 2003 Term	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University- Oklahoma City	Russ Tresner - 405-739-0397 or oklahoma_city_center@cts.db.erau.edu	Call or email for more info or to get your name on our mailing list.
Mar 17 7:00AM-7:00PM	Trip to the Kansas Cosmosphere Tulsa Air & Space Museum	Hutchinson, KS	Loretta Jones- 918-834-9900	
Mar 20-22	14th Annual Women in Aviation Conference	Cincinnati Convention Center Cincinnati, OH	386-226-7996 www.wiai.org	
Mar 21	Tulsa Engineering Challenge Tulsa Engineering Society	Tulsa Technology Center Jones-Riverside Campus Tulsa, OK	Scott Phillips- 918-760-1875	For 7th & 8th graders. Bridge building with toothpicks, airplane building.
Mar 29 8:00AM-11:00AM	Wild Onions & Eggs Fly-In Breakfast	Tenkiller Airpark (44M) Cookson, OK	John Sevier- 918-457-4183 jsclyde@aol.com	
Mar 29 6:00PM-11:00PM	M.A.S.H. Dinner, Dance, & Auction Fundraiser Tulsa Air and Space Museum	7130 E. Apache Tulsa, OK	Katheryn Pennington 918-834-9900	
Apr 2-5	National Congress on Aviation & Space Education (NCASE)	Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza Cincinnati, OH		
Apr 2-8	EAA Sun 'n Fun Fly-In	Lakeland, FL	863-644-2431 www.sun-n-fun.org	
Apr 25 7:00PM-9:00PM	A. Blaine Imel High School Art Competition Tulsa Air & Space Museum	7130 E. Apache	Katheryn Pennington 918-834-9900	
Apr 30 7:00PM-9:00PM	"Life on the International Space Station" Speech by Astronaut Jim Voss Tulsa Community College	Tulsa Technology Center Jones-Riverside Campus Tulsa, OK	Jack Sellers- 918-828-4254 jsellers@tulsacc.edu	The public is encouraged to attend. Jim Voss is a veteran of four shuttle flights and four months on the ISS.
May 2-3	Small Aircraft Transportation Systems (SATS) Exposition	Thomas P. Stafford Airport Weatherford, OK	Linda Weckel- 580-772-7744 or 1-800-725-7744 chamber@nts-online.net	Come see the latest in NASA's program to prove a second tier air transportation system in the US. Friday- Education & OAC Day; Saturday- Media Event Day.



# TCC Assistant Professor Jack Sellers Is New UAA President

Jack Sellers, assistant professor, aviation technology sciences, Tulsa Community College (TCC), was elected president, University Aviation Association (UAA), at its recent national conference in Orlando.

Sellers, a registered professional engineer and professional flight instructor, is former director of operations, Tulsa Flight Center. He spent 33 years in numerous key budget, personnel, planning, telecommunications, and computer management positions with Southwestern Bell Telephone.

At TCC, Sellers chairs the Aviation Advisory Committee, serves on the executive committee for the Tulsa Aviation Alliance, and directs Aviation Careers Academy (a summer academy for high school

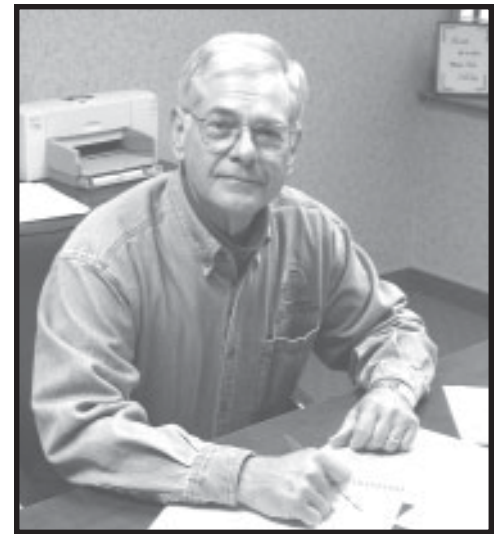
students from Northeast Oklahoma interested in aviation). Sellers has three degrees from Oklahoma State University (OSU) --bachelor of science in electrical engineering, master of science in natural and applied science, and doctorate of education. He is a former instructor at OSU and U.S. Army Signal Officer School.

A life member of American Technical Education Association, National and Oklahoma Societies of Professional Engineers, and Oklahoma Technical Society, Sellers is also a member of Council on Aviation Accreditation and former chairman, board of visitors, electrical engineering department, University of Tulsa.

Celebrating its 55th year as the voice of

collegiate aviation, UAA is composed of 731 individual members and 119 public and private two-year and four-year accredited institutions of higher education that offer degrees in aviation, flight education, airway service management, or avionics.

For the fifth consecutive year, TCC is ranked in the top three percent of more than 1,150 community colleges nationally in the number of associate degrees awarded in all disciplines. As the largest two-year college in Oklahoma, TCC serves approximately 40,000 students per semester in credit, corporate and industry training, and continuing education classes. TCC information is available at [www.tulsacc.edu](http://www.tulsacc.edu).



## EAA at 50 Years: A Half-Century of Opening the World of Flight

OSHKOSH, WI - As powered flight celebrates its centennial, another landmark anniversary will open this remarkable year. On Jan. 26, 2003, the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) celebrates the 50th anniversary of its inaugural meeting.

It is fitting that the Wright brothers' first flight and EAA's history reach major anniversaries in the same year, since the hundreds of thousands of EAA members over the past 50 years are the true aviation descendants of the Wrights.

"If there have been common threads among the many aviation interests for EAA members over the last 50 years, it's been the innovation, participation and sharing among members interested in flight," said EAA President Tom Poberezny. "EAA has opened that portal so people may pursue and enjoy the area of flight that intrigues them the most. Perhaps that is building or restoring an airplane, finding fellow aviators through EAA Chapters, discovering flight through Young Eagles or other education programs, or rekindling flying privileges that had been side-tracked over time."

### In the Beginning

EAA had its start next to a half-built airplane in Paul Poberezny's Milwaukee-area garage. In the years after WWII, Poberezny continually worked on airplane projects there. While he was rebuilding an old Taylorcraft, former members of the defunct Milwaukee

Lightplane Club would stop by to help or just visit. The garage became a place to chat about airplanes, and talk turned to forming a local club for amateur airplane designers and builders. However, when Poberezny was called up for active duty in the Korean War, the talk went onto the back burner.

On January 26, 1953, after Poberezny returned, about three-dozen aviation enthusiasts met at Curtiss-Wright Airport to discuss forming the club. Some of those attending were interested in forming only a local social group, but others saw the possibilities in uniting aviation enthusiasts who designed and built homebuilt airplanes.

Eventually, the group's name emerged as the "Experimental Aircraft Association," after the Civil Aeronautics Administration's "Experimental" classification used for homebuilt and modified airplanes. A one-page mimeographed newsletter called *The Experimenter* was published, which would eventually evolve into today's full-color *Sport Aviation* magazine.

It did not take long for word of the fledgling organization to spread. Poberezny's full-time job with the Wisconsin Air National Guard enabled him to travel to many airports across the country. During the inevitable layovers, Poberezny met with other pilots about EAA. After his articles on building an airplane for \$800 appeared in *Mechanix Illustrated*, hundreds of people be-

gan sending mail to the Poberezny house, who basement contained the EAA world headquarters.

In September 1953, EAA held its first fly-in convention, attended by about two-dozen airplanes and 150 people. During the 1950s, membership grew from dozens to several thousand and several local EAA Chapters were founded around the country.

### Growth and Changes

In the early 1960s, Paul Poberezny spent time with designers and builders, encouraging standardization in plans to enhance homebuilt aircraft safety. He developed key relationships with federal officials, demonstrating that safety could continue to improve with a minimum of regulatory interference.

In 1959, the annual fly-in was moved to Rockford, IL, having outgrown its Milwaukee site. In 1964, the EAA office finally moved out of the Poberezny basement and into a new building in Franklin, WI, a suburb of Milwaukee. Two years later, another building was added, which housed the first EAA Air Museum and provided a truly professional office setting for the support staff.

The volunteer "can-do" attitude established in EAA's early years has continued to be a hallmark of the organization. During the 1960s, programs such as "Project Schoolflight," which brought aircraft building into high school vocational programs, and the "Designee" program, which provided no-cost advice from experienced airplane builders (and preceded today's Technical Counselor program), allowed EAA members to be directly involved with opening the world of flight to others.

By the early 1970s, annual EAA membership had grown to more than 25,000. Three new divisions-- Warbird, Vintage, and Aerobatic-- were created. In 1970, the annual convention moved again, this time to Oshkosh, WI, and a short time later, EAA selected Oshkosh as the place for its permanent headquarters and fly-in facilities.

### Home in Oshkosh

When the new EAA Aviation Center was dedicated in 1983, it culminated a stunning pattern of growth. In just 30 years, EAA headquarters had grown from a basement coal bin office that served several dozen flying

enthusiasts to a world-class facility telling the story of sport aviation and supporting hundreds of thousands of EAA members and other aviation enthusiasts.

New aircraft types, including ultralights, composite airplanes, and sophisticated kits, were emerging and EAA welcomed them.

As membership soared past 100,000 in the late 1980s, government officials and industry leaders looked more and more to EAA for resources and guidance on a variety of issues.

### Turning Toward the Future

In 1989, Paul Poberezny retired as EAA President, succeeded by his son, Tom. As the 1990s dawned, EAA members were concerned that young people were not able to discover aviation and its experiences as easily as previous generations. That led to the formation of the Young Eagles Program, which has become the largest youth aviation education program ever created. In 1992, EAA announced the goal to fly one million young people, free of charge, by the 100th anniversary of powered flight in December 2003. As of now, approximately 900,000 young people had been flown by more than 32,000 volunteer pilots.

Throughout its history, EAA has worked to make aviation financially accessible, with a minimum of regulations, to all who want to participate. To bolster those efforts, EAA supported a variety of proposals that would simplify the ways pilots earn ratings and the ways basic aircraft could be manufactured and made available.

"Although there are literally thousands of individual interests within our membership, EAA remains dedicated to some simple tenets that apply to everyone who wishes to participate," Tom Poberezny said. "EAA will protect the right to fly, promote access to flight, preserve the heritage of aviation, and prepare for those who will carry the dream forward."

"For 50 years, EAA has represented the individual who wants to discover and explore aviation. As individuals bonded by this common passion, EAA has been able to provide the support needed to fulfill thousands of dreams of flight. It is that vision that will continue to carry us into the future."

The Oklahoma Aviator, February 2003, Page 9

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# Tulsa International Hosts Centennial of Flight Commission

TULSA - Tulsa International Airport, currently in its 75th year of operation, is setting up a commission to commemorate its anniversary and the 100th anniversary of the Wright brothers' first flight at Kitty Hawk. The commission plans to organize and promote aviation events throughout the year as the December 17, 2003 first flight anniversary approaches.

Originally envisioned as involving northeastern Oklahoma, the commission's activities seem to be spreading to include other areas of

the state. Its second meeting on January 16 attracted more than 20 people, including representatives from:

- The Tulsa Airport Authority (TAA)
- American Airlines
- The Air National Guard- 138th Fighter Group
- The Tulsa Air and Space Museum (TASM)
- The Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission (OAC)
- The Commemorative Air Force (CAF)

• The Tulsa Aviation Education Alliance, and

• *The Oklahoma Aviator*

The group expressed enthusiasm about the prospect of a coordinated celebration of 100 years of powered flight and Oklahoma's involvement from its earliest days. The participants presented a wide variety of ideas and plans. Attendees from American Airlines, a mainstay of Tulsa aviation, offered the use of the company's extensive library of historical information.

The Tulsa Air and Space Museum participants outlined plans for the

dedication of their new hangar facility on the Tulsa International Airport later this year. They also described collaborative efforts with the Aviation and Space Museum at the Kirkpatrick Center in Oklahoma City and the Oklahoma Historical Society to publish a book of Oklahoma aviation history.

The Commemorative Air Force attendees confirmed that the second annual WWII Hangar Dance and Exposition will be held in late November, just prior to the first flight anniversary date.

Representatives from *The Oklahoma Aviator* voiced their plan to run at least one article each month concerning the centennial of flight.

In evidence of its spreading interest, Victor Bird, newly appointed OAC Director, and Erin Wright, OAC Special Projects Coordinator, attended the meeting from Oklahoma City.

The next meeting of the commission will be February 19 in the Green Room at Tulsa International Airport. The meeting is open to other groups interested in the centennial of flight. Those interested in attending should contact Mary Smith, Marketing Director for TAA, at 838-5008 or [marysmith@ci.tulsa.ok.us](mailto:marysmith@ci.tulsa.ok.us).

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