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The Oklahoma Aviator

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

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Spaceplane To Be Built at Oklahoma Spaceport in Burns Flat

Burns Flat, OK – Within the next several years, space enthusiasts may have the opportunity to fly into space and back from the Oklahoma Spaceport in Burns Flat. On January 12, Rocketplane Limited, Inc, headquartered in Solvang, California, broke ground on a new facility at the Spaceport to mark the beginning of a new phase in the development of their first reusable launch vehicle. And, with that groundbreaking, the Oklahoma Space Industry Development Authority (OSIDA) is seeing their missions become reality.

State Senator Gilmer Capps and Rocketplane Limited officials announced at the Oklahoma State Capitol that the company is the first tenant of the Oklahoma Spaceport, located at the Clinton-Sherman Industrial Airpark in Burns Flat. Oklahoma Spaceport is being organized and promoted by OSIDA.

"It's a great day for Oklahoma and a great day for the United States: a very important opportunity to continue the thrust of the United States to space," said Gen. Merrill McPeak, member of the company's Board of Directors.

"Oklahoma is on the cutting edge in this new field of civil and commercial space transportation. Reusable launch vehicles will bring down the cost of the space travel experience and could eventually make Oklahoma a hub for commercial space activity," said Capps, who is chairman of the Senate Aerospace and Technology Committee and author of legislation that created OSIDA.

As its first development effort, to be complete by late 2006, Rocketplane Limited plans a 4-seat winged airplane/spacecraft called the Rocketplane XP, which will take off horizontally from the Oklahoma Spaceport runway using its two turbojet engines and climb to about 30,000 ft. There, its reusable rocket engine will ignite, pushing the craft into suborbital flight at over 360,000 ft altitude. Crewmembers will experience weightlessness for three or four



A conceptual illustration of the Rocketplane XP, a 4-seat fighter-sized reusable suborbital aircraft.

minutes and will see the same view of the Earth that Alan Shepard enjoyed on his first flight in 1961.

Then, protected by heat shields, the craft will re-enter the earth's atmosphere, descending to an altitude where its jet engines will be restarted. With the engines restarted, the aircraft will be flown back to a normal landing at Burns Flat.

"We chose Oklahoma because of its

spaceport infrastructure and Oklahoma's commitment to development of a space launch vehicle industry," said George French,

President of Rocketplane Limited.

The dream of private citizens experiencing space flight has previously been available only to the extremely wealthy.

American Dennis Tito and South African Mark Shuttleworth both paid the Russian Space Agency \$20 million for a trip into space on a conventional expendable launch vehicle in 2002. Rocketplane Limited plans to offer suborbital trips to space for approximately

\$100,000, according to French.

Besides space tourism, the company envisions other uses for its vehicles, including microgravity research, satellite launch, and earth observation for military, agricultural, and environmental purposes. After development and operation of the Rocketplane XP commence, work will begin on larger versions of the vehicle to provide launch services for International Space Station cargo delivery, commercial, and military payloads.

When OSIDA was created, the agency was given the mission of strengthening the economic foundation of Oklahoma by licensing a spaceport at the former Clinton-Sherman Air Base and by establishing a viable space commerce industry in the state. Throughout the past few years, OSIDA has continued to strive toward completing those objectives.

First is the licensing procedure: the Federal Aviation Administration requires two major studies be completed before any property can be licensed as a spaceport, an environmental impact statement (EIS) and a flight safety study. Currently, the contractors are in the final stages of the EIS and the flight safety study is underway.

With Rocketplane Limited's decision to locate in Oklahoma, achieving of OSIDA's second objective is well underway.

To help attract aerospace companies to Oklahoma, Capps, Rep. James Covey, and Rep. Jack Bonny were the authors of legislation that created tax credits for companies certified by the state to be developing and operating "qualified space transportation vehicles." Under the statute, investors in the company can receive up to 59.9 percent state tax credit on the value of their investment. Rocketplane Limited has been certified by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, the Oklahoma Tax Commission, and OSIDA.

The technological feasibility of



In a January 12 ceremony, a ribbon held by officials of Rocketplane Limited and the state of Oklahoma is about to be cut by Rocketplane Limited's Lear 24. The Lear is a fitting vehicle since its airframe will be the basis of the spaceplane being developed by the company.

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New Owners for the Haskell Airport

On October 31, 2003, Kaz and Julie Pienkos were out looking at land to purchase near Coweta on which they hoped to build a home and a grass airstrip. They are currently Tulsa residents; Kaz is a long-time American Airlines avionics technician, a Spartan A&P graduate, and a private pilot with about 25 years flying experience. Julie works in finance and accounting for Citgo Petroleum and, although not a pilot (saying "I'd rather be chauffeured"), has always been interested in aviation—when she was young, her father worked for Leng-Temco-Vought on various aerospace projects and he kindled the interest in his daughter.

Out of curiosity, Kaz and Julie decided to attend the auction of the Haskell Airport, since they were close by anyway. They did not intend to buy anything.

The then-current property owner Mike Douglas, along with the auctioneers and area banks holding interests in the property, had decided the best way to conduct the auction was to divide the property into several different parcels. The largest parcel, 58 acres in all, included the runway, the main office/hangar, and open hangars south of the office.

Another parcel included the "auction hangar," harkening back to the days when Mike Douglas and Red Stevenson held aircraft auctions there. A third parcel included a row of newly-built T-hangars with an attached four-bedroom house at one end. Several other parcels of varying sizes and descriptions were offered, making up a total of ten separate parcels. With the exception of the parcels containing the auction hangar and the T-hangars, the parcels were sold by the acre.

The auction was run by "bidders choice," meaning the winning bidder picked which parcel he wanted to purchase, and then the bidding continued until all of the parcels are taken. As Kaz and Julie watched, they began to get excited about what they considered to be low selling prices. Thus, as the bid price went lower, they found themselves not only bidding, but having the winning bid! Suddenly they were airport owners!

L.C. Neel of Bixby had the winning bid

on the auction hangar parcel and Eddie Reynolds of Reynolds Construction in Coweta wound up with the T-hangar/apartment parcel. The other parcels went to various other buyers.

After some post-auction negotiations, the Pienkos closed the purchase of their parcel on January 16. Says Julie, "Well, we wanted to live on an airport—it's just happening a little quicker than we expected. As soon as we can, we'll sell our house in Tulsa and move to Haskell. We plan to build a house on the airport property. We keep asking ourselves what our first priorities should be, to build a house quickly or begin investing in the airport. So far, the airport investments seem to be winning. We hope to repair the ailing open hangars as quickly as

possible, to provide safe and secure storage for the airplanes based on the airport.

"We have made an agreement with Aerographics, the aircraft paint shop located in the main hangar, to remain there. We plan to have fuel available by summer. Beyond that, we'll make other improvements as time, money, and our job commitments permit. Hopefully at some point, we'll have the main office attended.

"One of the adjacent parcels of land was also purchased by Eddie Reynolds of Reynolds Construction, and we intend to work together with him to encourage the start of an airport community, similar to Gundy's in Owasso.

"Most of all, we plan to bring the Haskell Airport back to life."



Kaz and Julie Pienkos are the new owners of the Haskell Airport.

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Omniplex Cockpit Photo Exhibit

From February 28 through April 25, Omniplex in Oklahoma City will exhibit *At the Controls: The Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Looks at Cockpits*. Some of us have seen the *outsides* of famous airplanes like the Wright 1903 Flyer, Charles Lindbergh's *Spirit of St. Louis*, or the Boeing B-29 *Enola Gay*. But who, other than the pilots, has seen *inside* these planes?

Featuring 4' x 7' color photographs of cockpits of airplanes and spacecraft in the Smithsonian's collection, the exhibition offers new views of 20 historic aircraft, including the Wright 1903 Flyer, Ryan NYP *Spirit of St. Louis*, Grumman F4F-4 Wildcat, Supermarine Spitfire Mark VII, the Space Shuttle *Columbia*, and others.

Photographers Eric F. Long and Mark Avino used a 4x5 camera with a wide-angle lens covering 120 degrees to create these thrilling images. Printed on a nearly 1:1 scale, these photographs let viewers imagine what it's like to sit at the controls.

The images are accompanied by information about each aircraft, its historical significance, and details on some of the instruments. The exhibit also visually traces the development of cockpits over the past century. From the efficiently designed instrument panel of the P-51D Mustang to the myriad switches and gauges in the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird, each photograph displays advances in aviation and aeronautics from the pilot's point of view.

A companion book of the same title (Boston Mills Press, 2001) includes 45 of these images.

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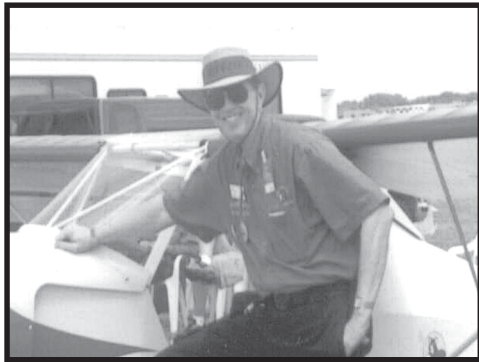
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Up With Downs

by Earl Downs



Weather or Not: Decision Making

Sad to say, the Air Safety Foundation's published data indicates that over 80% of pilots involved in fatal weather-related accidents never made a radio call requesting help. I wonder why a pilot would allow this to happen. We all know that deadly weather seldom appears without warning or without symptoms that can be interpreted. Could the cause be "get-there-itis?" Is it a lack of knowledge, a lack of training, or bad decision-making? Like most accidents, it is probably a chain of events that can be broken if only one link is removed.

Over and over, the most common link in the weather-related accident chain is poor aeronautical decision making (ADM).

Thoughtful weather ADM always starts with the weather briefing. However, the weather briefing is only as good as the pilot's ability to understand it, and this takes training and practice. It is important that all pilots participate in frequent weather briefings. Practice makes permanent, and this is one habit we want to become permanent.

Once the decision has been made to launch the flight, that decision must constantly be updated to DECIDE whether or not to continue the flight. This is where I use the DECIDE model, a simple mnemonic I call "the loop of life." It applies to many flight situations, but it is particularly effective with weather safety. All pilots perform the steps in the DECIDE loop even if they do not use the mnemonic. Let's run a quick review of the mnemonic:

- **D**etect – The pilot must detect the fact that a change has occurred.
- **E**stimate – The pilot estimates the need to counter or react to the change.
- **C**hoose – The pilot chooses a desirable outcome (in terms of success) for the flight.
- **I**dentify – The pilot identifies actions that could successfully control the change.
- **D**o – The pilot takes the necessary action.
- **E**valuate – The pilot evaluates the effect(s) of the action taken.

It is the application of the first two steps of the DECIDE model that can determine the success of the DECIDE loop. Detecting that the weather has changed could be as simple as looking out the windshield and seeing that the visibility or clouds are better or worse than forecasted.

Note that weather changes for either the better or the worse should actuate the DE-

CIDE loop. Seeing the weather change for the worse by visual reference only puts a pretty short fuse on the DECIDE process. You might say the loop is put into a fast forward mode and that is not good, even for experienced pilots.

We have all heard stories of bad weather suddenly appearing, but is that really the case? It is more likely that the airplane suddenly arrives at an area of existing bad weather than that the weather abruptly changed. Detecting that a change has occurred and estimating the need for action can more predictably lead to a successful conclusion when we start the DECIDE loop as early as possible. Here is a review of some of the tools for detecting in-flight weather changes.

Adequate pre-flight planning is critical, but let's face it, as soon as the wheels leave the ground, it is history. Once airborne, we switch to "in-flight" planning and updating, constantly restarting the DECIDE model, looking sometimes only minutes ahead. Here is where it is so important to practice the numerous methods of weather checking and planning while enroute.

We will start with our old standby, the Flight Service Station (FSS). Even in "severe clear" weather, the preflight briefing could include important NOTAM information or critical National Security warnings. Once in flight, communication with the FSS should continue, if possible. Weather information can be updated by calling FSS or Enroute Flight Advisory Service (EFAS-Flight Watch). Also, don't forget about the National Weather Service radar from sites all around the county that is available at FSS facilities. Flight Service can't vector you around bad weather, but they sure can help activate your DECIDE loop.

Of course, many airports and urban areas have Air Traffic Control (ATC), which leads us to ask how well ATC radar can see weather. It has been well known for many years that those capabilities were limited, but things are changing for the better. Local and enroute ATC radar is being upgraded to display not only traffic, but also detailed weather radar information. Newer systems are now able to provide some safety measures not previously available. As a result, the controller can plan traffic control better and provide useful weather radar information to help the pilot make more informed choices.

Don't get me wrong, I am not promoting using ATC radar to preclude good planning. But we need to be ready and willing to ask for help when needed. When a pilot uses the phrase "weather deviation required" in an ATC communication, it indicates to the controller that priority is required and that an ATC response is needed. As good as ATC controllers are, they are not mind readers. Tell them what the problem is and what your capabilities are.

We have taught the advantages of using VFR Flight Following for years, but it also plays an important role in weather safety. ARTCC Flight Following automatically

Ask the Doctor

by Dr. Guy Baldwin, AME



More on SSRI Medicines

A 32-year-old man came to my office in September for a Second Class FAA Medical. On the FAA Form 8500-8, he listed that he was taking 10 mg of Lexapro daily. He asked if he is allowed to take Lexapro and fly.

Lexapro is a mood-altering drug, one of the selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) which include Prozac, Paxil, Zoloft, and others. SSRIs are being prescribed for an ever-widening variety of conditions ranging from such simple things as withdrawal from smoking to treatment of temporary depression to more serious mental problems.

During last year's EAA Aeromedical Council meetings, held during AirVenture at Oshkosh, the subject of SSRIs came up once again. About a dozen people participated, about half FAA employees and half aviation medical examiners such as myself. So far, the FAA's stand is that airmen are not allowed to use any mood-altering drug, including not only SSRIs, but also similar drugs such as Effexor and older medicines such as amitriptyline.

It has been my experience that, with regard to SSRI use, airmen or would-be airmen fall into one of three groups. First, there are those who continue to take SSRIs

and do not fly (even though they want to). Next are those who have taken SSRIs, but who choose not to in order to be able to fly (even though the decision may adversely affect their sense of well-being).

Last, there are those who take SSRIs, do not report it on their FAA medical applications, and continue to fly, apparently without problems. I want to advise everybody not to take this approach. Dishonest answers on an FAA medical application form are a federal offense, punishable by up to 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

My response to this applicant was that he has a couple of options, either continue taking the medicine and not be able to fly or discontinue it and see how he does. As we discussed it, he said he was only taking half the 10-mg pill daily. He said the medicine did improve his mood, but he thought he could get along without it.

I advised him to stop taking the medicine, immediately notifying his doctor of the fact. Then, after 90 days off the medicine, I told him to let the doctor know how he has felt without it. If he has felt well, he should ask his doctor to write a letter to that effect and bring the letter to me. Upon receiving the letter, I can make a phone call to FAA and ask to have his medical reinstated.

Sometimes in these cases, we can get a medical reinstated in 30 to 60 days, for example, for someone who has only been on the medicine a week or two and did not know it would keep them from flying. Another example would be someone who is on SSRIs simply to ease their withdrawal from nicotine. However, if a patient has a serious mental problem, that condition itself may prevent issuance of an FAA medical, whether or not he or she is taking mood-altering drugs.

If you have any questions regarding this article or any other subject matter do not hesitate to contact me at 918-437-7993.

broadcasts Weather Advisories in their respective areas.

Talking to ATC, Flight Watch, or an FSS are "active" ways to update weather information. However, there are also "passive" ways to keep the information flowing. By passive I mean that we listen but we don't talk. HIWAS and En Route Flight Advisory Service (EFAS) are examples of listening by simply tuning in the correct frequencies. Another "passive" tool is to monitor nearby AWOS, ASOS, and ATC broadcasts. Pilot flying near areas of ATC operation can listen passively to what is going on even if they are not actively using the service. The frequencies for the services are shown on the charts and in the Airport and Facility Directory. Look up these frequencies and have them ready if needed.

Another important way up-to-the-minute weather data is made available for inflight DECIDE-loop planning is through pilot reports (PIREPs). PIREPs are perhaps the most immediate way for a pilot to

detect a change in the weather. The trick is, PIREPs will not be available unless we make them ourselves. Timely pilot reports can be a lifesaver if the weather is worse than forecast. However, when the weather is better than forecast, that is also important news. Both good-news and bad-news PIREPs can help pilots run their own DECIDE loop. AOPA and the Air Safety Foundation have teamed with FAA and the National Weather service to develop a wonderful program called "Sky Spotter," which encourages pilots to make PIREPs and leads them through the easy steps in doing so. Check it out at www.aopa.org.

There is an old aviation saying that goes, "Plan the flight and fly the plan." When it comes to dealing with weather, part of the plan is to constantly update it with the DECIDE model. The number of weather-related accidents can be reduced and it is up to us to use good weather ADM skills.

Comments or questions? earldowns@hotmail.com

Miss America: Restoration of an Air Racing Icon

by Jerry Day, Team Member/
Photographer

The P-51 Mustang *Miss America* crashed at the Reno Air Races on September 11, 2002. Dr. Brent Hisey, a resident of Oklahoma City and the owner/pilot of the airplane, was relatively unhurt in the crash. However, *Miss America* was heavily damaged, landing on the right wing and tail section first, after a brief "off-road" trip through the desert and sagebrush.

Miss America was disassembled and trucked back to Wiley Post Airport in Oklahoma City. While waiting for the insurance company to make a settlement, crew members cleaned and stripped paint from the wings, fuselage, and all previously removed parts.

The insurance company finally made a settlement late in December 2002 and a ground-up restoration of *Miss America* began. The wings were separated at the center keel and shipped to Dave Teeter's shop in Salinas, California. The fuselage, cockpit, instrument panel, and tail section were to be restored by Larry Butler's shop in Okla-

homa City. Mustang parts were supplied by Dennis Schoenfelder's shop in Santa Barbara, California. The new race engine was to be built by Rick Shanholtzer's shop in McKinney, Texas.

The restoration was proceeding as scheduled until *Miss America's* hangar was partially destroyed by the tornado that ripped through Wiley Post on May 9, 2003. Team members were forced to move the restoration operations to another hangar. Three or four weeks were lost due to the tornado.

The restored wings arrived from California on July 5, 2003. The wings and fuselage were mated together and the rest of July and August were spent installing new fuel tanks, hydraulic lines, electrical systems, wheels and brakes, fuselage-to-wing fairings, and flight controls. The number of hours spent working during these two months was unbelievable.

On September 1, 2003, Brent made the first flight of the restored *Miss America*. For the next several days, he made as many flights as his hospital schedule would permit. On September 4, the

new Rolls Royce Merlin race engine was installed. On September 6, *Miss America* left Oklahoma City heading west to the Reno Air Races.

At that point, *Miss America* did not look like herself. Her normal red, white, and blue paint scheme would have required two additional weeks in the paint shop. So, with time running out to make the Reno Air Races, she was simply painted white.

At Reno, *Miss America* had several problems during qualification and heat races. A leaky radiator was replaced, a gear door was repaired, and a rudder trim tab came off during a heat race. Team members overcame the difficulties and *Miss America* flew back home to Oklahoma City with the Unlimited Silver Championship.

Two weeks later, the airplane appeared at Aerospace America and then spent the following two weeks in the paint shop. Her new paint scheme changed slightly, but still retained the basic appearance of previous years.

Brent Hisey and the *Miss America* team members spent many, many long

hours getting the famous airplane back in the air. The total restoration was done in an amazing nine months, in spite of Mother Nature and other delays. The newly-restored 60-year-old Mustang will take Brent Hisey to many more Reno Air Races and air shows throughout the United States.

All photos copyright 2003 by Jerry Day.

MISS AMERICA AIR RACING TEAM MEMBERS

Oklahoma City
Brent Hisey, Owner and Pilot
Larry Butler, Owner, Warbirds,
Inc
Greg Butler
Scott Butler
Danny Van Dusen
Mike Curtis
Bob Hightower
Kevin Day
Jerry Day
Out of State
Rick Revell
Ed Hayes
Davey Phillips



September 11, 2002- *Miss America* after her rough ride through the Reno desert.



May 9, 2003- With the restoration underway, a tornado struck Wiley Post.



September 9, 2003- *Miss America* landing at the 2003 Reno Air Races.



December 19, 2003- Back in Oklahoma City, with her new paint job complete.

Rocketplane To Be Built in Oklahoma

continued from p. 1.

a suborbital spaceplane traces back more than 40 years ago with the successful deployment of the X-15. The X-15 was a joint program of NASA, the Air Force, the Navy, and North American Aviation. It successfully reached an altitude of 67 miles and achieved Mach 6.7 speed.

Rocketplane Limited has assembled a team of employees with many years of experience working on reusable space vehicles. After more than four years of internal vehicle development work and extensive consultation with subcontractors, the company has advanced to the full design phase and has developed a 30-month

project schedule for the Rocketplane XP. In order to reduce development time and help ensure success, the craft will be built starting with an existing airframe—the Lear 24. The Rocketplanes jet engines and rocket engine are already existing, well-proven designs.

In addition, the company has selected key technical, marketing, and investment partners for their decades of experience and knowledge working with NASA, the Department of Defense, and the aerospace industry in areas including airframe design, thermal protection systems, and advanced propulsion.

OSIDA Chairman Gen. Ken McGill

said: “The leaders of Rocketplane Limited have exhibited tenacity, creativity and a belief in Oklahoma’s role as an aerospace leader. At OSIDA, we feel confident that this company’s presence at the Oklahoma Spaceport gives us a big advantage in meeting our goals of job creation in the aerospace industry.”

“This is a great opportunity for Oklahoma to embark on a new business frontier which will continue to solidify Oklahoma’s role as a leader in the aerospace industry as well as create new and exciting opportunities for all Oklahomans,” said OSIDA Deputy Director Bill Khourie.

Governor Brad Henry congratulated Rocketplane Limited officials and Capps on the announcement.

“This is exciting news for all of Oklahoma. This announcement is further proof of our state’s dynamic and always-growing aviation and aerospace industry. There are many public officials who deserve thanks for this economic boost, particularly Sen. Gilmer Capps and Rep. Jack Bonny,” Henry said.

For more information on Rocketplane Limited, visit www.rocketplane.com. For more information regarding OSIDA, contact Melissa Sue Smith at (405) 602-3877 or msmith@okspaceport.state.ok.us.

National Warbird Operators Conference in OKC in February

Warbird owners, operators, maintenance technicians, and enthusiasts will gather in Oklahoma City February 26 - 29 to further the cause of safety and knowledge relating to the warbird aircraft at the 10th National Warbird Operator Conference (NWOC).

NWOC was created to bring together owners, operators, and the principal museums of warbirds to discuss common goals in the ever-changing world of economics, operations and regulations. Over the past decade NWOC has remained true to this origi-

nal intent.

As in previous years NWOC organizers have developed a balanced program to enhance pilot maintenance, technician knowledge and address aircraft-specific topics to ensure continued flight for these unique aircraft. Planned for this year’s agenda are keynote presentations by FAA personnel from various local FAA offices, as well as a tribute to conference attendees who have been with the organization since the very first NWOC in 1993 in Galveston, Texas.

Annual attendance at NWOC continues to grow, with 2003 breaking all previous records. “It is so rewarding to see fellow warbird enthusiasts unite one weekend a year to share the requisite knowledge to keep our national treasures airborne,” said Bob Cannon, conference organizer and owner of Cannon Aviation Insurance. He continued, “Looking to 2004 we anticipate a hugely successful conference due in part to the privilege of holding NWOC in the FAA’s hometown.”

Topics and speakers for NWOC

2004 include: Piston Engine Ignition and Lubrication by Mike Hudon and Dan Whitney Parachutes; Aircraft Egress by Allan Silver; and Aeromedical Preparation by Dr. Warren Silberman and Dr. Guy Baldwin. NWOC is sponsored by Cannon Aviation Insurance, Courtesy Aircraft, EAA Warbirds of America, Precision Aviation Products Corporation, North American Trainer Association, HCC Insurance Holdings and Air Capitol Insurance. Sponsorships are available through February 1. FMI: www.warbirdconference.com

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OmniDome Theater to Feature Aviation Films in February

OKLAHOMA CITY—OmniDome Theater's Fifth Annual Big Screen Film Fest will feature a different giant-screen film each weekend in February. While all four films are of interest, two are especially suited to viewers interested in aviation.

On February 13-15, *Adrenaline Rush: The Science of Risk* will appear. Viewers will take a look at the thrill-seeking world of skydiving and base jumping

—parachuting from a building, bridge or cliff. Breathtaking views of skydiving over the Florida Keys, the Mojave Desert and the magnificent Fjord of Norway accompany the exploration of the psychological and physiological forces behind risk-taking and the physics involved in these daredevil activities.

Then, on February 20-22, *Straight Up! Helicopters in Action* will be shown. The audience will fly along with

skilled helicopter crews as they carry out sea and mountain rescues, apprehend drug smugglers, repair high voltage power lines, save endangered animals, deliver humanitarian aid, and undertake a reconnaissance mission. Learn how helicopters are flown in this film narrated by Martin Sheen.

The other two films in the series include Jane Goodall's *Wild Chimpanzees*

and *Our Country*, a celebration of country music.

Show times are Friday, 6 and 8 PM; Saturday, 1:10, 3:30, 6, and 8 PM and Sunday, noon, 2:20, 4:40, and 6 PM. *Top Speed* and *Lewis and Clark: Great Journey West* are also showing at OmniDome Theater. Advanced tickets are available at the museum box office or by calling 405-602-DOME.



Base jumpers take the plunge in a scene from *Adrenaline Rush*.



A Blackhawk helicopter silhouettes against the sunset in *Straight Up!*

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SkyStar Reorganizes for SP/LSA

CALDWELL, IDAHO - In what may be the first of many marketing moves that will take place in the kit plane industry as the Sport Pilot/Light Sport Aircraft rule nears completion (perhaps by April), SkyStar Aircraft Corporation announced a management reorganization aimed at capitalizing on the new opportunity.

SkyStar Aircraft has divided into two parts. The portion of the company that manufactures the Kitfox Aircraft kits, will now be known as SkyStar Aircraft Corporation, Experimental/Manufacturing Division. A new President and CEO, Frank Miller will head that division. The newly

created SkyStar Aircraft Corporation, Sport Plane Division will be under the direction of former SkyStar President, Ed Downs. Mr. Downs will serve as the President of the Sport Plane Division.

SkyStar has shared in dealing with the business downturn that struck the entire aviation industry following 9/11, but the future is encouraging as the economy recovers and Sport Pilot draws near. Frank Miller is optimistic in the outlook for 2004, saying, "Sales are already up by 25% over last year's average, and the trend is continuing." Let's all hope that 2004 will be a banner year for recreational aviation.

EAA's 2004 Air Academy

Into The Air, Junior Birdmen! Young people ages 10-18 can explore the fascinating world of flight as the EAA Air Academy presents its summer 2004 schedule of programs. The individual camps range from three to nine days long and take place at the EAA Aviation Center and the beautiful Air Academy Lodge in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The academy offers four programs; Young Eagles Camp I for 10 and 11-year-olds; Young Eagles Camp II for ages 12-13; Basic Air Academy for ages 14-15; and Advanced Air Academy for ages 16-18.

"Since 1984, the EAA Air Academy has hosted thousands of young people from around the world, launching them on their own voyages of self-discovery and aviation adventure," said Chuck Larsen, EAA's executive director of residence education. "Each participant will learn that the sky is not the limit—it's a beginning for aviation fun, adventure, friendship, and knowledge."

The Air Academy programs, which are accredited by the American Camping Association (ACA), are staffed with instructors with more than 180 years of combined experience at the Air Academy and more than 225 combined years of teaching and counseling background. The Air Academy's mission is to provide a fun aviation learning experience and develop bonds with other young

aviation enthusiasts.

The Young Eagles Camps, designed as an introduction to the wonderful world of aviation, use small group activities and close counselor relationships to present the basics of flight in a "science camp" format that is a unique combination of fun and discovery.

Basic Air Academy is the next exciting step through the world of aviation. Each "hands-on" activity is developed for the intermediate 14- and 15-year-old during classroom and media presentations, specialized laboratory activities, and aviation-related demonstrations.

EAA Advanced Air Academy provides an atmosphere for mature students to become totally immersed in the world of flight. Ground instruction and introductory recreation flight experiences highlight this meaningful, action-packed camp. It combines "in-the-air" and "on-the-ground" activities.

The 2004 EAA Air Academy schedule is as follows:

- Young Eagles Camp 1- June 12-16
- Young Eagles Camp 2- June 19-23 or June 25-29
- Basic Air Academy- July 5-11 or July 12-18
- Advanced Air Academy- July 20-29 or July 31-August 9)

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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	Matt Burton 918-343-0931	Go to Ponca City for breakfast, then come to Claremore for hamburgers and aerobatics!
2nd Monday 7:00PM	Meeting- Oklahoma Chapter 99s	Wiley Post Airport	Poochie Rotzinger- 405-842-9829	
2nd Tuesday	Meeting- Spirit of Tulsa Squadron- Commemorative 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 (KADH) 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
2nd Saturday	Fly-In Lunch Meeting Kerr County Aviation Association	Poteau Municipal Airport Poteau, OK	Bryan Hoggatt- 918-647-4719	
2nd Saturday 11:00AM	Meeting- EAA Ultralight Chapter 98	Thompson Airport Tuttle, OK	Robert Crawford- 405-381-2840	Visitors welcome!
3rd Saturday	Meeting- Green Country UltraSport 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 David Koehn for time/place	David Koehn- 918-671-0481 ffav8@sbcglobal.net	
3rd Monday 7:30PM	Meeting- EAA Chapter 10	Gundy's Airport, Owasso, OK	Bhrent Waddell- 918-371-5022 bwaddell@tulsa.oklahoma.net	
3rd Tuesday	Green Country Women in Aviation Meeting	Contact Kristen Esparza for time/location	Kristen Esparza - 918-851-36557	Men and women supporting women in aviation
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- 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	The South Regional Library, 8316 East 93rd Street, Tulsa, OK	Charles Harris- 918-622-8400	
Feb 9 7:00-9:00PM	"Maneuvering Flight-- Hazardous to Your Health" Aviation Safety Foundation/FAA Free Seminar	Aerospace Education Center I-Max Theater 3301 Roosevelt Rd, Little Rock, AR	800-638-3101 or www.asf.org	No registration req'd! Qualifies toward FAA Wings Program. Chance to win NAV/COM in ASF drawing.
Feb 10 7:00-9:00PM	"Maneuvering Flight-- Hazardous to Your Health" Aviation Safety Foundation/FAA Free Seminar	Beaver Lake Aviation, 1 Cass Hough Dr, Rogers, AR- (Hwy 62 1 mi N of town)	800-638-3101 or www.asf.org	No registration req'd! Qualifies toward FAA Wings Program. Chance to win NAV/COM in ASF drawing.
Feb 11 7:00-9:00PM	"Maneuvering Flight-- Hazardous to Your Health" Aviation Safety Foundation/FAA Free Seminar	Metro Tech Aviation Career Ctr, 5600 S. MacArthur, Oklahoma City, OK	800-638-3101 or www.asf.org	No registration req'd! Qualifies toward FAA Wings Program. Chance to win NAV/COM in ASF drawing.
Feb 12 7:00-9:00PM	"Maneuvering Flight-- Hazardous to Your Health" Aviation Safety Foundation/FAA Free Seminar	Kansas Aviation Museum, 3350 S George Washington Blvd, Wichita, KS	800-638-3101 or www.asf.org	No registration req'd! Qualifies toward FAA Wings Program. Chance to win NAV/COM in ASF drawing.
Mar 6	Tulsa Air and Space Museum Hollywood Stage Door Canteen	7130 East Apache Tulsa, OK	Katheryn Pennington- 918-834-9900 kpennington@tulsamuseum.com	Dinner, Auction, and Show
Mar 8-19	Registration for Spring II 2004 Term	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Oklahoma City	Russ Tresner - 405-739-0397 or oklahoma.city.center@erau.edu http://www.erau.edu/oklahomacity	Spring Term II, March 22-May 23, 2004. Call or email for more information on Bachelors & Masters degrees
Mar 11-13	Women in Aviation Conference	Reno, NV	386-226-7996 www.wai.org	
Mar 19	Tulsa Air and Space Museum Family Day	7130 East Apache Tulsa, OK	Katheryn Pennington- 918-834-9900 kpennington@tulsamuseum.com	Come see our new wind tunnel exhibit!
Mar 27 8:30AM-11:00AM	Wild Onion & Eggs Breakfast	Tenkiller Airpark (44M) Cookson, OK	Dianah Harrod- 918-457-5444 abuvclouds@aol.com	
Apr 13-19	EAA Sun 'n Fun Fly-In	Lakeland, FL	863-644-2431 www.sun-n-fun.org	
Apr 17-18	Oklahoma Airshow (Formerly Airshow Oklahoma)	Davis Field (MKO) Muskogee, OK	Mike Anderson- 918-682-4101 northmain@azalea.net	Headline act this year is USAF Thunderbirds! Their availability resulted in the April dates this year.
Apr 18-20	18th Annual Oklahoma Airport Conference	The Westin Downtown, Oklahoma City	Registration, Debra Coughlan, 918-838-5018 Exhibitor Info, Carl Cannizzaro 918-663-0870 Sponsorship, Bob Williams, 918-838-5014	Partnership of Oklahoma Airport Operators Association and Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission providing useful and up-to-date information to the aviation community.
Apr 30-May 1	5th Annual Small Aircraft Transportation Systems (SATS) Exposition	Thomas P. Stafford Airport Weatherford, OK	Joe Tilton- 580-486-3610 joe_tilton@hotmail.com	Come see the latest in NASA's program to prove a second tier air transportation system in the US.
May 15-16	EAA Southwest Regional Fly-In (SWRFI)	New Braunfels Airport (BAZ) New Braunfels, TX	Stan Shannon- shannons@kctc.com www.swrfi.org	We had in excess of 700 planes last year(our largest ever) and hope for even more in 2004.
May 15 1:30PM-3:00PM	Angel Flight Annual Barbeque	Hangar B-52 Jones Riverside Airport, Jenks, OK	Angel Flight- 918-749-8992	Free BBQ for Angel Flight pilots, volunteers, guests. Shuttle provided to hangar from FBOs.
May 17-28	Registration for Summer 2004 Term	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Oklahoma City	Russ Tresner - 405-739-0397 or oklahoma.city.center@erau.edu http://www.erau.edu/oklahomacity	Summer Term May 31-August 1, 2004. Call or email for more information on Bachelors & Masters degrees.
May 31	6th Annual Gage Fly-In	Gage Airport Gage, OK	Ron Cox 580-938-2469 or Clint- hanshu@pldi.net	Free pilot breakfast, rib lunch. Ultralights, warbirds, experimentals, RC models, hot air balloons, kids airplane rides. Come in Sunday night and camp out!

Sunglasses in Aviation: A Primer for Pilots

by **Ronald W. Montgomery & Van B. Nakagara, OD**

Sunglasses are as much a part of the pilot mystique as are the white scarf and leather jacket. More than just a symbol of the aviator, sunglasses play an important role in safeguarding a pilot's most important sensory asset—vision.

A good pair of sunglasses is essential in the cockpit environment to protect ocular tissues from harmful solar radiation, to minimize eye fatigue, and to help maintain good vision when flying into and out of clouds. Sunglasses can also protect a pilot's eyes from flying debris resulting from a bird strike or sudden decompression.

Radiation. In addition to visible light, the sun gives off invisible ultraviolet (UV) radiation that can damage skin and eyes when exposure is excessive or too intense. UV radiation is present in our environment in varying amounts, depending on factors such as the time of day, time of year, latitude, altitude, weather conditions, and the reflectivity of clouds, snow, or other surrounding surfaces.

UV is divided into three bandwidths: UVA (400-320 nm), UVB (320-290 nm), and UVC (less than 290 nm). Excessive or chronic exposure to UVA and, to a greater extent, UVB can cause sunburn, most skin cancers, and is implicated in the formation of cataracts, macular degeneration, and other eye maladies. The American Optometric Association recommends wearing sunglasses that incorporate 99-100% UVA and UVB protection.

Fortunately, UVC, the most harmful form of UV radiation, is absorbed by the atmosphere's ozone layer before it reaches the Earth's surface. Some scientists believe, however, that depletion of the ozone layer may allow more UV to pass through the atmosphere, making 100% UV protection a wise option when selecting eyewear.

Lens Materials. The three most common lens materials in use today are crown glass, CR-39® monomer plastic, and polycarbonate plastic. Glass lenses provide excellent optical properties and are more scratch-resistant, but are heavier and less impact resistant than plastic lenses. Glass

absorbs some UV light, and UV absorption can be improved by adding certain chemicals during the manufacturing process or by applying a special coating. Glass holds tints better over time but, for higher prescription lenses, the color may be less uniform, as parts of the lens will be thicker than others. Glass photochromic lenses (PhotoGray® or PhotoBrown®) automatically darken when exposed to UV and become lighter in dimmer light. Most of the darkening takes place in the first 60 seconds, while lightening may take several minutes. Although most photochromic glass lenses can get as dark as regular sunglasses (approximately 20% light transmittance in direct sunlight), their darkened state may be lighter due to the reduced UV exposure through an aircraft windshield. In addition, the lightened state may not be clear enough to be useful when flying in cloud cover or at night.

Plastic lenses possess excellent optical qualities, are lighter weight and more impact resistant than glass lenses, but they are more easily scratched, even with scratch-resistant coatings. Polycarbonate lenses are even lighter than CR-39® plastic and are the most impact-resistant lenses available. However, when a high refractive correction is required, polycarbonate lenses may have poorer optical quality than CR-39® plastic unless an anti-reflective coating is added. Polycarbonate lenses come from the manufacturer with a scratch-resistant coating that is much stronger than that applied to CR-39® plastic lenses and have built-in UV protection. (Note: CR-39® plastic lenses must have special coatings applied to protect the eyes from harmful UVA and UVB radiation.) CR-39® lenses can be tinted to any desired shade with little color variation, even for those requiring a great deal of refractive correction, but they do not hold their tint as well as glass. CR-39® plastic can be bleached and re-tinted if fading becomes excessive at some point. Since polycarbonate lenses do not accept dye as readily as CR-39® plastic, the interior anti-scratch coating absorbs most of the tint. CR-39® and polycarbonate photochromic lenses, like their glass counterparts, automatically

darken in bright sunlight and become lighter in dim light. There have been complaints that they do not darken as well as photochromic glass lenses in the enclosed cockpit environment or in warmer weather. Finally, high-index materials (i.e., index of refraction greater than 1.6) are available in both glass and plastic for those who require a large degree of refractive correction and desire lighter, thinner lenses.

Tints. The choice of tints for sunglasses is practically infinite. The three most common tints are gray, gray-green, and brown, any of which would be an excellent choice for the aviator. Gray (neutral density filter) is recommended because it distorts color the least. Some pilots, however, report that gray-green and brown tints enhance vividness and minimize scattered (blue and violet) light, enhancing contrast in hazy conditions. Yellow, amber, and orange (i.e., "blue blocker") tints essentially eliminate all short-wavelength light and supposedly sharpen vision, although no scientific evidence supports this claim. In addition, these tints are known to distort colors considerably, making it difficult to distinguish between green and red lights (aviation signals, anti-collision, and navigation lights).

For flying, sunglass lenses should screen out 70-85% of visible light without appreciably distorting color. Tints that block more than 85% of visible light are not recommended for flying due to the possibility of reduced visual acuity, resulting in difficulty seeing instruments and written material inside the cockpit.

Polarized Lenses. Polarized lenses, which can block reflected glare from horizontal surfaces such as water or snow, are not recommended for the aviation environment. Polarization can interfere with viewing of instruments that incorporate anti-glare filters and can interfere with visibility through an aircraft windshield by enhancing striations in laminated materials. In addition, polarized lenses can mask the sparkle of lights that reflects off shiny surfaces such as another aircraft's wing or windshield, which can reduce the time a pilot has to react in a "see-and-avoid" traffic situation.

Frames. The selection of sunglass frames is probably more a matter of personal preference than lens material or tint. However, they must not interfere with communication headsets or protective breathing equipment. Frame styles that incorporate small lenses may not be practical, since they allow too much visible and UV radiation to pass around the edges of the frame.

Fit. Aviator's sunglasses should fit well, so that sudden head movements from turbulence or aerobatic maneuvers do not displace them. The use of a necklace chain or strap to secure the sunglasses to the pilot's head is recommended in case they become accidentally dislodged or must be removed briefly (i.e., to view objects in the cockpit, or when flying in and out of cloud cover) and subsequently replaced.

In summary, while adding to the mystique of an aviator, sunglasses protect a pilot's eyes from glare associated with bright sunlight and the harmful effects of exposure to solar radiation. Lenses for sunglasses that incorporate 100% UV protection are available in glass, plastic, and polycarbonate materials. Glass and plastic lenses have superior optical properties, while polycarbonate lenses are lighter and more impact resistant. The choice of tints for use in the aviation environment should be limited to those that optimize visual performance while minimizing color distortion, such as gray, gray-green, or brown, with 15-30% light transmittance. Polarized sunglasses are not recommended because of their possible interaction with displays or other materials in the cockpit environment. For an aviator, a pair of sunglasses is an important asset, whether or not refractive correction is required. Therefore, careful consideration should be used when selecting an appropriate pair of quality sunglasses for flying.

Editors Note: This article was excerpted from the Fall 2003 issue of the Federal Air Surgeon's Medical Bulletin, a publication of the FAA Civil Aerospace Medical Institute in Oklahoma City. Mr. Montgomery is a vision Research Specialist and Dr. Nakagawara is a Research Optometrist there.

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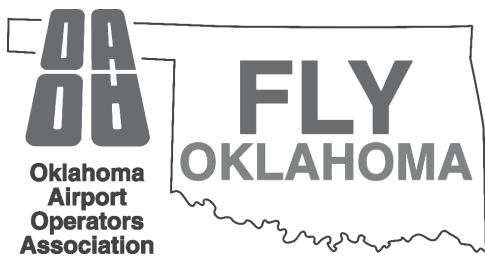
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OAOA LAUNCHES WEBSITE, SOLICITS SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL FEATURES

On January 20, OAOA launched a new website, which can be found on the web at www.okairports.com. In its current state of development, the site pro-

vides basic information on membership benefits, how to become a member, upcoming OAOA events, Oklahoma airports, and contact information.

Noteworthy is a list of aviation links of interest to airport operators, including links to the American Association of Airport Executives and to various FAA functions associated with the management of airports.

Other links are of interest to the aviation public in general. For instance, there is a link to the Aviation Digital Data Service (ADDS), which makes available to the aviation community text, digital

and graphical forecasts, analyses, and observations of aviation-related weather variables. ADDS is a joint effort of NCAR Research Applications Program (RAP), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Forecast Systems Laboratory (FSL), and the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) Aviation Weather Center (AWC).

ADDS makes access to National Weather Service aviation observations and forecasts easy by integrating this information in one location, and by providing visualization tools to assist the

application of this information for flight planning.

Other interesting links include online aviation databases, sites that allow realtime tracking of commercial flights and IFR general aviation flights, aviation weather sites, and various aviation organizations.

OAOA is seeking input from its members and others in the aviation community about additional features to include in the site. Some suggestions have included names and photos of present and past officers, airport job listings, and additional information about member airports. If you have suggestions for features, please contact Debra Coughlan - Executive Director, Tulsa International Airport, PO Box 581838, Tulsa, OK, 74158-1838, 918-838-5018, Fax: 918-838-5405. Or you can email Debra at: DebraCoughlan@ci.tulsa.ok.us.

MUSKOGEE DAVIS FIELD UP-GRADERS RUNWAYS AND PROVIDES SITES FOR PRIVATE HANGARS

Muskogee's Davis Field has completed a rehabilitation of Runway 4/22 and a similar rehabilitation of Runway 13/31 is planned for next summer.

In addition, the airport recently opened up an area for folks wanting to lease space to build private hangars. Currently, space has been provided for 10-12 private hangars. Six leases are already sold, two hangars have been completed, and two more hangars are under construction. Additional room exists on the east side for 10-12 more hangars. Lease rate are \$.13/sq.ft./year, tied to the Consumer Price Index.

Airport Manager Terry Randall said, "We had to do quite a bit of work to get the new hangar spaces ready to lease, including installing new sewer lines and electrical service, but it looks like they are going to fill up quickly."

FBO Mike Anderson said, "Right now, I'm having to turn down folks looking to base larger airplanes here because I don't have the hangar space. This new lease program will free up some of my hangars for those airplanes."

AOPA

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE AOPA WINGS Medical Department keeps members flying

"What a shame," murmurs Gary Crump as he hangs up the phone. "We could have saved that member a lot of unnecessary heartache." He smiles ruefully at the unintended pun.

The AOPA member in question had been treated a year earlier for coronary disease and now seemed trapped in a nightmarish paper chase as he sought to convince the FAA to restore his airman medical certificate. At his wit's end, he had called AOPA for advice.

"His bypass surgery is an automatically disqualifying condition," Gary explains. "The regulations require a six-month recovery and stabilization period. At the end of that period, the FAA has to see all the hospital records, plus a current cardiac evaluation and stress test." But the recertification had dragged on an additional five months so, as the FAA continually requested further information.

As director of AOPA's medical certification department, Gary understands something that most pilots don't: of the 450,000 medical applications processed by the FAA each year, a whopping 30 to 40 percent are initially deferred (that is, the medical certificate is not issued at the time of the examination), simply on the basis of a paperwork error by the applicant or the AME. And each new document submission and examination can add 8 to 12 weeks to the recertification process, sometimes leading to a 6- to 9-month delay.

It's not inefficiency on the FAA's part, though limited resources play a role. Incomplete or inaccurate paperwork notwithstanding, Gary attributes the backlog at the FAA Aerospace Medical Certification Division largely to its policy of individually reviewing each submission rather than rubber-stamping denials as is common in other countries.

"The FAA grants more than 12,000 special issuances a year for serious medical conditions that are routinely denied outside the United States," he explains. "The FAA policy is by far the most progressive of the ICAO members. Their enlightened attitude towards insulin-treated diabetes is one good example."

But just 30 to 40 document examiners and seven doctors must cope with 3,000 pieces of mail a day, and that doesn't count the applications themselves, which are all electronically transmitted from AMEs to the FAA.

"It's a formidable task," Gary sighs.

Clearly, reducing the error rate could go a long way towards getting pilots back in the air quicker. That's why Gary urges pilots to use **AOPA's online TurboMedical®** Interactive Medical Application Form.

This unique service leads the member through the application process, spotlighting potential problem areas and linking to additional online information sources. It also permits pilots to save or print the completed form, which will save time in the doctor's office as well as helping keep the information consistent from one examination to the next.

They should then contact AOPA to discuss any questions arising from the **TurboMedical®** exercise (email inforequest@aopa.org or call 1-800-USA-AOPA).

Gary and his medical certification technical specialists, Jeannette Snyder, Jo Ann Wilson, and assistant Linda Toms, respond to more than 20,000 telephone calls and emails each year. The team has more than 25 years' experience in advising pilots on medical certification issues and enjoys a close working relationship with FAA's medical certification division, which gives them quick access to the latest policies and procedures.

"There are few truly unique medical certification problems," Gary notes. "Believe me, we can often save a pilot a great deal of time and distress. But only if you call on us."

For more information on medical certification, visit www.aopa.org/members and click on the "Medical" button.



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