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# The Oklahoma Aviator

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## Hudec Waco Wins Big at Biplane Expo

by Mike Huffman

At the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Biplane Expo in Bartlesville this year, an unprecedented thing happened. John Hudec won three of the major awards for one airplane.

Hudec is a mild-mannered guy who lives at Airman Acres in Collinsville, Oklahoma with his wife Belinda and 12-year-old son Nick. He works as a Lead Mechanic for FlightSafety International in Tulsa, building portions of their simulator cockpits—"anything the pilots see or touch."

John recently finished a 9000-hour, twelve-year-long project to build a replica Waco UMF-5 biplane from scratch. The results are simply spectacular. As a result, the Biplane Expo judges presented John three major awards—the Grand Champion Replica Award, the Grand Champion Experimental Award, and the Robert P. Moore Memorial Award for Air Craftmanship.

John relates the story of how he got started with the project: "Dan Mooney, who now lives at Sky Haven Airpark in Collinsville, was building a UPF-7. I met him and he showed me his project.



**John Hudec's beautiful 1935 Waco UMF-5 replica. Photo courtesy of Pat Stewart.**

I liked the looks of all the 1930s Waco models, but really liked the UMF-5 because it had such nice streamlined fairings everywhere. It had such a sexy shape to it!"

Deciding he had to have a Waco, but feeling he could not afford a factory-built example, he decided to build his own. Plans for many of

### KEARBY SE-5 REPLICA ALSO WINS

John Hudec's Waco was by no means the only immaculate biplane at Bartlesville. Another spectacular machine is Jack Kearby's SE-5 replica, winner of the Reserve Grand Champion Replica award. Plan on seeing a story on it next month. See a photo of the SE-5 on page 2.

the Waco biplanes are on file at the National Air and Space Museum and, as public-domain documents, copies are available. John first borrowed Dan Mooney's UPF-7 plans, then later ordered UMF-5 plans from the Smithsonian.

By the way, for the uninitiated (like me), John explained the complicated numbering system for Waco models. The first digit specifies the engine; in this case "U" indicates a 220-hp Continental W-670 radial. The second digit identifies the fuselage style and the third digit the wing style. Says John, "From there, it is an alphabet soup of different designa-

tions to cover all the different models that were built."

John started building his UMF-5 replica on the day his son Nick was born. "That's how I know exactly when I started."

According to John, he spent "a couple of hours most evenings and all day most week-

ends" completing the project. "Belinda was really good about letting me work on it; of course, it helped that we live on an airpark where I could be nearby whenever she needed me," he says.

"One thing that kept me going through the project was that I didn't have a schedule. So, I wasn't stressing myself to get it done at any specific time. There are parts I built three times; if it took me a hundred hours to build a part somebody else could have built in twenty, I was fine.

"I enjoyed learning so many new things I'd never done as a normal A&P: woodworking, compound forming of aluminum, fabric work, sewing leather for the seats! I got a lot of help by watching Jim Younkin do metal forming. I learned to use an English wheel on the big items like the cowling, but I used a leather shot bag and hammer for most of the smaller parts."

"The decision to go with a homebuilt Waco turned out to be really good, because it let me make my own design improvements. For instance, I priced standard disc brake systems, but they were way beyond what I wanted to pay.

*continued on p. 3.*



**Note the hand-formed polished brass overlay and burl wood.**



**John Hudec, mild-mannered air craftsman. Photo: Pat Stewart.**



# The Horizontal Windsock

by Mike Huffman



## Changes Afoot

For those who may be interested, here's an update on changes with Barbara and me and also with *The Oklahoma Aviator*. Barbara has now moved to Kansas City to begin her ministerial training and I will be joining her soon. In all likelihood, next month's issue will be my last as publisher. However, I plan to still be involved as a subscriber, a supporter, and perhaps even a contributor.

Meanwhile, Earl Downs and I collaborated on the June and July issues so he can get his feet wet on all that is required. I must say I've tremendously enjoyed getting to know Earl better through this process and have become fast friends with him and his lovely wife Mimi Stauffer. For a week in May, Earl visited me at the Tenkiller Airpark as we produced the June issue and now, in June, I am visiting him at his home near Cushing (affectionately dubbed "Stauffer Downs" and the home of Earl's ultralight airstrip, "Horse Apple International.")

Earl and I have discovered that we are on the same wavelength when it comes to *The Oklahoma Aviator*. We're having great fun-- he even has the same wierd sense of humor as me. So, I believe that, if you have enjoyed the pa-

per as it has been up to this point, you'll enjoy it even more when he takes over. He is bringing new ideas to the publication and is already making some good changes.

One of the changes I have wanted to make for some time is to improve our printing. I've not been particularly happy with the clarity and color rendition of photographs, the folding of the paper, and a couple of other aspects of the printing process. Late last year, I had located a new printer in Oklahoma City, but knowing we might be leaving, I did not make the change.

However, now that things have settled, we have made the switch and you will notice some changes. First, we were able to go from 6 color pages to 8 color pages. As a result, we had to rearrange the pages somewhat. The Calendar of Events page and the classified ad page have moved from where you are used to seeing them. Hopefully, you'll also see improvements in the appearance of the pages.

On another subject, I want to be sure and point out the photo and story on page 7 concerning Dale Frakes and the Will Rogers Museum in Claremore. I had known Dale for many years, but only on a casual basis. A few months ago, Kim Jones, Curator of the Tulsa Air and Space Museum, introduced me to him. Dale (being the curmudgeon that he is) opened the conversation by saying, "You're the guy whose picture is always on the front page of *The Oklahoma Aviator*."

Taken only slightly aback, I stammered something to the effect that it was my blankety-blank newspaper and I would be on the front page if I wanted! As luck would have it, it was exactly the right thing to say. Dale laughed, Kim laughed, and we had a great time.

So, Dale, I wanted to make sure

that, before I leave the newspaper, I print a picture of you. Yes, yes, I know, it's not on the front page, but this is as good as it gets!

Seriously, the annual Will Rogers Fly-In is a nice event and I encourage everyone to attend. Dale and the folks at the museum work hard to organize it. This year, the anniversary of Rogers' and Post's crash falls on a Sunday, so there is no excuse to miss it.

One more subject I want to mention: as Earl and I were laying out this issue, we watched in awe as news coverage unfolded of Scaled Composites' history-making flight of SpaceShipOne to an altitude of 100-km (that's 328,000 ft!). We wrestled with whether to do a story on the event, but decided we could not do justice to it.

Much has been written and said in praise of the phenomenal successes Burt Rutan and his team have had over the last 30 years, and we echo all that. However, what I want to mention here is not about Burt, but a member of his team that is now in the world spotlight: Mike Melvill. Mike's description on national television of the June 21 flight to space was quietly eloquent and very touching.

Mike started out about 30 years ago as an aircraft homebuilder. His first homebuilt airplane, to my knowledge, was Rutan's first design, the all-wood Vari-Viggen. A good friend of mine, Ken Winter from Tulsa, also built a Vari-Viggen. As homebuilders are wont to do, Ken and Mike corresponded frequently during their respective building processes. Mike was "just another homebuilder."

Shortly thereafter, Mike went to work for Burt and has been there ever since. While he is not as well known as Burt, he has enjoyed a phenomenal career as a test pilot and now as a vice-president of Scaled Composites. Over

the last 20 years, Mike has flown almost all the amazing proliferation of aircraft that have emerged from the Scaled skunk works. During that time, he also managed to build an EZ and fly it around the world.

As an aircraft homebuilder myself who has long been in love with the wonderful creative process of designing, building, and flying one's own airplane, it is especially gratifying to see "one of our own" be so successful as to become the pilot of the first civilian aircraft to go into space. As Burt and Mike said in their television interviews, this is just the start-- the next 25 years will be unbelievable!

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**Jack Kearby's spectacular SE-5 replica, complete with Hispano-Suiza engine. Look for our story on the building of this airplane in our August issue.**



**With SpaceShipOne as a backdrop, Mike Melvill, right, describes his flight to space, as a smiling Burt Rutan, left, looks on. Photo: Scaled Composites, LLC.**



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## Hudec Waco

*continued from p. 1.*

So, using standard brake calipers as a starting point, I machined my own brake discs and had them hard chrome plated. A local brake shop custom made the brake pucks and didn't even charge me!"

The engine John acquired for the project was a brand-new 1943 240-hp Continental W-670. The logs showed it had a total of 6 minutes running time when it was pickled and packed in cosmolene. However, over the intervening 50+ years, the cosmolene had become completely

hardened everywhere, including inside the engine innards. John carefully took the entire engine apart, carefully cleaned the parts, and was delighted to find them in perfect condition.


John is proud to have kept the airplane light—1840 lbs empty. According to him, most UPF-7s come in at about 2000 lbs and the YMF-5s (with a 275-hp Jacobs engine) at about 2100 lbs. There are no interior upholstery panels; however, the interior appearance is immaculate with leather seats, leather coaming, polished burl wood instrument panels, and polished hand-formed brass instrument panel overlays. In addition, all aluminum panels were treated with a mil-spec Alodine conversion coating, whose gold color enhances the appearance even more.

John chose to cover the airplane using the Polyfiber process, finishing

it off with Aerothane paint. His wife Belinda chose the paint colors—Sun Valley Ivory and Madrid Rd outlined with gold stripes. The design is standard Waco, with "fishhook stripes" on the fuselage and "tadpoles" on the bump cowling.

Asked about what portion of the project he is most proud of, he laughs, "I guess just persevering long enough to finish it—in my lifetime!" Now that the project is complete, what does John plan next? "Well," he says, "I really enjoy the process of building airplanes. I'm probably more of a builder than a flyer. However, the Waco flies so great, it's definitely a keeper."

His next project will be to restore his 1950 150-hp original Piper Pacer, which he has owned since 1987. Good luck, John—we know the result will be as spectacular. We'll look in on you over the next dozen years or so!



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# Calendar of Events

For a free listing of your event, email us at [oklahomaaviator@earthlink.net](mailto: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: <a href="http://www.eaa323.org">www.eaa323.org</a>
3rd Saturday	Fly-In Breakfast	Alva Regional Airport	Greg Northern- 580-327-2898 alvaair@sbcglobal.net	
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	The South Regional Library, 8316 East 93rd Street, Tulsa, OK	Charles Harris- 918-622-8400	
Jul	Tulsa Air and Space Museum Aerospace Camp for Kids	7130 E. Apache Tulsa, OK	Katheryn Pennington- 918-834-9900 kpennington@tulsamuseum.com	Exact dates to be announced later.
Jul 4	Tinker AFB General Aviation Fly-In	Tinker AFB Oklahoma City, OK	Debby Toland- 405-732-8316 Dtoland@cox.net	There are slots for only 20 GA airplanes. Contact Debby Toland early for a reservation.
Jul 5-11	EAA Air Academy Basic Air Academy	EAA Aviation Center Oshkosh, WI	<a href="http://www.eaa.org">www.eaa.org</a>	
Jul 10	Fly-In Pancake Breakfast and FAA PACE Program	Rogers Municipal Airport (ROG) Rogers, AR	Don Williams- 479-640-1338 dswilliams@cox-internet.com	Rain date July 17. Reservations needed for PACE program.
Jul 10	Gundy's Airport Ice Cream Social	Gundy's Airport (038) Owasso, OK	Roger Wieden- 918-272-1523	Dig out those ice cream freezer or bring ice or a dessert. Invite your friends & family-- for all ages.
Jul 10	"Celebration of Wings and Wheels"- Air & Military Museum of the Ozarks	Old Downtown Airport, 2546 E. Division St., Springfield, MO 65803	Harry Carr- (417) 864-7997 Ray Hopper- (417) 736-2722- hopperhomes@juno.com	Aircraft fly-in, antique autos, trucks, military equipment, Young Eagles rides, food, and fun! Adults \$3, kids \$1.
Jul 12-18	EAA Air Academy Basic Air Academy	EAA Aviation Center Oshkosh, WI	<a href="http://www.eaa.org">www.eaa.org</a>	
Jul 19 - 23	"A View from STARBASE" Teacher Training	STARBASE Headquarters Tulsa Air National Guard Base	Sue Burgess- 918-833-7757, susan.burgess@oktuls.ang.af.mi	Two-hour grad course in Aerospace Ed, preparing teachers to teach Aerospace Science/Math in their class.
Jul 20-29	EAA Air Academy Advanced Air Academy	EAA Aviation Center Oshkosh, WI	<a href="http://www.eaa.org">www.eaa.org</a>	
Jul 26-Aug 6	Registration for Fall 2004 Term	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Oklahoma City	Russ Tresner - 405-739-0397 or oklahoma.city.center@erau.edu <a href="http://www.erau.edu/oklahomacity">http://www.erau.edu/oklahomacity</a>	Fall Term August 9-October 10, 2004. Call or email for more information on Bachelors & Masters degrees.
Jul 27-Aug 2	EAA AirVenture 2004	Wittman Field Oshkosh, WI	<a href="http://www.eaa.org">www.eaa.org</a>	
Jul 31-Aug 9	EAA Air Academy Advanced Air Academy	EAA Aviation Center Oshkosh, WI	<a href="http://www.eaa.org">www.eaa.org</a>	
Aug 14	Gundy's Airport Ice Cream Social	Gundy's Airport (038) Owasso, OK	Roger Wieden- 918-272-1523	Dig out those ice cream freezer or bring ice or a dessert. Invite your friends & family for all ages.
Aug 15 9:00AM	Annual Will Rogers Memorial Fly-In	Iron Dog Ranch Airport Oologah, OK	Pat Reeder- 343-8129 or 341-0719	Marks anniversary of Will Rogers and Wiley Post's deaths. Grass strip beside Will Rogers birthplace home.
Aug 20-21	26th Annual Okie Derby Proficiency Air Race	Wiley Post Airport Bethany, OK	Amy McCue, Registration Chairman 405-359-9774, AmyMcCue@fullnet.net	<a href="http://hometown.aol.com/okiederby/myhomepage/business.html">http://hometown.aol.com/okiederby/myhomepage/business.html</a>
Sep 11	Gundy's Airport Ice Cream Social	Gundy's Airport (038) Owasso, OK	Roger Wieden- 918-272-1523	Dig out those ice cream freezer or bring ice or a dessert. Invite your friends & family for all ages.



# Up With Downs

by Earl Downs



## The Instrument Rating

I often get questions from pilots about the instrument rating. How much training will it take—how much will it cost—is it as hard to obtain as everyone tell me? These are good questions but the first thing you should do is answer this question: why do I want this rating? Don't make the assumption that an instrument rating is automatically the right move for you. It may be the perfect thing to do or it may be more than you will ever use.

As I travel around the country teaching courses for passing the instrument knowledge examination (written exam), I often ask the trainees why they are seeking the Instrument rating. The answers usually fall into three categories. A common answer is that it's a good thing to have in your pocket just in case you need it. Next is, it's just another important step to a career in aviation. The third reason is that the individual wants to increase the productivity of their airplane for personal or business flying.

There are different ways to obtain training for your Instrument rating and the reason you want the rating may affect the training method you choose. Should you enroll in a highly regimented FAR part 141 school? Perhaps a full-time or part-time instructor at your local airport could do the job. Then there are the accelerated courses. Some accelerated training professionals come to your location and provide intense training in your own airplane. Others require that you travel to their location. Which the best? It depends on why you want the rating.

Let's start off with the "to have it in my pocket" answer. Whenever I hear that, I am pretty sure the individual doesn't fully comprehend the significance of what instrument flying and the instrument rating are all about. An instrument rating doesn't work like a parachute. In order to fly IFR, a commitment to continued study, practice, and on-going training (not to mention considerable extra expense) is a necessity. However, someone who has recognized the fact that instrument training can improve their skills even though they

don't intend to fly IFR is on to something. Having a good knowledge of the IFR system can make your VFR flying safer and more enjoyable.

Okay, you're a VFR pilot and you realize the "to have it in your pocket" idea is not realistic, but you still want to improve your skills by working towards an Instrument rating. A regimented training academy or accelerated training program may be too intense and/or too expensive to suit your ultimate goal of increased knowledge. You may find that a local flight instructor can customize a training program to fit your needs. For instance, start off with a few hours of one-on-one ground training. Then you can take the flight training in phases. A few hours of really learning how to fly your plane on the gauges will sharpen skills that can be used everyday in your VFR flying. Terminal procedures, enroute procedures, and instrument approaches can all be divided into training blocks. These blocks can be connected if you decide to go for the rating. Even if you decide not to use it, you will find the journey towards the target well worth it.

For those of you going for the Instrument rating in the interest of an aviation career, there are a number of schools that have "from the ground up" professional pilot programs. Many outstanding collegiate programs are also available. Becoming a professional pilot requires a professional approach to training. Make sure the school or instructor is well aware of your goals. Ask your instructor to assign you a study program that will help you to exceed the minimum FAA standards. Talk with a professional who is successful in the field you are headed for. Remember, as you move towards being aviation professional, your knowledge of IFR procedures and your instrument pilot skills will play a very important roll in any review of your abilities.

An instrument rating can help you increase the productivity of your plane. Our light planes are certainly not all-weather planes, but your IFR capabilities can help in many weather conditions that would ground a VFR pilot. Low visibility or clouds can stymie a VFR pilot for days, but the IFR pilot and plane can continue. On the other hand, thunderstorms, prolonged enroute IFR, and icing are not things a small plane IFR pilot should be flying in. The usefulness and safety of light plane IFR flying is truly a matter of good pilot decision-making. Your experience and your airplane equipment will always determine the increased usefulness of your plane.

You can take a weekend ground school course and pass the knowledge exam at the end of the second day. Add a 10- to 12-day accelerated flight program and it's certainly possible to have

# Ask the Doctor

by Dr. Guy Baldwin, AME



## Antidepressants

Recently in the online aviation newsletter *AV Web*, an article appeared written by an aeromedical examiner (AME) friend of mine from EAA, Dr. Brent Ballew. He is an emergency room physician in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. In the article, he talks about a proposal for the FAA to consider allowing airmen to take certain kinds of antidepressants. We have talked about this before in *The Oklahoma Aviator*.

Commonly used antidepressants fall into two general categories, the older tricyclic antidepressants such as Elavil, Tofranil, and Wellbutrin, and the newer selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) such as Prozac, Zoloft, Celexa, Lexapro, and others.

Tricyclic antidepressants have been largely replaced by the SSRIs, but are still used for some conditions.

I believe SSRIs to be one of the finest classes of medicines that have been developed since I have been practicing medicine. As a result, they are in widespread use to treat both temporary episodes of depression (caused the loss of a loved one, or anxiety from a job situation or family situation, etc.) and chronic depression.

The FAA's current stand is that pilots may not use antidepressants of any kind. However, in my office I see a lot of airmen who are already on SSRIs.

your Instrument rating in about two weeks. Is accelerated training a good idea? Both the airlines and the military use intense accelerated training programs and they work well. Of course, the accelerated program you choose is not airline or military and there are some things you should do to make this choice an efficient and safe way to go. When you schedule an accelerated program, remember that pre-course preparation and post-course follow-up are all up to you. If you enter into an accelerated training program with no preparation, you may find it to be less than you expected. If you think you are a fully capable IFR pilot just because you have passed the FAA exams, you may be dangerous. Use a local instructor to help prepare you for the accelerated course and, even

Many of them were prescribed SSRIs by their family doctors and are unaware of the effect on their FAA medical certificate. That presents a problem because, even if they were taking SSRIs for a temporary condition, the FAA says they have to be off the medication at least 90 days and must have a letter from their doctor saying they are experiencing no adverse effects on their state of mental well being.

Among pilots who need SSRIs for more chronic conditions and who generally know the effects on their medical, I have observed two attitudes. First are those who have stopped taking the medication and as a result feel miserable. Second are those who keep taking the medication and do not report it. Both are big mistakes. First, if a pilot needs antidepressants, the condition itself can prevent the issuance of a medical certificate. And second, if the FAA finds that you are taking medicines you did not report on the 8500-8, which is a federal document, repercussions will surely occur. Of course, if I have knowledge that an airman is chronically depressed and/or is continuing to take SSRIs, I cannot issue a medical certificate.

The good news is that this situation may be about to change. Each year at Oshkosh, myself and other AMEs who are part of the EAA's Aeromedical Council meet with FAA representatives in very candid sessions about things that either are about to change or need to change with FAA's issuance of airman medical certificates. The topic of SSRI use has been coming up for the last few years. Up until last year, the FAA's answer was always "no." However, last year it was "maybe—we are looking at it." So I am anticipating that this will change after a test run is done on some select airmen. We'll keep you advised on the outcome.

If you have any questions regarding this article, do not hesitate to contact my office at 918-437-7993.

more important, plan on some follow-up training and practice. Practice your new skills by filing IFR on your VFR flights. You may have obtained your instrument rating without ever being in actual instrument weather. When safe instrument weather shows up, make some practice flights with an instructor. A safe pilot should want to make sure the accelerated training took hold.

Does the Instrument rating make you a safer pilot? It all depends on you. Increased knowledge can always be beneficial if it's used correctly. It's your attitude and aeronautical decision-making ability that makes the difference. If you're committed to acting like a professional and want more productivity from your flying, the Instrument rating is for you.



# Oklahoma Aviator Brings U.S. Servicemen Together

Two Oklahoma servicemen stationed in Afghanistan recently became friends there as the result of *The Oklahoma Aviator*. Colonel James Wilhite from Tahlequah and Major Todd Chisum from Tulsa were both assigned to the Office of Military Cooperation-

Afghanistan (OMC-A) in Kabul. Prior to their meeting, neither man knew the other.

Major Chisum is an *Oklahoma Aviator* subscriber whose wife sends his copies to him in Afghanistan. Colonel Wilhite, a private pilot and professor at

Northeastern State University, saw Major Chisum reading *The Oklahoma Aviator* and struck up conversation with him. It turned out that not only was Major Chisum also a private pilot, he was an alumnus of Northeastern State University.

Major Chisum started his flight training in McAlester with Les Cashmere and completed training at Riverside. A member of EAA Chapter 10, he flies out of Roadhouse Aviation at Riverside and is building an experimental PA-18 Super Cub. He hopes to complete his project after returning from Afghanistan. He has also purchased a lot at Avian Airpark, so he will be flying the Tulsa skies for a long time. He will begin his IFR training with Instructor Mark Segovia upon his return.

Colonel Wilhite trained in Tahlequah with Tom Tucker and received his pilot certificate in July 2002. He is a partner in a Cessna 150 that has been restored and hangered at Tahlequah Regional Airport. Upon his return from Afghanistan, he will start instrument training and hopes to purchase another airplane. He said he would rather not be in IFR conditions in a C150.

Major Chisum is a Force Structure Officer, which involves designing military units for the Afghan National Army

(ANA). Colonel Wilhite initially was assigned as Chief of Design for the ANA, but has since been assigned to organize the Afghanistan Military Academy, which will be modeled from the United States Military Academy at West Point, NY.

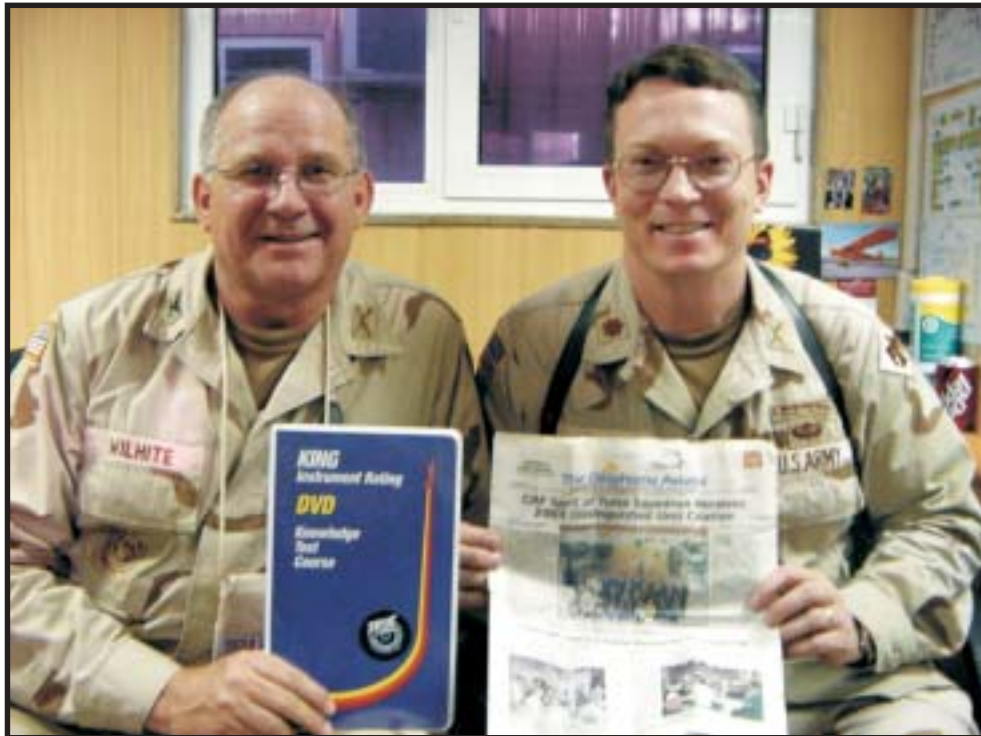
Colonel Wilhite had brought a King DVD course to Kabul to study in his spare time and has partnered with Major Chisum in working together for the Instrument knowledge exam. Major Chisum will return to Oklahoma in September of 2004 and Colonel Wilhite will return in June 2005.

## Fly In to the Cookson Jubilee

Here's an idea for a neat summertime fly-out: each year the booming metropolis of Cookson hosts the Cookson Jubilee, a two-day community affair featuring food, fun, arts and crafts, and entertainment.

This year's event will be held July 16 and 17 and will feature nationally-known entertainers including the Stamps Gospel Quartet, Pake McIntire (Reba's brother), and others.

Fly in and camp out at the Tenkiller Airpark, only a couple of hundred yards from the Jubilee grounds. Showers are available in the airport FBO building.



Colonel Jame Wilhite, left, shows his King Instrument Rating study guide and Maj. Todd Chisum holds a copy of *The Oklahoma Aviator*. Both men are assigned to the Office of Military Cooperation in Kabul, Afghanistan.

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# Will Rogers Museum Fly-In to Commemorate Rogers/Post

by Pat Reeder

CLAREMORE - Dale Frakes grew up watching pilots buzz the family dairy farm as they flew from Collier Field. He knew then being in the air would beat plowing, haying and milking. At 13, against his father's better judgment, he started learning to fly. At 15, he soloed. It has been many decades since the farm boy became a flyboy, but he still flies.

The octogenarian will land his Luscombe on the 2000-foot grass strip Sunday, August 15 at the Will Rogers Ranch Airport, northeast of Oologah. Frakes is chairman of the Will Rogers Fly-in at the ranch airport, which commemorates the August 15, 1935 crash in Alaska that claimed the lives of Will Rogers and Wiley Post. The flying public is invited to attend; about 50 pilots are expected, many of them retired aviation enthusiasts like Frakes. "Many pilots are just looking for an excuse to fly," the seasoned pilot said.

A special guest will be Pearl Carter Scott of Marlow, Wiley Post's first flight student. The fly-in officially starts at 9:00AM, but planes may arrive earlier, Frakes said. Food concessions will be available.

Frakes well remembers the day he pulled a newspaper out of the mailbox and saw big headlines announcing the death of Will Rogers and Wiley Post. "I ran to the house to tell my family," he said. Wiley Post's watch stopped at 11:30 AM Oklahoma time on August 15, 1935. But it would be the next day before word got back to the United States that Will Rogers and Wiley Post had died in a plane crash in the shallow Artic waters.

Frakes is proud to have landed on the original Will Rogers Airport in Claremore, which was later razed to create an industrial site. A commemorative sign from the old airport has been relocated to the ranch airstrip because of Frakes. He was walking across the grounds of the Claremore museum and by chance found it almost buried.

"I looked down and saw a shiny corner," he said, and pulled the marker, all but forgotten, out of the dirt.

In her book *Will Rogers*, author Betty Blake Rogers writes of Will's first flight in 1915. He was playing a vaudeville engagement in Atlantic City and Glen Curtiss was offering flights in a "flying boat" moored off the Boardwalk. Passengers were carried to the plane on the back of an attendant who waded through the water.

"Will watched day after day, but courage failed him," she wrote.

On the last day of his engagement he bought a \$5 ticket. When he landed, excitement was on his face. He had his picture taken in the airplane. It was the beginning of a love affair with airplanes and pilots. He never missed a chance to fly and his heroes were pilots like Post and Lindbergh.

Will Rogers never piloted a plane, but in 2003 he was inducted into *Aviation Week & Space Technology's* "Top 100 Stars of Aerospace" at a Paris, France celebration. From a field of 760 candidates, Rogers was in 46<sup>th</sup> place in a list led by Wilbur and Orville Wright.

For information on the museums or the fly-in, call 918-341-0719 or visit the website at [www.willrogers.com](http://www.willrogers.com).



Dale Frakes, Will Rogers Fly-In Chairman, with a sign from the original Will Rogers Airport he found accidentally on the grounds of Will Rogers Museum.

## Curtiss-Wright Hangar Gets New Doors



This is a picture of a happy man. Bob Kemper, organizer of efforts to relocate the Curtiss-Wright hangar from the original Wiley Post Airport in OKC to the current Wiley Post Airport in Bethany, is happy because doors from Tulsa International's Hangar 2, which is slated for demolition, have been acquired for the Curtiss-Wright Hangar. By a stroke of good luck, the doors are identical on both hangars.

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# Around the Patch

## by Earl Downs

Here we go! This is the column that exists only because of your participation. You have to help me fill it in with airport happenings and gossip (only good stuff). Examples; first solo flights, new people on the airport, new businesses on the field, did someone get their plane painted, an airport person got married or had a baby, a local pilot got a taildragger endorsement, the mens room has been repainted, news about airplane projects, etc. In other words, stuff that you talk about when drinking coffee with you local airport friends.

I'll start this off with a correction. In the last issue of the *Aviator* I told you about the good folks at Midwest Air Center on Stillwater airport. The problem is, my fingers got mixed up and I transposed some digits in their phone number (my

editor missed it—it's his fault). The correct number is 405-533-6258. Sorry guys!

### Flight Training

Nielson Aviation, located at Skiatook airport and owned by John and Tracy Nielsen, specializes in aircraft maintenance and taildragger instruction. John's shop works on airplanes of all sorts; however, he also specializes in warbirds such as the T-28 and AT-6. John's maintenance experience includes the restoration of an AT-11. The tailwheel training side of the operation is unique because of the planes John uses for training. One is a Taylorcraft L2-M and the other is a Taylorcraft BL-12. The L2 was used by the military in the early 1940s and is in a tandem configuration using control sticks. The BL-12 is side-by-side, control wheel airplane, produced just after the WWII. These classics have been

restored and are not only great trainer planes, they add the extra adventure of taking you back to the days when most planes had tailwheels. Both of these planes will qualify for sport pilot operation under the new proposed sport pilot regulation.

Oklahoma Aviation, a Cessna Pilot Center located on Wiley Post Airport announced the addition of Keith Udcoff to their instructing staff. Keith is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and brings more than 2,000 hours of flight and instructional experience with him. Keith hails from Dallas and he and his wife now reside in Edmond. You can contact Oklahoma Aviation at 405-787-4569.

### Aces High at Ponca City

Merle Helt and Steve McGuire attended the Sport Aviation Association Fly In held in Urbana, IL on June 11-12. Steve and Paul Poberezny, the founder of the EAA, presented a forum about the history and construction of the Corben Baby Ace, which was first designed in the 1920's by "Ace" Corben. Paul updated the design in the 1950's and wrote a series of construction articles in *Mechanix Illustrated* magazine. The article included plans to build

the single-seat, tube and fabric, open-cockpit airplane. Hundreds of Baby Aces have been built since then, many from the plans in *Mechanix Illustrated*. They continue to be built today. Plans and kits are available from Ace Aircraft in Toccoa, GA. Steve is scratch building a Baby Ace in his shop in Ponca City. After almost 4 years of construction, he is starting to cover the ship. Steve said, "Stop by or give me a call at 580-762-6986 if you are interested."

Jim Eck, also of Ponca City, found another way to get into the air in a Baby Ace. He purchased his plane about 3 years ago. It was originally built in 1964. When he bought it, it was pretty ratty (Jim's words), so he decided a restoration was sorely needed. Powered by a Continental A-75 engine, his Ace cruises at about 85 mph and flies a lot like a Cub. Jim says, "There is one exception though. The Ace has a lot of drag and the wingspan is only 26.5 feet, so when you pull the power back it comes down fast." Jim finished the restoration about a year ago. Last September, his Ace was selected as Best Homebuilt at the Tulsa Fly In held at Bartlesville.



"Scratch built" means that Steve McGuire has built every piece of his Baby Ace. No kit parts here! Steve learned how to weld and is doing the job one piece at time.



Taking a different approach from Steve McGuire, Jim Eck restored a previously-built Baby Ace. As you can see, it has left its "ratty" days far behind.

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## Peace of Mind A Case for Aircraft Renter's Insurance

The gloomy skies above Hometown Airport cleared and Fred was eager to fly. As he taxied between the neat rows of parked planes he focused on the vista ahead. It was a picture-perfect day . . . at least until a massive jolt reverberated through the aircraft accompanied by the deafening sound of aluminum in distress.

The ill-fated shock resulted when the wing of Fred's plane collided with a parked airplane's turning propeller. Fred, who until now thought that renters' insurance was for "the other guy," gazed in disbelief. But his troubles were only beginning. Lawsuits ensued, and creditors followed closely.

Industry experts point out that the worst of Fred's agonies could have been averted with proper aircraft renter's insurance. They also point out that there is no better time to buy than *now*, before an accident or incident takes place.

Many renters mistakenly believe that they are covered by their flight school's or FBO's policy. Don't count on it. Check the policy carefully because the fine print will tell you that, while these entities are covered themselves, their insurance company can easily sue you, the renter, for the entire claim amount -- or more!

Because aviation insurance is affordable and so easy to obtain, it's a wonder why more renter-pilots haven't considered it. An excellent place to start is the AOPA Insurance Agency (AOPAIA) --one of only two sources for this kind of coverage. Best of all, the AOPA insurance service is available to anyone, and AOPA members can receive bonus renewal discounts.

There are two aspects to aircraft renters' coverage: One portion covers bodily injury and property damage including someone else's property, people in either airplane or victims on the ground. The second portion is aircraft damage liability coverage strictly for the aircraft that you command. Premium rates vary depending on liability limits selected, so how do you decide? Highly trained AOPAIA insurance specialists can offer detailed guidance, not only for renter's coverage, but also aircraft owners insurance as well as CFI coverage -- essential because of increased risk exposure.

As the nation's largest light aircraft insurance agency, the AOPA Insurance Agency is committed to providing comprehensive and affordable coverage to all pilots. Detailed information is available through their toll-free number, 1-800-622-AOPA (2672), or online at [www.aopaia.com](http://www.aopaia.com).

Fred learned the hard way: An expensive accident can easily result from a minor lapse of attention or small distraction at a critical time. Why take the risk? **A renter's policy provides important peace of mind, protects precious assets and might be one of the wisest aviation investments that you can make.**



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### by Earl Downs

There we were, Mike Huffman and I sitting in our *Oklahoma Aviator* booth at Bartlesville Biplane Expo. Ah, the sound of round motors (engines, for you purists), the smell of oil oozing and burning as these flying art-forms from the past taxied by. This was aviation at its best—the good old days when just flying was the thrill, not how fast you got there. Yes, I said to myself, those were the good old days.

As I was becoming lost in a Walter Mitty daydream of flying the mail in the 1920s, a stranger approached us. He turned out to be Jeff Sandusky, Regional Sales Director for the Cirrus Design Corporation. He asked if we would like a demonstration flight in their new Cirrus SR22-G2 airplane. We looked out to the ramp and the sleek, gleaming SR22 parked there was beckoning. My viewpoint suddenly changed. I was hooked! My daydream of low and slow became replaced with the anticipation of taking the controls of this speed merchant. I responded to Jeff with a cool, "If you insist." After all, the biplanes would still be around when I returned.

Like most of you, I had seen pictures of the Cirrus and read several pilot reports. This flight was to be demo, not a complete test flight, but I hoped it would answer some questions I had about the overall capabilities of the plane. Over my years of flying oodles of different production planes and many types of homebuilts, I have come to the following conclusion; most production planes are swell for transportation, but lack what I call a "happy" flying quality. By that I mean, you don't get a smile on your face just because the plane handles so well.

On the other hand, flying

homebuilts often results in an ear-to-ear grin, but in some the grin starts to disappear when it comes to long distance flying or IFR operations. Most everybody is aware that the Cirrus has its roots in the sexy, high-end kitplane market. As such, one would expect crisp, responsive handling characteristics and high cruise speeds. That, combined with the side stick and state-of-the-art glass cockpit automatically results in a high "geewhiz" factor. But I wondered how well the technology would integrate.

The first thing you notice about the SR22 is that it completely breaks with the traditional high-performance singles of the past. The Continental 310 HP engine can be found on many planes, but the rest of the airplane sets new standards. All-composite construction, super modern instrument display and avionics, incredibly simplified engine operation, and fixed landing gear are just a few of the unique features of this high performance plane.

When it was my turn to fly, I entered the cockpit through one of the two spacious doors and found an environment both sophisticated and simple. The lack of clutter is stunning. Jeff briefed me for about fifteen minutes on the basic operation of the panel display and avionics. A comprehensive ground-training program would be required to completely grasp the full capabilities of this magnificent suite of electronic gear, but Jeff's briefing was more than enough for our demo flight.

Part of the reason for the "clean" cockpit is the flight control system. This airplane uses a side-stick controller for roll and pitch control. The side-stick, different from what I was used to, at first looked like it would be awkward to use. It turns out this was not the case.

## Northern Oklahoma Flight Academy Takes Off!

The 2004 (and first) session of the Northern Oklahoma Flight Academy (NOFA) got off the ground on June 7, 2004 in Ponca City for 45 youngsters interested in aviation. The Flight Academy for students grades 5-12 was held at the Ponca City Regional Airport and was sponsored by the Ponca City Aviation Booster Club and the Ponca City Regional Airport.

The mornings of Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday were devoted to aviation-related classroom activities and the afternoons were filled with hands-on activities to reinforce the concepts learned during the morning sessions—with emphasis on "fun" ways to learn. EAA Chapter 1046 also gave Young Eagle airplane rides to all of the students.

Thursday was a "show and tell" day, with visits by an Oklahoma

Highway Patrol helicopter and a "flying intensive care unit" Cessna Caravan ambulance plane owned by Cardiac Air Transport of Oklahoma City. Students also toured the Conoco/Phillips jet aircraft, observed weather radar, heard about and saw ultralight aircraft, and watched a model rocket demonstration.

Friday they traveled to Tulsa for a day at the Tulsa Air and Space Museum along with a tour of the Spartan College of Aeronautics A&P section.

Saturday they and their families were treated to a free breakfast at the Booster Clubhouse, followed by a graduation ceremony. The staff had fun and the students did, too. The club is evaluating the success of the program and at the first look, they believe the Flight Academy will be continued next year.



*NOFA student build Wright Flyer models as one of their many activities.*

By the time I had completed the takeoff and started a left turn out of the pattern, I was becoming comfortable with the side-stick. What I was not used to was the ease of engine operation—almost as easy as a jet. One lever operates both the throttle and the prop.

The visibility is spectacular; even in a climb, and to use the word "comfortable" does not do justice to the feel of the cockpit. Then I noticed it—I was smiling.

Dutch rolls were easy because of the aileron/rudder interconnect. The pitch and roll was crisp, but not "twitchy." Even while indicating 160 knots, the pitch control was smooth and holding altitude was a breeze. At 80 knots, it felt as solid and responsive as at cruise speed. Jeff asked me to connect the autopilot to demon-

strate its capabilities, and I did, but only for a few minutes because I wanted to feel this baby.

During the approach to land, I set up the ILS, using the same 110 knots I use in a Bonanza, to get a comparison of how the Cirrus handles. All concerns about having to work hard on the approach faded away. Somehow, Cirrus has combined the responsive "grin" factor with the stability that is a must for safe IFR operations.

While I did not perform a full technical test flight of the CR22, I learned enough to convince me that that Cirrus is more than just another new airplane design; it is a well-integrated "transportation system." Such new 21<sup>st</sup>-century designs will ultimately make traditional production airplane designs obsolete.





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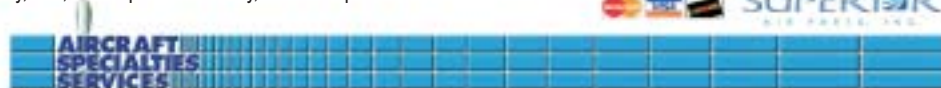


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