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2016**

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ASTRONAUT GENE CERNAN HIGHLIGHTS 2016 TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE

By Chris Sasser
Texas A&M Transportation Institute

The rainy weather did little to dampen the spirits of the 532 attendees of the 2016 Texas Aviation Conference, held March 9-11 at La Torretta Lake Resort and Spa in Montgomery. The conference is sponsored by the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Aviation Division and participants included airport sponsors, aviation professionals, governmental and economic development officials, enthusiasts and exhibitors.

The last man on the moon, Captain Gene Cernan, retired U.S. Naval aviator and retired NASA Astronaut (Gemini 9, Apollo 10 and Apollo 17), delivered the keynote address to a captivated audience. The session was moderated by TxDOT Aviation Advisory Committee Chairman Jim Schwertner, and featured stories of how Cernan fulfilled his dream to become a Naval Aviator, how he joined NASA, his role as an advisor in the ill-fated Apollo 13 mission, and going to space three times as Pilot of Gemini 9A in June 1966, as Lunar Module Pilot of Apollo 10 in May 1969, and as Commander of Apollo 17 in December 1972, the final Apollo lunar landing.



Captain Gene Cernan addresses the audience at the Texas Aviation Conference as moderator TxDOT Aviation Advisory Committee Chairman Jim Schwertner (right) listens.

continued on pg. 3

DAVE'S HANGAR



FAA FUNDING

Due to a lack of FAA discretionary funding over the past four years, many of you are experiencing delays in funding for your airport improvement projects. We are well aware of your concerns and ask for your patience as we attempt to fix this problem. This reduction in funding arose as a result of FAA's Non-Primary Entitlement Program (NPE). The NPE program has had significant benefits in allowing us to fund many needed hangars, fuel systems and other revenue producing projects that our airports badly needed. These

projects will help our airports work toward becoming financially self-sustaining, something we all want.

There is also a downside to the NPE Program. The banking of entitlement funds, which is authorized by law, resulted in TxDOT Aviation having a large bank balance of FAA funding. Due to our large bank balance, FAA placed a "moratorium" on discretionary funding, beginning in FY 2013 up to the present. As a result, we have experienced a loss of \$35M, so far, in anticipated grant funding which has had a substantial impact on our ability to fund your projects. We are working with the FAA Southwest Region and our Congressional delegation to find a solution to the funding problem. We appreciate your patience as we work through this.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION

Congress continues to work on reauthorization of FAA programs which expired September 30, 2015. As of the date of this column, near term FAA reauthorization does not look promising, due to several controversial issues. If that does prove to be the case, FAA programs will likely continue by means of a program extension, resulting in FAA grant funding being delayed, then issued to TxDOT Aviation in a piecemeal fashion. Hopefully, after the presidential election and the new Congress is seated next year, FAA reauthorization will move forward rapidly.



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THE 34TH ANNUAL TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE

Thanks to our host, Montgomery County, and all of you who participated, the recent conference was a big success. In spite of the "Monsoon" that was taking place as we traveled to Conroe, we still had great attendance with over 500 people registered. Thanks to all of you who attended. We will see you next year in San Marcos. ♦





TxDOT Aviation Division Director David Fulton and Director of Grant Management and Administration Kari Campbell present Conference Coordinator Becky Vick with flowers and a gift. Vick left TxDOT Aviation to accept another position closer to her home.

During his remarks, Cernan said that his story was one of “any kid with a dream from any town U.S.A.” When asked by Schwertner about his role in Apollo 13, Cernan explained, “if we had lost that flight, we would not have continued the Apollo program. But at the end of the day, we all came home alive. It was a complete team effort; everyone took personal responsibility. They gave us the best machine in the world to fly, and for that, we can all be very proud.”

Cernan was recently featured in the documentary, “The Last Man on the Moon.” When asked about the Apollo 17 mission, Cernan said “when you’re on the moon and you look back at the earth, it’s like being on God’s front porch. That’s what it’s like being on the moon.”

TxDOT Aviation Division Director David Fulton began the conference with an introduction of the Aviation Advisory Committee members, and then delivered his state of the Aviation Division Address.

“This is my 25th conference to attend,” said Fulton. “And at times I’m asked ‘why do you keep doing this’ and the answer is that it’s just so much fun getting to see and work with everyone year after year. We’ve all worked hard to make the Texas aviation system the best in the nation and I truly believe it is. Everyone has done a lot for the airport system, but there’s plenty more we can do.”

In his remarks, Fulton noted that the key to the future was to make the airports as attractive as possible to travelers, notably business aviation.

“If we support business aviation, everyone in general aviation benefits,” said Fulton.

In addition to presenting a conference overview, Fulton provided updates about the non-primary entitlement funding, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill and 3rd class medical, the FAA’s new registration rules for

unmanned aircraft systems, MET (meteorological) towers and the last Texas Legislature session.

Fulton also explained the division's new eGrants software and introduced new staff members and said goodbye to Becky Vick, who among many other roles served as the conference coordinator for the last decade.

Following Fulton's morning address was Jerry Hendrix, Executive Director of the Lone Star UAS Center of Excellence and Innovation located in Corpus Christi. Hendrix explained the mission of the center, the projects the center was actively engaged in and the future of UAS.

TxDOT Aviation Education and Information Program Coordinator Bill Gunn concluded the morning session with his always-popular presentation on airport compliance issues.

After lunch, conference goers had the choice of attending breakout sessions throughout the afternoon. Breakout sessions topics included:

- TxDOT Aviation Wildlife Hazard Assessment and Management Program
- an introduction to eGrants
- airport manager's roundtable
- pavement maintenance guidelines
- developing effective stakeholder relationships
- increasing activity on your airport, and
- RAMP and airport consultant sessions.

The day concluded with the Awards Banquet. A complete list of award winners is available at the end of this story.

The final morning began with a presentation from President and CEO of the National Association of State Aviation Officials, Greg Principato, who provided an update from Washington.

The conference concluded with comments on the TxDOT/FAA AIP Program and a listening session.

"Texas is a huge state, and many of our attendees travel a good distance to attend this conference," said Texas A&M Transportation Institute Research Scientist and co-conference organizer Jeff Borowiec. "We want to make sure we give them the most bang for their buck with a wide range of relevant topics presented from experts from around the state and country."

The conference presentations are available at <http://ti.tamu.edu/conferences/tac16/program.php>. Next year's conference will be held April 19-21, 2017, at the Embassy Suites in San Marcos, Texas. ♦

2016 AWARDS PRESENTATION

Aviation Art Contest Winners:

Category I (Ages 6–9)

1st Place: Adam Roth, White Rock Montessori, Dallas, TX

2nd Place: Corbin Gray, HJM Elementary, Port Lavaca, TX

3rd Place: Ava Smith, Garden Ridge Elementary, New Braunfels, TX

Honorable Mention: Doreen Luo, HJM Elementary, Port Lavaca, TX

Category II (Ages 10–13)

1st Place: Anika Busra, Kingwood Middle School, Kingwood, TX

2nd Place: Sreeniketan Sai Senapathi, Katy, TX

3rd Place: Alexis Puryear, Wheeler Elementary, Wheeler, TX

Honorable Mention: Avery Pulley, Burnett Junior High, Wylie, TX

Honorable Mention: Emily Eckert, Burnett Junior High, Wylie, TX

Category III (Ages 14–17)

1st Place: Gaby Arambula, JB Alexander HS, Laredo, TX

2nd Place: Mariana Garcia, Veterans Memorial HS, Brownsville, TX

3rd Place: Jason Chu, Burnett Junior High, Wylie, TX

Honorable Mention: Annie Kingston, Burnett Junior High, Wylie, TX

Honorable Mention: Rebecca Gonzalez, JB Alexander HS, Laredo, TX

Airport Awards:

General Aviation Airport Manager of the Year: Bruce McKenzie, Kerrville Municipal/Louis Schreiner Field

Most Improved Airport of the Year: Mid Valley Airport, Weslaco

General Aviation Airport of the Year: Cotulla-La Salle County Airport, Cotulla

Reliever Airport of the Year: Conroe-North Houston Regional Airport, Conroe

RAMP Coordinator of the Year: Tony Loya, El Paso District

Award for 20 Years of Continuous Participation in the Routine Airport Maintenance Program: Big Spring McMahan-Wrinkle Airport, Big Spring

GRANTS RECEIVED

Sugar Land Regional Airport	\$3,269,020	Construct center section Taxiway F
Dallas Executive Airport	\$6,226,140	Construction services to: reconstruct Runway 13-31 and runway shoulders; rehabilitate concrete at runway end; regrade runway safety area; improve drainage along runway; reconstruct Taxiway B-2; demolish Taxiway B-1 and B-3 pavement west of Runway 13 near end; and runway shoulder compression joint sealant
Plainview/Hale county Airport	\$4,407,168	Rehabilitate and mark Runway 4-22 and Runway 13-31; rehabilitate and mark Taxiways A, B, C, D, E, and F; rehabilitate east side apron; replace medium intensity runway lights at Runway 4-22 and 13-31
Eastland Municipal Airport	\$140,000	Install automated weather observing system
Mid Valley Municipal Airport	\$2,806,900	Extend and mark Runway 13-31; extend parallel taxiway; extend medium intensity runway lights Runway 13; relocate precision approach path indicators -4 Runway 13; relocate lead in lighting system Runway 13; install fence; relocate utilities; and improve drainage
South Texas International Airport at Edinburg	\$2,393,600	Construct/expand hangar taxi lane and north apron; fill grass islands with pavement and install new tie-downs and install emergency generator for terminal and lighting
Karnes County Airport	\$2,308,797	Reconstruct south apron hangar area; construct connector and partial parallel taxiways; reconfigure and expand apron near FBO office; construct fuel containment delivery road; construct auto parking lots and access road; demolish obsolete pavement; install wildlife fencing; and survey and clear threshold sighting surface penetrations in easements Runway 16-34
Karnes County Airport	\$667,548	Design and construction services to install fuel farm 100LL/Jet A

MEET AOPA'S NEW TEXAS AMBASSADOR

By Pat Brown
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association

Aviation is a fun industry and it's a great way to make a living. But, it's not without its challenges! Economic conditions and a myriad of other factors can keep recreational and weekend pilots away from the airport. If you are an airport manager, you know this only too well because it means reduced activity at **your** airport.

As you are also, no doubt, aware, the pilot population in the United States is in decline and has been for a long time. Over the past few years, AOPA has created a number of programs to reverse that trend. One of them is **You Can Fly!** That's where the Texas Ambassador comes in...and I have the pleasure of being the "face" of this effort here in the Lone Star State. So, what can I do to help you bring more activity to your airport? Here are a few suggestions.

FLYING CLUBS

Flying clubs make flying more affordable. Period. Flying clubs are not difficult to set up but there are decisions to make and details to handle. Flying clubs provide a social atmosphere

that fosters more flying and gets even non-flying family members involved. In addition, students who learn through a club setting are far more likely to complete flight training. AOPA has tremendous resources designed to help start, or grow a flying club, and I am here to help the process. An active flying club will bring additional activity to your airport both in terms of operations and in fuel sales! I have a fun presentation called Maximum Fun/Minimum Cost designed to answer many of the questions that potential club organizers have. If you want me to bring that presentation to your airport, just let me know!

Check out this link: <https://www.aopa.org/community/flying-clubs>

RUSTY PILOT

There are thousands of certificated pilots out there who, for one reason or another, haven't flown for years! That's what the Rusty Pilot program is for. Our **FREE** three-hour seminar will bring them up to date on what's changed since they last flew, provide a review of all the stuff they used to know and, at the end, they will receive a logbook endorsement satisfying ground school portion of the flight review requirement. This



AOPA Ambassador Pat Brown.

is an excellent way to introduce potential new customers to your airport. If you want to host a Rusty Pilot Seminar at your airport, just let me know. And, let me repeat...it's **FREE**.

For more details, check out this link:

<http://www.aopa.org/training-and-safety/lapsed-pilots/rusty-pilots>

FLIGHT SCHOOLS

Just as with any other business, flight schools face challenges every day. If there is a flight school on your field and it's having some issues—or just wants opportunities to grow its customer base. Call me and let's talk about the resources and tools we can offer. As an example, we can bring a Rusty Pilot Seminar to the school. Those attendees are potential new customers!! We can also get the school engaged in our Flight Training Excellence Awards, connect them with other successful schools, and help them with ideas for promoting their school.

Why not start by checking out our research on the flight training experience:

<https://www.aopa.org/training-and-safety/flight-schools/flight-training-initiative>

So, there you have it. As your AOPA Ambassador, I am here to help grow aviation in the State of Texas. Please feel free to contact me directly at pat.brown@aopa.org. Let's get flying! ♦

ABOUT PAT BROWN

Pat has been flying since age 16. As an active Gold Seal CFII-MEI-Glider-CSIP flight instructor, he has over 5000 hours of instruction given. He is an approved Check Pilot for the Piper PA46 (Matrix/Malibu) platform as well as a factory-trained Cirrus Standardized Instructor Pilot. Pat is the former Chief Tow Pilot for the Greater Houston Soaring Association with over 2400 tows under his belt. He contributed a sidebar on radio communications to Rod Machado's Sport Pilot Handbook, and participated in re-writing/updating the National Association Of Flight Instructors' CFI Guide To Light Sport and Light Sport Aircraft. He is the co-developer of AOPA's Rusty Pilot seminar, travels the country speaking to pilot groups as a Safety Seminar Presenter for the Air Safety Institute, and conducts Flight Instructor Refresher Clinics nationwide. In 2013, Pat was named by the FAA as both the Houston FSDO and Southwest Region Flight Instructor Of The Year.

RUNWAY CAFE SERVES UP A MEAL WORTH FLYING (AND DRIVING) FOR!

Chris Sasser
Texas A&M Transportation Institute

Amongst the aviation community, the term "\$100 hamburger" refers to the cost of flying your plane to the airport to eat. But how about "\$100 shrimp and catfish?" Before the traditionalists scoff, they would best be advised to visit the Runway Cafe located at the Texas Gulf Coast Regional Airport (KLBX) in Angleton, TX.

I ate lunch there in February with airport manager Jeff Bilyeu while on an airport visit.

"What a treat it is having this restaurant at the airport," said Bilyeu. "Flying clubs visit, families from around the area, business lunches from local community leaders...it's just a great asset."

Despite being busy, we were waited on and received our food quickly. I ordered the fried shrimp off the lunch menu along with fries and cole slaw. When prepared properly,

there's nothing like great fried shrimp and this place nailed it. Jeff had the catfish which looked equally as good, as did everything else I saw being efficiently hustled around to the other tables.

The restaurant features an outside patio that faces the airport's runway, which makes a fun time for the kids to see the different types of planes that visit the airport.

According to their website (www.runwaycafeangleton.com), the restaurant's mission is simple: serve delicious, affordable food that guests will want to return to week after week. Mission accomplished!

Visit their Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/Runway-Cafe-617848335017453/>.

LOCATION

7915 Airport Rd
Angleton, TX 77515
979-849-5160

HOURS

Monday - Sunday
11 a.m. - 8 p.m. ♦

TEXAS WELL REPRESENTED IN WOMEN OF AVIATION WORLDWIDE WEEK AWARDS

The Women of Aviation Worldwide Week was held on March 6-12 and the state of Texas can proudly boast three winners that helped to foster aviation awareness and help grow the number of women pilots.

Texas had two winners in the 2016 Most Dedicated Female Pilot Worldwide division, which is awarded to the registered female pilot who conducts the most reported flights (girls reporting divided by number of passenger seats) during the week. Dianna Stanger from Port Lavaca was the overall winner flying 574 girls during the week and Yasmina Platt from Houston was the first finalist.

The South Texas International Airport at Edinburg won the 2016 Most Female-Pilot-Friendly Airport Worldwide Award. This award was presented to the airport hosting one or more official activities that generate the most valid female first flight reports for the week, March 7-13, 2016.

The highly-successful Fly It Forward Challenge took place at the South Texas International Airport. The volunteer-based event was hosted by the airport and Calhoun Air Center, and was an opportunity to foster aviation awareness and help grow the number of women pilots.

The challenge invited pilots to introduce girls of all ages to flying with the goal of addressing the flight introduction gender gap and fostering gender balance in the industry. In addition to free rides, participants learned about the history of women in aviation, received information regarding necessary training and special scholarship opportunities.

The aim of Women of Aviation Worldwide Week is to help women feel welcome, valued and qualified to pursue aerospace based goals; to prepare female students through quality Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) curriculum and to expose girls to positive female role models.

"The WOAW initiative is one that I truly believe in and, after giving someone their first flight, it is one that each new passenger believes in," said Calhoun Air Center Director Dianna Stanger. "Each year Calhoun Air Center tries to target a different location in order to make sure that those kids that are in different areas are able to experience the thrill I get each time I fly. It is one of the most remarkable weeks in terms of the volunteer time, flights given and lives touched." ♦



Dianna Stanger and Vanessa Molina prepare for a ride during the Fly It Forward Challenge at the South Texas International Airport.

ENGINEERING HOT TOPICS

By Harry Lorton, P.E.
TxDOT Aviation Division Engineering Director

An issue has come up recently concerning PAPI siting and commissioning. Recently several PAPI installations have failed commissioning during the flight inspection verification. The reason for the failure was the result of objects (obstructions) being seen between the flight check aircraft and PAPI unit. It seems this issue is becoming more apparent as more and more airport PAPI's are required to be commissioned by flight check.

When this situation occurs during commissioning, the problem is resolved by the use of internal PAPI baffles to reduce the visible portion of the PAPI light beam to block out the obstruction. This is best described by FAA AC 150/5340-30H, Chap 7, Section 7.7, f, 7, c:

Flight check personnel will evaluate the PAPI obstacle clearance within the lateral limits of the "visible" light beam. This evaluation may exceed the standard OCS in paragraph 7.5.d(4) and Figure 80. If a larger OCS is not planned for, baffles will be required to set the limits of the OCS to 10 degrees either side of runway centerline (20 degrees total) to restrict excess horizontal light beam distribution. See AC 150/5345-28 for additional information about PAPI horizontal beam width. It is vital that personnel designing and installing the PAPI, including the project engineer, be thoroughly familiar with the requirements in FAA Order 8200.1, United States Standard Flight Inspection Manual.

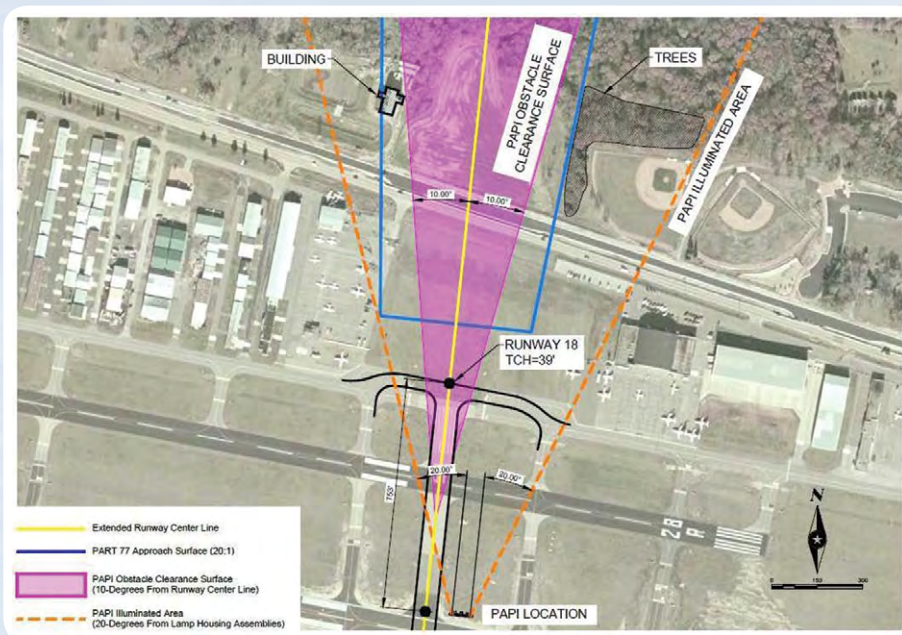
See the illustration below.

It appears the FAA recognizes this issue and will be issuing an engineering brief to address this in the future.

Until the FAA issues any further guidance the temporary work around is to require all new PAPI's to be shipped from the manufacturer with adjustable-internal baffles pre-installed.

Please be aware of this issue as you design new PAPI installations.

If you have any further information or ideas concerning this please feel free to contact me at Harry.Lorton@txdot.gov. ♦



This figure illustrates that an obstruction is outside of PAPI Obstacle Clearance Surface (OCS) but within PAPI light beam visual area. PAPI internal baffles are needed to block visual acquisition of obstruction outside of the OCS. (Figure from FAA Airport Visual Aid Presentation - 2014 Spring IES Conference, 5/8/14)

GENERAL AVIATION PITCHES IN DURING TEXAS STORM RECOVERY

By Dan Namowitz
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association

When river flooding from violent storms shut down a major interstate highway in Texas and threatened to disable key public facilities in mid-March, general aviation pilots provided officials monitoring the situation with timely updates on the rapidly changing situation.

Different pilots and members of the Texas Wing of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) flew dozens of missions and took thousands of digital photos in support of the emergency response. And in some cases, they found that the risks posed by the situation weren't only on the ground.

"The State Operation Center uses the imagery for state response and mitigation planning by Texas Division Emergency Management, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and Texas Department of Transportation," the CAP's Texas Wing said on its website.

The CAP was credited for doing "a great job of day-by-day documentation of changing conditions at key structures," by Dr. Gordon Wells, program manager of the Center for Space Research at the University of Texas-Austin.

As a newspaper in Tyler, Texas, reported, some CAP pilots flying as low as 1,000 feet agl initially found themselves in the same airspace as numerous aircraft of various types, "from helicopters to ultralights," according to Maj. Steve Robertson, southwest region director of emergency services, that were not monitoring the same frequencies, but also pitching in. The profusion of traffic caused some CAP aircraft "to deviate from the intended flight route," the paper reported.

At the CAP's request, the FAA imposed a temporary flight restriction for a portion of the recovery period. The TFR included unmanned aircraft in the flight prohibitions.



View of Interstate 10 west to east at the Texas Travel Information Center (the Texas Welcome Center) in Orange, Texas. Photo by Yasmina Platt.

On March 17, the Weather Channel reported that the Sabine River dividing Texas and Louisiana crested at Deweyville, breaking "the unofficial highest river level set over 130 years ago" after a week of torrential rain. Mandatory evacuations, the flooding of hundreds of homes and numerous rescues were in progress as two reservoirs on the river overflowed. Along the border of Texas and Louisiana, the Weather Channel described the river's flooding as "historic."

South of Deweyville, the two-state area continued to be hard-hit.

"Interstate 10 was closed at the Louisiana/Texas border for at least four days," said AOPA Central/Southwest Regional Manager Yasmina Platt, who monitored some of the continuing CAP flights' radio reports as she flew herself from Orange, Texas, to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to participate in a legislative hearing on March 21.

About one-third the length of I-10, which runs from Santa Monica, California, to Jacksonville, Florida, and is the southernmost major interstate highway in the United States, is within the state of Texas. The highway reopened on March 18 after waters receded. ♦

IN MEMORY OF GENE JOHNSON

R. Eugene Johnson, aka Gene Johnson, was born December 23, 1941, to Rayford Johnson and Ella Mae Nickell Johnson, in San Antonio, TX. Gene married the love of his life Linda on August 22, 1969, after having met on Padre Island in April of 1969. After living several years with a weakened heart, Gene died on February 16, 2016.

Gene served in the Marine Corps February 5, 1960 to January 13, 1968, and worked for Braniff Airlines in different cities for 17 and a half years. After leaving the Dallas area as DFW Air Cargo Manager, Gene and Linda moved to Rockport where Gene worked at and eventually was given the title of Aransas County Airport Manager; position he held for over 30 years. During his tenure, TxDOT Aviation awarded him the honor of 1993 Airport Manager of the year and in 2010 the airport was awarded Most Improved Airport of the Year.

Gene was a giver to a fault always challenging his spouse to work the budget around his giving nature. His favorite saying was "it's only money and time— all that belongs to God who gave it to you and you can't take it with you."

Gene is survived by his wife, Linda of Fulton, TX. His sisters, Lynda (Mark) Hanna of Hermitage, Tennessee, and Betty (Les) Daniel of Bulverde, TX and his cat, Boy. He is preceded in death by his parents, Rayford and Ella Mae Johnson, sisters Dorothy Mabry and Bertie Rae Turrentine.

At the 2016 Texas Aviation Conference, Aviation Division Director Dave Fulton spoke of Gene's legacy in general aviation in Texas.

"Gene was truly dedicated to his airport and serving the needs of this community," said Fulton. "He was an amazing man and general aviation in Texas is better off for having him as airport manager for many years." ♦



Gene Johnson (center with green shirt) at his retirement ceremony in 2015.



Texas Department of Transportation

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AVIATION DIVISION

TEXAS AERONAUTICAL CHART NOW AVAILABLE!

The Texas Aeronautical Chart is a full-color map designed to assist pilots in planning air travel in the Lone Star State. Order yours by visiting the site below.

<http://www.dot.state.tx.us/apps-cg/registration-forms/AVN/aeronautical-chart-form.htm>

