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HOME OF THE ARMADILLO

TINY CADDO MILLS' AIRPORT IS HOME TO AN UNLIKELY RESIDENT

by Chris Sasser
Texas Transportation Institute

When I first contacted Phil Eaton, vice president of operations at Armadillo Aerospace, to set up an interview, we threw around potential dates — none of which coincided with the bi-weekly test of their lunar landing module. I lamented that it probably wasn't necessary for me to see a test, to which Eaton had a quick and empathic response: "Who wouldn't want to see a rocket launch?!"

Indeed, and with that I was on my way to Caddo Mills to visit Armadillo Aerospace and watch a test launch.

First, Some Background

Founded in 2000, Armadillo Aerospace has quickly become a leading developer of reusable rocket-powered vehicles. The company is headed by John Carmack, a developer of computer games including the *Doom* and *Quake* series.

After initially being fully self-funded and relying on employees who volunteered their time twice a week, the company has recently caught the eye of NASA and other small commercial customers with several high-profile successes of their lunar-landing test vehicles. One of those was the 2008 Lunar Lander Challenge that took place on October 24–25 at the

continued on pg. 3



Lift off! The lunar module hovers over the infield at the Caddo Mills Airport before making a precise landing.



Recently, on three different occasions, USA Today published editorials severely criticizing the use of aviation industry generated taxpayer funds to improve "small airports" that do not have airline service and "benefit only a few private pilots."

The following letter is my response to these editorials:

USA TODAY LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

My name is Dave Fulton. I am the Director of the Texas Department of Transportation's Aviation Division. Our primary mission is the development and maintenance of a statewide system of airports in Texas. I am writing this letter in response to recent editorials appearing in your newspaper criticizing the expenditure of taxpayer funds to support general aviation airports throughout the nation. Your editorial reflects the same lack of understanding of the benefits of general aviation and general aviation airports that has plagued general aviation throughout its history.

Admittedly, only a small percentage of the public use general aviation on a regular basis. However, the benefits of general aviation for the public go far beyond personal use. Everyday, you or someone you know, is directly benefiting from general aviation. When a member of your family is airlifted to a medical center, when someone's home is saved from a forest fire, when a criminal is captured due to airborne surveillance, when you receive overnight airborne package delivery, when someone gets a new plant job in a rural area that would not have occurred without business aircraft access, these are all contributions made by general aviation.

The United States of America has the greatest commercial service air transportation system in the world, providing the public a rapid means of transportation between major metropolitan centers throughout the nation. But America is a large country with vast areas not accessible by the airlines. Imagine our country with the national interstate system but no state or local highways. Certainly, we could drive across the country from north to south or east to west but how we would get to the cities and towns that do not have an interstate. The same is true for aviation. Without general aviation, many cities and towns would simply be left out. Economic development would suffer. As Sam Walton said when beginning his chain of Wal-Mart stores in rural areas many years ago, "I will not build a Wal-Mart store in a town that does not have an airport. I plan to visit my stores frequently and I don't have the time to drive there."

I appreciate the opportunity to express my views in your newspaper. I urge you to take the time to gain a better understanding of the benefits of general aviation and general aviation airports prior to commenting further on this important form of transportation.

*David S. Fulton, Director
Aviation Division
Texas Department of Transportation* ♦



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HOME OF THE ARMADILLO *continued from pg. 1*

Las Cruces International Airport in New Mexico. The crew took home the Level 1 top prize of \$350,000.

In September, Armadillo Aerospace took their success a step further by qualifying for the Level 2 top prize. Level 2 requires the lunar landing module to hover for 180 seconds before landing precisely on a simulated lunar surface constructed with craters and boulders.

"We want to develop a module that can not only land on a surface in space, but also take off and go to another location for exploration," says Eaton.

In addition, the company does business with the Rocket Racing League, providing propulsion modules for their aircraft as well as some prototype testing assistance.

The company also has a sponsorship agreement with Microcosm/Scorpius, which provides the ultra light-weight pressure tanks for pressurized helium. They are the industry leaders in manufacturing ultra light-weight, linerless composite tanks. Along with the sponsorship, they received the naming rights of the 2009 Lunar Lander Challenge vehicle, dubbed Scorpius.

A New Home on the Prairie

The thing one notices when one visits Caddo Mills Municipal Airport for the first time is that, for an airport which is only 38 miles from downtown Dallas and two miles northwest of Interstate 30, it is decidedly in the middle of nowhere. According to Eaton, the remoteness, yet convenience to the Metroplex, was a significant factor in the company's decision to relocate their testing facility to Caddo Mills.

"We used to do our testing at a facility in Dallas, but because of the increased size and noise of our vehicles, there were complaints from local businesses, which weren't unjustified," says Eaton. "We wanted to be good neighbors and realized it was time to move our testing facility. So literally I got in my car, turned my GPS on, and drove around the outskirts of Dallas where I came upon the airport at Caddo Mills."

The company found a home in a large hangar previously used by Southwest Soaring, a sailplane company, and settled in during the summer of 2008.

Testing, Testing and More Testing

With its relatively low traffic, expanse of real estate and hangar space, the marriage of Caddo Mills Airport and Armadillo Aerospace has been a success.

Twice a week — Tuesday and Saturday — the company performs component tests on their lunar landing modules. And the first thing you notice when visiting on one of these days is that there is no standing around with your hands on your hips while watching others work to prepare the module for testing. A time or two I felt like grabbing a wrench, broom, or getting someone a cold beverage while waiting for "go" time.

As the module was loaded onto a flatbed trailer and positioned on a concrete pad in the middle of the field, Eaton walked by and handed me a radio so I could monitor communication between Carmack at control central and the rest of the team in the field. "You're far enough away to where I don't think you'll need ear protection. But trust me, it will be loud," says Eaton.

And loud it certainly was. As I watched the lunar lander hover for a minute before successfully touching down on target, I couldn't help but look at the houses adjacent to the airport and wonder, "What do they think of these rockets firing next door to them?"

In line with their company approach of transparency and proactiveness, Armadillo Aerospace has actively worked to



An Armadillo Aerospace worker makes a few last minute checks before a test flight.

COMMAND CENTRAL

In a hangar adjacent to Armadillo Aerospace resides a family-run business that has called Caddo Mills Municipal Airport home for many years: Air Command International.

Air Command International designs and manufactures gyroplanes. A gyroplane is a type of rotorcraft that utilizes an unpowered rotor in autorotation to develop lift and an engine-powered propeller, similar to that of a fixed-wing aircraft, to provide thrust. While similar to a helicopter rotor in appearance, the autogyro's rotor must have air flowing up and through the rotor disc in order to generate rotation.

Using Caddo Mills Airport as their home base, the small company manufactures and ships the aircraft kits to their customers throughout the world. In addition to aircraft kits, the company is a full fabrication shop and sells all types of accessories and components to support their gyroplanes.

"Our kits are complete bolt-together components that are simple to assemble and require no special tools. They can be put together in 50 to 135 hours depending on the model," says Douglas Smith, president. His father, Harold Smith, the CEO of the company, owns the hangars at Caddo Mills and has used the facilities for several businesses throughout the years, including a glider company.

Though flying in an open air cockpit at several thousand feet may seem harrowing to some, Douglas says that he's never felt scared. "It's an amazing feeling," says Douglas. "There's really nothing like flying in a gyroplane."



Soft landing. A newly constructed gyroplane lands on the taxiway at Caddo Mills Municipal Airport.

build ties in the local community to try to fend off the eventual noise concerns.

"The first time we fired an engine at dusk, the local police said the 911 switchboard 'lit up like a Christmas tree,' with people concerned that something had exploded at the airfield," says Eaton. "We participated in a local community festival the following week to meet a lot of the neighbors and get the word out about our activities. We are part of this community now, and it is important to us that we be good neighbors."

As evidenced by their acceptance into the community of Caddo Mills and their airport, Armadillo Aerospace has found a home. And if the successes of the last few years are any indication, the potential for additional jobs and commerce within the small Texas community is as limitless as the frontier this company seeks to explore. ♦

THE MASTER PLAN FOR CADDO MILLS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

The municipal airport located just outside of Caddo Mills is ripe for economic development and expansion, both of which could help propel the airport into the coveted slot of major reliever airport for the East Dallas region.

Despite lacking a terminal building, hangar space and general upkeep, the location and room for growth have aviation planners excited about the airport's possibilities.

Chris Munroe is an aviation planner with Garver, an engineering planning and environmental services firm, which recently wrote a master plan for Caddo Mills Municipal Airport (7F3).

The recommendations listed in the master plan include:

- Acquisition of land adjacent to the airport,
- Rehabilitation of both 4,000-foot runways,
- Construction of taxiway and runway connectors,
- Construction of hangars,
- Installation of fuel facility,
- Extension of runway 17/35 and
- Construction of a terminal building.

The land acquisition around the airport could become future industrial development areas.

"We've given this airport a blueprint for success," says Munroe. "Now the airport needs a champion from within the community to spearhead the financing efforts required to make these improvements."

GRANTS RECEIVED

| | | |
|---|-------------|--|
| Sugar Land Regional Airport | \$583,980 | The Aviation work consists of install airfield generators. |
| Hillsboro Municipal Airport | \$270,250 | The Aviation work consists of rehabilitate and mark Runway 16-34; rehabilitate and mark partial parallel taxiway to Runway 16; rehabilitate apron; and rehabilitate turnaround Runway 34 end. |
| Scholes International Airport at Galveston | \$2,262,014 | The Aviation work consists of replace high intensity runway lights Runway 13-31; replace medium intensity runway lights Runway 17-35; replace precision approach path indicator 4's Runways 13-31 and 17-35; replace runway end indicator lights Runway 17-35 and Runway 31 end; replace taxiway lights; replace and elevate electrical vault; install/replace signage, and check wiring to supplemental wind cone. This project is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). |
| Schreiner Field/Kerrville Municipal Airport | \$4,190,769 | The Aviation work consists of relocate parallel taxiway to Runway 12-30; relocate fencing and install/relocate signage. This project is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). |
| Schreiner Field/Kerrville Municipal Airport | \$1,454,200 | The Aviation work consists of relocate west entrance road. |
| Center Municipal Airport | \$828,790 | The Aviation work consists of engineering/design and construction services to construct 10 unit T-hangar and construct hangar access to new T-hangars. |
| Mid-Way Regional Airport | \$5,986,700 | The Aviation work consists of extend, widen, overlay and mark Runway 18-36; extend parallel Taxiway to Runway 18; construct new connecting taxiway and new south run-up pad; overlay apron, taxiway A and stub taxiway; extend and replace medium intensity runway lights at Runway 18-36; install runway end identifier lights at Runway 18; install precision approach path indicators-4 at Runway 36 and relocate FAA'S precision approach path indicators at Runway 18; and relocate power line/air release valve. |
| Brazoria County Airport | \$9,862,500 | The Aviation work consists of reconstruct and mark Runway 17-35; improve grade along runway edge; install precision approach path indicators-4 Runway 17-35; and replace medium intensity runway edge lights fixtures. |
| Lancaster Airport | \$5,544,700 | The Aviation work consists of extend, overlay and mark Runway 13-31; extend parallel taxiway to Runway 31; rehabilitate and mark apron; overlay and mark taxiway connectors and rehab parallel taxiway; construct holding apron at end of Runway 31; extend medium intensity runway lights; extend medium intensity runway edge lights to Runway 31; relocate existing precision approach path indicators at Runway 31 end; install supplemental lighted wind cone; install fencing; install/replace perimeter deer-proof fencing; and install security gate/chain link fence. |
| Hondo Municipal Airport | \$6,044,240 | The Aviation work consists of extend Runway 17L; extend parallel taxiway to Runway 17L; overlay and mark Runway 17L/35R and overlay cross taxiways; construct new cross taxiway Runway 35R; install precision approach path indicators-4 Runway 17L/35R; and replace medium intensity runway lights Runway 17L; and relocate fencing. |
| Nueces County/Robstown | \$462,611 | The Aviation work consists of design and construction of hangars. |

HAPPY RETIREMENT, LINDA!

TxDOT Aviation Division's Director of Planning and Programming Linda Howard and Director Dave Fulton at her retirement luncheon held on August 31.



A SCHOOL THAT'S COOL

AIRPORT ACADEMY IN SUGAR LAND A BIG HIT WITH LOCAL RESIDENTS

By Chris Sasser
Texas Transportation Institute

In recent years, the Sugar Land Regional Airport (SLRA) has emerged as the destination of choice for business travelers in the Houston area. However, for local residents who watch planes, ranging from Cessna 172 Skyhawks to Citation X jets, buzz in and out of SLRA daily, they may wonder, "Just what in the world is going on over there?"

The answer is: plenty. Thanks to the Sugar Land Regional Airport Academy, residents can now take a six-week course that provides a comprehensive overview of aviation operations and the facility's important role in the regional economy. The course covers topics such as:

- the history of SLRA,
- the role of the airport in the city's organization,
- the scope of airport operations and
- the economic impact on the region and the benefits provided to Sugar Land.

This unique program started last year after the city manager saw an opportunity to expand on local citizen academies.

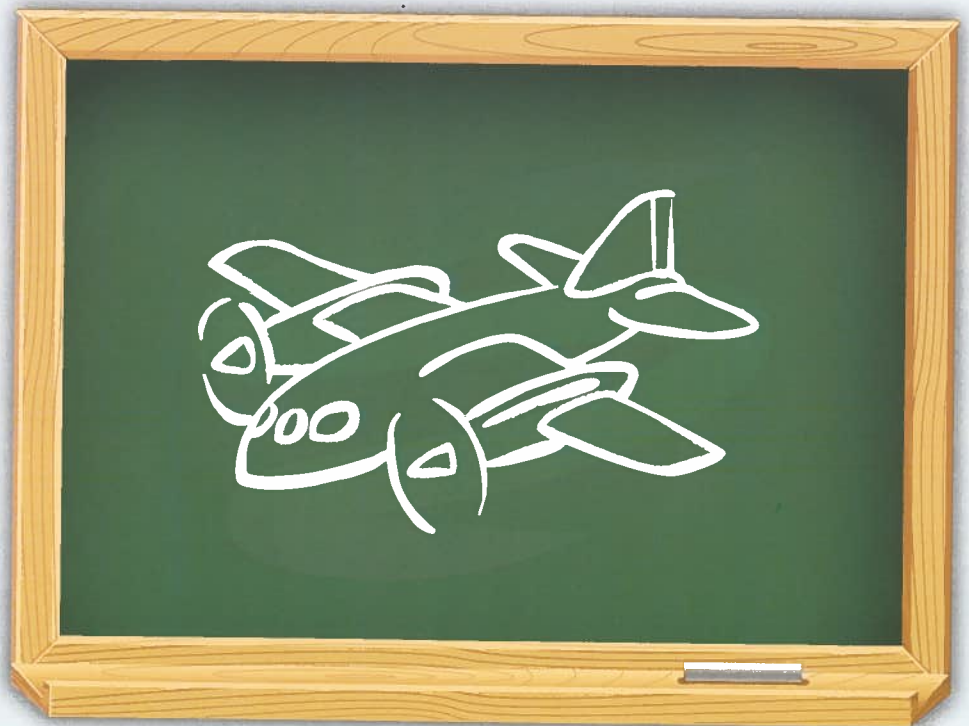
"Sugar Land already had a police, fire and city government 101 academy," says Anne Gaines, assistant aviation director over planning and development for SLRA. "Since our airport is located in the middle of town and therefore surrounded by homes and businesses, we thought it would be a great idea to offer this class to help educate the community about the airport."

The popular class is deliberately kept small to allow the instructors a lot of interaction with students. The participants are taken up in the air traffic control tower, out on the taxiway apron and basically get a full tour and instruction of the inner workings of the airport. Instructors include airport administration, the director of economic development for Sugar Land and a pilot who has flown in and out of the airport for years.

"One of our goals is to educate our residents as to what is going on over their heads," says Gaines. "We want them to understand the benefits of the airport to our community, and hopefully consider volunteering with us in the future."

The third class is about to begin, and, judging by the quick enrollment and positive evaluation comments, the academy has been a huge hit.

"It was very informative, fun, interactive and enjoyable," says Yaffa Steubinger, a graduate of the first academy. "I've been to most of the Sugar Land academies, but this is one most of us didn't want to end. It was hard to get rid of us each night!" ♦



BULLOCK MUSEUM TO HOST AVIATION EXHIBIT

TANGO ALPHA CHARLIE: TEXAS AVIATION CELEBRATION

By Jeremy Smith
Texas Transportation Institute

Texas is a state full of rich history. While cowboys, agriculture and oil dominate the state's storied past, 2010 will mark the centennial celebration of another part of Texas history.

Since Frenchman Louis Paulhan's first flight in Texas on February 18, 1910, the Lone Star State has been on the leading edge of aviation. To celebrate the state's centennial of flight, The Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, starting in September 2010, will tell the story of Texas aviation — past, present and future.

"Texas truly does have a rich history in aviation," states interim museum director Laura Hall. "We are thrilled to be celebrating that history at the museum next year."

The history of aviation in Texas is the story of industry innovation, record-setting achievements, gravity-defying feats and the soaring human spirit. In March 1910, one month after Paulhan's flight, the first U.S. military aircraft flew from Fort Sam Houston, beginning Texas' long tradition of military aviation. The first Texan to fly in the state was L.L. Walker Jr. in Houston, who built and flew his own plane in the summer/fall of 1910, exemplifying the spirit that has driven the Texas aviation industry ever since.

The museum looks to capture that spirit with its 7,000-sq.-ft. special exhibition highlighting the dynamic achievements of Texas aviators, designers, manufacturers and services. The exhibit is scheduled to run from September 12, 2010, to January 9, 2011.

Dr. Barbara Ganson, who is currently an associate professor of history at Florida Atlantic University, where she teaches Aviation History and Latin American History, will be the guest curator for the exhibit. Exhibit features include: artifacts, hands-on activities, interactive displays, faces and places that have made Texas a dominant force in the aviation industry, public programs to spark the spirit of flight in visitors of all ages and resources to encourage youth who are the future of aviation.

"With multimedia interactivity, artifacts, original research and hands-on experiences for every member of the family, this exhibition will serve as the next great chapter in the rich story of Texas aviation," says Hall. "Come fly with us." ♦

For more information visit the museum's Web site at www.thestoryoftexas.com and/or contact museum communications director Tim Dillon at marketing@thestoryoftexas.com.



An American Airlines DC-4 buzzes over the skies of Texas in this vintage photo.

WINGTIPS PROFILES

AVIATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER ROBERT "BOB" BRUCE

This is one of a continuing series of profiles featuring members of the Texas Aviation Advisory Committee. The six members are appointed by the Texas Transportation Commission for six-year terms and assist the Texas Department of Transportation with its aviation development programs. Committee members also work with the legislature on various aviation issues. Members must have at least five years of experience in the field of aviation and a strong interest in supporting Texas' general aviation program.

In this issue, we profile Committee Member Robert "Bob" Bruce.

When Robert "Bob" Bruce opened a recording studio in San Antonio in the early 1970s, he probably never expected the eventual turn of events that led to him opening, owning and operating an airport in the small town of Boerne.

"We did a lot of advertising production and had the goal of becoming one of the best in the country, competing successfully against Nashville and Dallas studios," says Bruce. "Then one evening I took a flight over San Antonio with a fellow who was the sound engineer for Rod Stewart. It was an incredibly clear and smooth night, and I was hooked on learning to fly."

That evening flight and an ensuing sail plane lesson helped launch an ambitious career in aviation. Bruce became a glider instructor, and then added the commercial/instrument airplane rating, single and multi-engine to his



Robert and Nancy Bruce at the dedication of a conference room named for them at the Heritage headquarters in Washington, D.C.

certificate. That's how he met his wife of 29 years, Nancy, who is a captain with Southwest Airlines, at the old Texas Flying Club at KSAT.

"I owned a Piper Aztec for my business, and Nancy furthered her career building lots of multi-engine time instructing others how to fly twins," says Bruce. "It was during my flying that I started learning about airports and becoming interested in the politics of them. The book called *Cleared for the Approach* really opened my eyes to some of the challenges we face."

In 1983, Bruce purchased about a hundred acres of land that was previously used for a dairy farm outside of Boerne and opened up Boerne Stage Airfield (5C1), which he still operates.

"There were some tough times along the way, especially the economic crisis of the 1980s, when we had to rely on Nancy's job with Southwest Airlines to get us by," says Bruce. "Most of what you do in aviation at this level is probably driven first by a passion for it, and then given enough time, you can make it work."

One thing is for sure, having a lack of passion is one thing Bruce will never be accused of.

Wingtips: How important is aviation to you?

Bruce: It's essential that general aviation (GA) thrive and be well cared for by all those who use it or work in it day-to-day. To that extent, it is important to me not just as a livelihood, but as a life mission that never ends. Most of the folks I know involved in GA have the same or a similar notion about our segment of the industry and their role in it. It needs care and nurturing that goes far beyond asphalt maintenance or public restrooms.

Wingtips: What was your motivation in accepting the appointment on the Texas Aviation Advisory Committee?

Bruce: There were folks I knew who had served in the past, and also in current service, and they are the type of individuals who, as we said in the military, we would gladly follow up any hill. You couldn't ask for a finer group of dedicated individuals doing a public service than what we have here. My motivation? Probably to just be a part of it and contribute whatever the need might be for TxDOT. It's important that citizens get in there and carry some water for the staffers and career people doing the hard work. Support is a necessary part of keeping Texas out front and leading the nation.

Wingtips: Was there a memorable experience that you can share that has occurred during your term?

Bruce: Seeing Jim Schwertner move on to the Texas A&M System Board of Regents was a big day for all of us. Meeting the private sector entrepreneur, Ron Henriksen, that's given us two new GA facilities in Houston (Houston Executive Airport) and now Manor (Austin Executive Airport). It's hard to find words to describe what a revolutionary event this is for me personally, knowing what it takes to get this done, with no public funds, like we've done, but at the level he's doing it is really something. But you know, even more, seeing Dave and the staff that I've known over the phone in the past, and their engineering people have helped me a lot over the last 20 years, and now to have the chance to know more personally would be the top thing. It's not a memory now, it's new, but it's going to be something that'll be a great thing to remember as the years go by. Texas, TxDOT and this Division of Aviation is something I hope to be able to tell a lot folks about and the job they're doing.

Wingtips: What are the biggest challenges you see for GA going forward?

Bruce: Texas gets it right. I remember many times making telephone calls and writing letters over the years to members of the Legislature when life was a little more testy for all of us. The oil and real estate bust in the late 80s really tested our mettle as a people. Didn't see any federal bailouts there, did you? And GA was primed to take

some really bad hits, but we got through it working together. And out of that the TxDOT Aviation Division has evolved and become a well-oiled machine that is so careful about how it appropriates, and together with that has established a better flight department and system-wide maintenance that saves us 30 to 40 percent over time what these things would have otherwise cost. Our challenge is to keep this train running and not get "spoiled" because things are going so well for us now. It got that way through hard work and planning by the people who run the division, and our challenge is to keep them going and give them the tools they need.

Outside TxDOT, as a state we need to never forget how we got here and what has made us one of the friendliest GA states, maybe the best, in the nation. Texas really does get it, and we need to continue the effort in public relations and education that will keep us on top and number one. The big PR challenge is that too many people see our segment of aviation as just a wealthy guy with his jet, and so few of them know that this segment accounts for a scant 10 percent of the entire GA fleet.

Wingtips: What would you like for the public to know about GA in Texas and why non-pilots should care about it?

Bruce: For the reasons mentioned above, and if there were a list, let's first set aside the pleasure and fun that aviation is for all who do it. This is a given. Most career pilots fly because they love their job. Most folks who work at any level in aviation, general or airline, or volunteers, do it because aviation is a magnet to them. This keeps us moving at all levels, and the same attitudes and work ethic are necessary all the way down to the training level in GA. Non-flyers should care because:

- The majority of new pilots will be trained from GA.
- All air life operations, fixed wing and rotorcraft, are GA.
- Every trip any elected representative makes to a remote spot for a last minute town hall is GA.
- Putting out California wild fires is GA.
- Getting your wife and the kids and departing Mesquite for Victoria to spend a weekend with grandma is GA.
- Dropping off a special saddle at Boerne Stage Airfield down the street from the Rose Palace for a George Strait roping competition is GA.
- You need to get from East Texas to a small town in West Texas before lunch, and doing it in your own aircraft, the company aircraft or a charter is all GA!
- You're a high school football coach, and every Saturday morning during spring training you hop in your affordable 20-year-old Cessna 182 to go to College Station to watch the practice session and pick the coach's brain a little bit. *This IS GA, the kind you and I can afford to do, as ordinary citizens, that makes so much to be done in one day a reality.* That's the bottom line the non-flyer needs to know.

"Outside TxDOT, as a state, we need to never forget how we got here and what made us one of the friendliest GA states in the nation. Texas really does get it and we need to continue that effort in public relations and education."

And this is just the short list. But with the oil industry being such a big part of the Texas economy, one should know that more people in the industry get moved around this region of the U.S. in GA than any other mode of transportation. ♦

For more information on the TxDOT Aviation Advisory Committee, visit:
http://www.txdot.gov/services/aviation/advisory_committee/default.htm.

CORSICANA AIRPORT DEDICATES ARMY AIR FORCES MEMORIAL

By Chris Sasser
Texas Transportation Institute

The cloudy cold weather did little to dampen the enthusiasm of several hundred folks who turned out for the dedication of the U.S. Army Air Forces Memorial on October 10.

The memorial stands as a tribute to all Army Air Forces cadets who served and the civilians who trained them. Nearly 8,000 301st Army Air Forces Flying Training Detachment cadets trained at Corsicana Air Field during World War II. Trained by civilian instructors, the cadets are credited with flying essentially every type and model aircraft of the U.S. Army Air Forces inventory and serving in every theatre of WWII.

Among the speakers at the dedication were Major General Frank Padilla, Commander, 10th Air Force, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth (keynote); Alberto Acero, Consul General Republic of Mexico; and Dr. Tommy Stringer, Navarro County College.

"Mr. Acero brought a large spray of flowers to the ceremony," said Sarah Farley, the fixed-based operator of Corsicana Municipal Airport and secretary of the Corsicana Field Aviation Heritage Foundation (CFAHF). "This area is considered hallowed ground by the Mexican government because a cadet was killed while training here. That sentiment was echoed in Gen. Padilla's speech. He was one of thirteen cadets and instructors who died in training at Corsicana Army Air Field."

Also in attendance were the Air Force quintet band, a color guard, cadets from Baylor's ROTC unit and former cadets from across the country, including one each from the first and last class. There were also two flyovers from a PT19 and T38's. Most of the members of the CFAHF were able to attend as well. These members, along with CFAHF President Gary Farley (Sarah's husband), were instrumental in bringing the memorial to the airport. The day concluded with a big band hangar dance that also served as a reunion for cadets who trained here in the early 1940s.

"Unfortunately, with the low ceiling that day, we had several folks who were unable to fly in," says Sarah. "We would have loved for them to be here. But it was still a wonderful event that would not have been possible without the efforts of many people. Gary and I just wanted to take a back seat and take it all in."

Gary echoed his wife's sentiments. "This has been a ten-year project and the culmination of many countless hours of hard work. We have a very well represented memorial and are proud to dedicate the grounds as they are, with confidence that the men and women we honor here today will be forever remembered." ♦



This statue at Corsicana Airport is part of the U.S. Army Air Forces Memorial.

2009 TEXAS GENERAL AVIATION SUMMIT A SUCCESS!

By Jay Carpenter
Texas Aviation Association

General aviation leaders from across Texas and the nation met in Austin, Texas, to address the challenges facing GA today. The one-day event was held on November 7 at the Hyatt Regency on Lady Bird Lake.

The Texas Aviation Association hosts the annual event, which is co-sponsored by the Aviation Division of the Texas Department of Transportation, the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the National Business Aviation Association, the Aviation and Space Foundation of Texas, Slack and Davis aviation law and the Valero Energy aviation team.

The summit began at 8:30 a.m. with registration, where coffee and croissants were served.

TXAA management committee chairman Jay Carpenter opened the day's program by welcoming the audience to Austin. He then introduced the summit's moderator, Paul Smith. Paul is the former regional representative of NBAA and lives in Georgetown, Texas. He is the president of Paul Smith Aviation located at the Georgetown Municipal Airport and serves on the board of directors of TXAA.

Smith introduced the first speaker, David Fulton, director of the Aviation Division at TxDOT. Fulton gave his top seven issues facing GA (loosely based on David Letterman's Top Ten routine). His lists of issues started with point number one: educating the non-flying public and elected officials on the value and benefits of GA. He also spoke about the



Texas Airports Council Vice President John Happ and TxDOT Aviation's Director Dave Fulton confer with the audience.

importance of a statewide network for GA support, which includes a well-funded state aviation agency and a statewide aviation association such as TXAA. Fulton emphasized the importance of developing aviation education programs that will attract youth to aviation careers.

Next, Smith introduced the regional representative from NBAA, Steve Hadley, who resides in Waco. Hadley spoke of the need to educate pilots and GA enthusiasts about the importance of keeping governmental bodies such as the Transportation Security Agency and Homeland Security aware of the needs and benefits of GA. He gave a progress report about the relaxing of proposed TSA rules that were detrimental to larger and heavier business aircraft.

Hadley's presentation was followed by Mike Nicely. Nicely works in the Airport Development office of the Federal Aviation Administration in Fort Worth. He spoke of the National Plan of Integrated Airports Systems, the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and GA System Planning. In 2005, Texas received AIP funding totaling \$243 million, \$55 million funneled through TxDOT. By 2009, that total is expected to be \$290 million, \$60.4 million of which is distributed through TxDOT.

After a short break, the program continued with Tim Schroeder, ATO-E, Central Service Area, Surveillance and Broadcast Services, FAA in Washington, D.C. The FAA plans to implement a new system of aircraft surveillance and separation using Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B). ADS-B is a crucial component of the nation's Next-Generation Air Transportation System, and its implementation over the next 20 years will turn the NextGen vision into a reality. With ADS-B, both pilots and controllers will see radar-like displays with highly accurate traffic data from satellites – displays that update in real time and don't degrade with distance or terrain. The system will also give pilots access to weather services, terrain maps and flight information services. The new system will require equipment upgrades in all aircraft flying in class A, B and C airspaces. Schroeder emphasized that with competitive companies making the products, prices should decrease over time.

The morning session concluded with the keynote speaker, Mr. Steve Brown. Brown is the Senior Vice President of Operations, National Business Aviation Association and resides in Washington, D.C. He incorporated into his speech the four initiatives created by audience participation from last year's Texas GA Summit, called GAP-T: Government regulations, Airport development, Public relations and Training/education. Brown spoke on how TXAA has cooperated with NBAA and AOPA concerning

TSA issues and FAA reauthorization. Brown claims that through cooperation between various aviation associations, GA's future looks bright.

The audience was treated to a steak lunch provided by the banquet department of the Hyatt Regency.

During the conclusion of lunch, Carpenter then introduced Carol Foy. Foy, along with her associate CarolAnn Garratt broke a world speed record by flying around the earth westbound in just over seven days. Foy intrigued the audience with tales of her adventure flying a Mooney single engine aircraft around the world. She and her partner were on a mission to raise funds and awareness for the ALS Foundation. ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease, afflicts thousands worldwide. Their goal is to raise \$1 million. So far, they have raised over \$236,000. On behalf of TXAA, Carpenter presented Foy with a donation to the ALS fund. FMI visit: <http://www.alsworldflight.com/>.

Next on the agenda was speaker Henry Ogradzinski. Henry O, as he is called, represents NASAO, the National Association of State Aviation Officials. He gave an overview of the history and the future of GA in our country. He gave many great recommendations of how to educate the non-flying public and government officials as to the benefits and economic values of GA.

Following Henry O was TXAA board of directors' member Gene Robinson. Robinson is the leader of the GAP-T initiatives created last year. He gave a summary of the four initiatives, their present state and what should and could be done with them in the future. All agreed that these four initiatives are vital for the development and maintenance of GA in Texas and the nation.

The summit concluded with a panel Q&A session. The audience was given questionnaire cards to submit to the panelists, which included David Fulton from TxDOT, John Happ from the Texas Airports Council, Mike Nicely of the FAA, Steve Hadley of NBAA and Dr. Steve Swartz from the University of North Texas. The questions ranged from legislative actions, governmental processes, educational opportunities and future actions from state and federal aviation agencies. A lively interaction took place between the panelists and the audience about the hot issues facing GA today.

Carpenter concluded the summit by thanking everyone for attending and then he awarded door prizes that ranged from flight jackets to books and other literature. ♦

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

At the Texas Aviation Conference held each spring, the Texas Department of Transportation's Aviation Division presents four customer service awards. Award nominations for the 2010 Texas Aviation Conference at the Marriott Resort in The Woodlands, Texas, are requested for the following categories:

- Most Improved General Aviation Airport
- General Aviation Airport of the Year
- General Aviation Airport Manager of the Year
- Reliever Airport of the Year or Reliever Airport Manager of the Year

Nominations will be accepted until February 15, 2010, and may be submitted by mail to:

Becky Vick, Aviation Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

or
e-mail to bvick@dot.state.tx.us

or
on-line at
<http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/tac10/awards/>

Nominations must be presented in a detailed narrative form sufficient and appropriate for use in presenting the award to the winner. TxDOT reserves the right to alter the wording to appropriately meet the needs for length of presentation or to address the spirit of the award.

Nominations should be detailed, professional and meaningful. They should not be simply a list of attributes, but should be presented in paragraph form commensurate with past-year awards presentations. Examples of previous award presentations are provided at the end of each award category.

Please note that winners from the last five years are not eligible.



MOST IMPROVED GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORT

This award reflects great improvements at an airport and recognizes the related efforts by a community or individual to make significant upgrades to a general aviation or reliever airport. The nomination should list at least three significant recent changes that have improved the appearance, function and/or role of the facility. The people who played significant roles in the airport development should be included with information on their efforts.

The improvements should be funded and take place outside of TxDOT grants. These improvements should be instituted and implemented mostly by local efforts. Improvements funded by TxDOT can be included, but the funding should have been initiated by local requests for assistance with work and effort on the local level to initiate the changes. This award shows that the airport has made significant changes that are clearly noticeable to users and now better meets the needs of the area. The airport should present a visual appearance that evokes pride from the area served.

Previous winners: **2005** - Teague Municipal, **2006** - Pearland Regional, **2007** - Fort Worth Spinks, **2008** - Del Rio International, **2009** - Port Lavaca Calhoun County

GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORT OF THE YEAR

This award reflects an airport's importance to the air transportation system and the region it serves. The nomination should include specific facts that demonstrate the impact this airport makes on the system, listing at least five areas where the airport meets or exceeds the needs of its users. The airport should serve its role in the system, whether basic or utility or transport use, in an exemplary fashion. There should be significant airport management involvement. The airport should meet the majority of the needs of the users and be an excellent example that other airports would want to emulate. There should be considerable local involvement beyond the support and funding from TxDOT.

Previous winners: **2005** - Mount Pleasant Regional, **2006** - Grayson County, **2007** - Mineral Wells, **2008** - Draughon-Miller Central Texas Regional, **2009** - Hondo Municipal

GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORT MANAGER OF THE YEAR

This award reflects the contributions of an airport manager to improve, sustain, enhance and develop the airport he/she manages. The individual should perform at a level above ordinary standards, showing innovation, care and concern for both the airport and its users. This person should possess positive people skills in working with others, and have the confidence and trust of those he/she serves. Nominations should detail how the manager's knowledge of airport operations is substantial and complete for the applicable airport. Nominations should contain at least six attributes, actions, skills or performance standards of this individual. Detail should clearly describe the dedication and skills of this person.

Previous winners: **2005** - Hud Hopkins, Scholes International, **2006** - Tim Fousse, Castroville Municipal, **2007** - George Alvarado, T.P. McCampbell, **2008** - Paul Henderson, Mount Pleasant Regional, **2009** - Teresa Lyons, Hereford Municipal

RELIEVER AIRPORT OF THE YEAR OR RELIEVER AIRPORT MANAGER OF THE YEAR

One award is given annually to either a reliever airport or a reliever airport manager. Since there are only 21 airports eligible in this category, only one award is presented. The nominations for either of these two awards follow the same standards as those listed for the general aviation airport and the general aviation manager awards.

Previous winners: **2005** - Mesquite Metro, **2006** - Jeff Bilyeu, Lone Star Executive, **2007** - Phil Savko, Sugar Land Regional, **2008** - Ken Wiegand, Collin County Regional, **2009** - Stinson Municipal Airport ♦



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TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE

Make plans to attend the **28th Annual Texas Aviation Conference** to be held on **April 7, 8, 9, 2010**, at **The Woodlands Waterway Hotel** located in The Woodlands, Texas.

Be sure to check out our **www.txdot.gov** or TTI Web site **http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/tac10/** for up-to-date events.

Social activities will include our annual golf tournament, Planes and Lanes at Main Event Entertainment sponsored by Garver, get acquainted reception, lunch, award's banquet and another great evening reception sponsored by Rodriguez Engineering, all at an exciting new location in The Woodlands, Texas. We are working on making this conference better than ever.



Mark your calendar and join us!

| APRIL 2010 | | | | | | |
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