

# PIREPS

A Bi-monthly Newsletter for Nebraska Pilots and Aviation Enthusiasts



'Encourage and Facilitate the Development and Use of Aviation in Nebraska'

## PIREPS

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## 22nd Annual Nebraska Aviation Symposium

By Rob Markise

This year's symposium was jam-packed with informative topics. Technology is always on the move and it has an impact on aviation professionals. Whether you were a pilot, airport manager, or aviation enthusiast, you were going to take away something from this year's symposium.

It started on January 22nd with Yasmina Platt, Central Southwest Regional Manager AOPA, giving a pilot safety meeting. Pilots were given WINGS credit, as it covered airport hazard management birdstrike information and a review of



Yasmina Platt (AOPA) and Director Ronnie Mitchell (NDA)

Airspace and Visual Flight Rules into Instrument Meteorological Conditions. Yasmina did a superb job getting the 80 people in attendance involved. She gave scenarios to make you think outside the box. One surprising statistic: 1/3 of all fatal accidents of visual flight into weather were instrument-rated pilots. Pilots can learn more about these subjects and more by visiting [AOPA.org](http://AOPA.org). Go online and take an educational course, test your knowledge, or watch a safety video.

The morning session on January 23 was educational, with a wide variety of speakers and presentations for more than 100 attendees. Opening remarks were provided by Ronnie

Mitchell (Director, Nebraska Department of Aeronautics). Joe Miniace (FAA Central Region Administrator) addressed the issue and problems of essential air service in Nebraska. At some Nebraska airports, air service has dropped 90% due to the new license and flight time requirements for the first officer at airlines. Jim Johnson (FAA Central Region Airports Division Manager) addressed the airport improvement plan. Paperwork is going electronic and there will be more streamlined standardization of the program.

The morning continued with Pete Bunce (President/CEO of the General Aviation Manufacturer's Association) giving a Washington D.C. update. Mr. Bunce works with a variety of federal agencies



Aviation Symposium/Maintenance Seminar Attendees

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## Winter Blahs!

By Ronnie Mitchell

Here we are in January and the morning temperatures have been running below zero, so what can we do? I don't know about you but I just attended the 22nd annual NAC Aviation Symposium in Kearney and had a great time. Most people who attended have an over-whelming interest in aviation. Great speakers, great food, and it was all about airports, airplanes, and the infrastructure to support them. You learn a lot at this annual event but what you really learn is how many wonderful people have a real love for aviation. You will read a lot more about it in this issue of PIREPS.



**Ronnie Mitchell**  
Director, NE Dept. of  
Aeronautics

Coming soon to PIREPS is another writer, Dick Trail, from McCook. Dick is a graduate of the first class at the Air Force Academy, and had a distinguished career in the Air Force but now is a corporate pilot and flight instructor, flying over 450 hours last year. We all look forward to Dick's first article which will be in the April/May issue.

On a more somber note, Henry Ogradzinski, better known as Henry "O" (President and CEO of the National Association of State Aviation Officials) passed away January 22 after a two year battle with cancer. Henry was a strong advocate for aviation and NASAO the past 17 years and will be missed by all who knew him.

Jim Johnson, FAA Central Region Airports Division Manager, tells us funding for Airport Improvement Projects is good this year for the first time after an abundance of Continuing Resolutions. This will be a productive year for Nebraska airports and a wealth of projects are planned.

Winter blahs!! Most went away but we still have a few more months of winter to look forward to!

## New Certificated Pilots

### Private Pilot License:

Samuel Stuhmer – Central City

Frank Dolphens III – Omaha

Joshua Anderson – Grand Island

Matthew Parker – Bellevue

Wayne Woldt – Raymond (Glider)

Anders Backlund – Omaha (Glider)

Alan Miller – Murray

Michael Fogarty – Walthill

Paul Wagner – Holdrege

Donald Hunter – Arapahoe

### Commercial Pilot License:

Merlin Stevens- Bellevue (Glider)

James Clark – Omaha (Glider)

### Instrument Rating:

Shawn Reeves – Waverly

Sarah Armatys – Central City

## Aerobatic Play-day

By David Moll

Starting April 19th, put the 3rd Saturday of every month on your flying calendar, to join the Midwest Aerobatic Club for their Aerobatic Play Day at Seward. All pilots are invited to join us, not only for burgers and hotdogs, but to talk aerobatics. In good weather I'm sure some of the pilots will be flying their aerobatic routine. If you fly in, please do your downwind on the East side of the highway, whether or not you are landing runway 16 or 34, because the aerobatic practice box is on the West side of the airport.



**David Moll**

The Midwest Aerobatic Club is having 2 aerobatic contests in 2014. The first one, called the Midwest Collegiate Challenge, will be held April 25th through the 27th. This contest will be pretty special for our club, because the aerobatic team from the University of North Dakota (UND) will be presented the team trophy for winning the IAC (International Aerobatic Club) Collegiate series for the 6th time. I serve on the IAC Collegiate Committee with Michael Lents, the assistant coach from UND, and there's not a better role model. As a Master CFI with Aerobatic Accreditation, a UND Lecturer, and a fierce competitor, he teaches his team the winning attitude through "smash and swagger." The smash is to execute the maneuver with speed, and the swagger is executing the maneuver in an appealing way for the judges. More importantly, Michael has taught his team life-long lessons in flying safely through aerobatics, something each member will retain for the rest of their aviation career.

With life-long safety in mind, one of my first PIREPS articles centered around being a Push Button Pilot, I said some of our basic flying skills are being diminished with all the new avionics on the market. The new avionics are not the problem by any means, but we can't let our basic flying skills get rusty, and the Boeing 777 that crashed at San Francisco a couple of months ago is a prime and perfect example of what I was talking about. Here was a Boeing 777 Captain who could not do a simple VFR approach to a runway that was 11,870 feet long by 200 feet wide. He got too slow, too low, and consequently crashed into the seawall short of the runway. Even though he was newly type-rated in the 777, the report I read indicated he had almost 10,000 hours in other airliners, including the Airbus 320 and Boeing 747. Even with all this experience, this pilot was concerned the ILS system was out of service, plus other factors, including the auto-throttle system, even though the weather was good VFR with light winds. However, I've landed on this same runway dozens of times and the four bar PAPI worked just fine; plus I've landed on thousands of other runways that didn't have an ILS much less a PAPI. Think of all the resource tools he had at his disposal to make sure the landing was successful: the PAPI, an airspeed indicator, an angle of attack, a co-pilot, a check-airman – and his most important tool, a front windshield!

Put Seward on your weekend flying schedule the 3rd Saturday of each month, starting in April. Join us for lunch and learn about life-long safety through aerobatics.





## Government Help

By Scott Stuart

I ran into a nice man at the Lincoln airport last week. We had a short visit and I learned that he is an FAA employee. I was impressed with his personality and the willingness to do IFR training on that particular day. I find it comforting to see the FAA having a grasp of what we encounter on a daily basis.

While I was plane-less and going through training, the FAA made some changes. There is no longer a Lincoln Approach/Departure Control. You still have to call 25-30 miles out and the frequency is still the same: 124.0, but now you are calling Omaha Approach/Departure, operating out of the Lincoln Airport. I think it is confusing, flying VFR or IFR. So be careful out there.



Scott Stuart

Now that I am flying again, I arranged a coffee date with an old friend from Ft. Dodge, Iowa last weekend. We agreed to meet in Harlan, about 75 miles for each of us. The flight turned out to be my first IFR flight in my new plane. Breaking out of the clouds at 1000 foot with 8 miles visibility was truly sweet! I noticed that I did not hear my friend on the local frequency going into Harlan. I assumed he might be running late or had to cancel due to the weather. After landing, I learned that he was already there. He flew under the overcast layer VFR from Ft. Dodge. To me, that is scary flying that low. Heck even a big cow or wind turbine might get in the way! To each his own. Even though he is instrument rated, he chose to fly differently due to his currency. My message is the same once again. Get current and stay current.

The G-36 Bonanza is coming along. More like, I am coming along and slowly catching on to it! Although new, things that are mechanical will break. My number one alternator has been balky. Not good. When it goes off-line, I get a red warning on the primary flight display (PFD), a flashing master warning light, and a tone in the headset. These warnings will not go away until the pilot acknowledges the failure and resets the warning switch. Beechcraft has been very cooperative and sent a new alternator, overnight. The problem persisted and Beechcraft sent a voltage regulator, overnight. Hopefully this will cure the problem.

Now in my 48th year of aviating, I continue to see the same reasons for plane crashes: running out of fuel, flight into bad weather and loss of control. Remove these big three reasons and private flight becomes safe, like a hug from your mother. Resolve to be safe for the coming year. Gear Down and Locked?

## Mitigating Risks

By Lee Svoboda

Yesterday I had one of my ideal days. The temperature here in Arizona was a record 81 degrees with 5 knots of winds. That caused me to fire up my old Piper Lance and fly to Tucson for a \$300 lunch followed by a session at the local shooting range. Except for the economic factors, the decision to fly was a good decision because of the temperature and light winds. My attempt to put five shots through the same hole at 100 yards was not as successful at the shooting range.

The winter in Nebraska has been as forecasted in the Old Farmer's Almanac, colder and windier than average with average snowfall. But those high gusty winds have resulted in some real ugly wind chill factors and flying hazards. And when we train and test pilots, these hazards must be factored into the training syllabus, so pilots can use them in their decision-making for safe flight. We examiners can't always completely test an applicant's aeronautical decision making, but we try. With cold windy conditions the task becomes a bit easier.

The Practical Test Standard (PTS) has specific performance requirements for applicants to qualify for a certificate. Winds play a large factor in the difficulty of achieving those PTS requirements. As an examiner, when a private applicant elects to fly with winds gusting over 25 knots, resulting in a 20-knot crosswind at the test airfield, good decision-making is probably not happening. However, when a commercial applicant elects to fly under the same conditions, it may be a good decision provided the crosswind does not exceed the aircraft manufacturer's limitation.

When an examiner attempts to test an applicant's decision-making based on temperature, the task becomes more difficult. Of course, if the temperature is so hot that the density altitude will not allow the ole Cessna 150 to become airborne from the available not-mowed short grass runway, I think an applicant will make the right decision. However, if the temperature is -5°F with a wind chill of -20°F, with a long hard surfaced runway, will the applicant make the right decision? In this scenario, an examiner looks for the factors an applicant considers in making their decision to fly or not to fly. Warmth of the aircraft for starting is sure a leading factor. Then, will the equipment in the aircraft work properly with the cold temperature? Will the heater keep occupants comfortable? What is the terrain to be flown over? Is there survival clothing and gear onboard? These are some items that need to be considered. The examiner will make his/her decision of satisfactory or not, provided all factors are considered and risk is mitigated to an acceptable level. As an instructor, we must make sure that our training provides the student with the knowledge of all the risk factors to be considered and the ability to mitigate those risks to an acceptable level. The decision from mitigation may be not to fly.

Remember, accidents are caused by lack of skill and poor decision-making. We, as instructors and examiners, can fix both of those causes.



Lee Svoboda



# THE WALK-AROUND

by Jerry Tobias

As an airline first officer, it was my responsibility to complete the visual inspection of the exterior of our aircraft, prior to each flight. Known as the “walk-around,” this was not just a quick glance, but was a very specific and thorough examination of the condition of all exterior components, including the wings, fuselage, flight controls, landing gear, tires, panels, hatches, probes and sensors, etc.

The inspection of our airline’s McDonnell Douglas MD-80s followed a very defined and precise route. After turning on the wheel well lights with a switch located behind a panel below and to the left of the main cabin door, I would travel around the aircraft in a clockwise direction to inspect the nose section and nose gear, right forward fuselage and right main landing gear, right wing, right rear fuselage, tail section, left rear fuselage, left wing, etc., until returning to the nose section. Once convinced that the exterior of the airplane was in an airworthy condition, I would return to the flightdeck to prepare for the next departure.

Because the MD-80 is 147 feet long and has a 107-foot wing span, this walk-around took several minutes to complete. One day, while in the middle of a walk-around at Chicago’s O’Hare Airport - and after traveling all the way around to the left wing tip - I suddenly “woke up.” I’m not sure what I had been thinking about, but my mind had definitely NOT been on the walk-around. I realized that I had looked at everything I was supposed to look at, but had not really seen anything.

Shocked by my inattention, I went back to the aircraft’s nose section and started over. But this time I didn’t just look, I inspected - meaning that I looked, saw, processed, and accurately determined the condition of the aircraft’s exterior.

Are there ever times on the ramp, in the airplane, the hangar, the shop, or life, when – like during my wasted walk-around – you just “go through the motions?” Fortunately, I had the opportunity for a “do-over” that day in Chicago. But do-overs are not always possible.

The bottom line is that if you are not purposely and consistently concentrating on what really needs your attention at the moment, you will miss something. And the price that eventually might have to be paid for whatever you miss could be more than you’d want anyone to pay.



Jerry Tobias

# Aircraft Plans

By Tom Winter

“Tom,” sez I to myself back in the 90’s, “it’s high time to build a model airplane in a scale of twelve inches to the foot.” That was my motive for joining EAA: “Well, silly boy, you’d better plug into the grapevine first.” So I did. The thought of building has never left, and now, retired and turning 70, I’m still dithering over what to build.

Dithering? Oh yes. I have plans for the J-3 Jr, for the Mitchell U-2 Superwing, for the Heath Parasol, for the Pietenpol Air Camper, for the Baby Lincoln, for the Hovey Wind Ding, for the Volksplane....

So what happened? Each plan set, when acquired, was at the top of the do-it list:

The Hovey Wing Ding? The designer had no stall information with the excuse that he had never flown it high enough to do stall testing. Well scratch that one!

The Volksplane? Tempting, but I never liked the all-flying tail, and the cardboard box look of it, either. Still and all, I was on the VP internet list for some years until the widow of one of the regulars reported in. He finished it, took off, caught a gust, she said, and crashed on take-off. Better to do welded steel tube that bends instead of wood that splinters...

The Pietenpol Air Camper is still tempting. It’s the most tested design out there, and I’ve never heard of anybody crashing one. I got as far as a making a rib jig and acquiring one, two, three, four Model A Ford engines before just running out to the airport and flying my 150!

The four that are still on my list feature a welded steel tube fuselage. (I grew up with welding, and used to be good at it):

1. The J-3 Jr. This is Jesse Anglin’s design, and is not the same as the J-3 Kitten which is available as a kit, but it looks much the same. Traditional two-spar wooden wing. Maybe.

2. The Baby Lincoln. This looks like an Aeronca C3, featuring kingpost and wire-braced wings. The Baby Lincoln would be a great museum attraction for Lincoln, Nebraska. Again, maybe.

3. Heath Parasol. I think this is the bird that Paul Poberezny modernized into the Pober Pixie.

4. Finally there’s the U-2 Superwing, the flying wing motorglider! The U-2 construction is a mix: Foam ribs in front of the spar, built-up ribs behind it, welded steel tube pilot cage, and all in all, a dream for a flying wing fan glider pilot wannabee. I even acquired Larry Collier’s book, “Building and Flying the Mitchell Wing.”

Besides the above, there are two more high on the list that I don’t own plans for yet, that might end up being THE ONE:

1. The Hummelbird. All riveted sheet aluminum like an RV. Fast as my Cessna 150, but powered by a half-VW engine. AND get this: one builder finished it, crashed it on take-off, bent everything but the tailfin, and walked away. (Take that, Volksplane!)

2. There’s the Pete Bowers-Fly Baby. Love it. The Fly Baby, in my view, looks like an airplane the same way a Harley Davidson looks like a motorcycle. Tempting, way tempting.

Which one will I build? Will I ever at all? Or will I just fly my 150 until the feeling goes away? I don’t know. Meanwhile, see you at the airport!





### Symposium, Continued From Front Page

with regard to aviation. Some of the topics discussed were future fuel changes for general aviation aircraft, consolidation of control towers during after hours, and promoting an aviation themed "Cash for Clunkers" program to promote general aviation. Mark Blanks (Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Program Manager at Kansas State) gave a presentation regarding UAS and its present and future goals. The Unmanned Aviation Vehicles (UAV) range in size from small-sized remote control aircraft to those as large as a Boeing 737. The price-tag of these machines varies from \$1,000 to 1/2 million each. UAV's are typically used for photos, thermo-infrared imaging, and aerial spraying. There are a lot of contingencies to integrate this technology into our current aviation structure. To finish off the morning session, a presentation on airport zoning and adopting LB140 (Nebraska Airport Zoning Act) was provided by Russ Gasper (Project Manager at Nebraska Department of Aeronautics) and Diane Hofer (Airport Team Leader at Olsson Associates).

The afternoon session began with a presentation from Beth Prettyman, Steve Meinders, and Katherine Ellis, all from the FAA Mid-States Operations Control Center. Yasmina Platt gave a presentation on the use of flight planning tools which included the use of electronic flight bags in the flightdeck. If you haven't seen the flight applications that are available on an electronic device, you don't know what you are missing. It is simply amazing, to say the least.

The afternoon continued with Paul Ross (TSA Federal Security Director for Nebraska) giving a talk on airport security at general aviation airports. Jay Morrow and Pat Burke of the Wahoo Airport Authority had a presentation about hangar tenant problems and leases. Ending the day, the FAAST Team talked about airport hazard management and Hilary Fletch (Jviation) talked about public engagement and how to communicate with your community.



"Clyde Cessna"

The awards banquet included a five-star steak dinner with all the trimmings. Awards were given to a general aviation airport of the year, FAR Part 139 airline service airport of the year and aviation project of the year. A living history of Clyde Cessna was given by Gary Krehbiel. Not only was Mr. Cessna impersonated but a history of his life was reviewed. Cessna worked his way up in his career starting as a mechanic. He then became a car dealer, pilot, and aircraft manufacturer. Clyde Cessna wore

many hats in his day. We had a nice reminder of all his accomplishments through good times and bad.

## Albion Airport: 2013 General Aviation Airport of the Year

BNV is in an ideal geographic location for transient aircraft. With easy access, safe approaches and a well-maintained runway, it sees a great deal of transient traffic for a small municipal airport.



L to R: Director Ronnie Mitchell presenting award to Ron Levander of Albion

There are a variety of reasons why transients choose to fly into KBVN. The airport maintains access to reasonable fuel prices 24 hours a day, it has a new terminal building, two courtesy cars, automated weather, a pilot lounge, and a kitchen. The community has supported its airport and continues to make

improvements. We would like to congratulate Albion for winning the general aviation Nebraska Airport of the Year for 2013.

## Grand Island Airport: 2013 FAR Part 139 Airport of the Year



Executive Director Mike Olson, Hall County Airport Authority, and staff

KGRI has made great strides to improve its airport and services to the users of its airport. The Central Nebraska Regional Airport had another record-breaking year with 56,902 enplanements for 2013. This broke last year's record by 2%. December was a record-breaking month with 6,162 boardings compared to 6,061 last December. Grand Island has non-stop jet service to Las Vegas and Phoenix/Mesa, and daily service to Dallas, Texas. We would like to congratulate the Central Nebraska Regional Airport and Executive Director Mike Olson for all the hard work to improve its airport.



# Nebraska Hall of Fame Inductees

By Sandi Decker

Brothers **Stanley** and **Harold Dwyer** shared a love of their country, which allowed them to join the Army during WWII. Both became pilots, but Stanley's last mission on May 10th, ended much differently than Harold's last mission in April 1944.

Stanley started flying B-17s from Roswell, New Mexico. He staged in Georgia and then flew to Celone Field near Foggia, Italy. Stanley flew his first combat mission in March 1944. He and his crew flew 24 bombing missions in Yugoslavia, Romania, Italy, Austria, and Hungary.

On his last mission, on May 10, 1944, Stanley and his crew flew from Foggia, Italy to Wiener Neustadt, Austria, along with 400 other B-17s and 200 fighter escorts, to bomb a Messerschmitt factory. Before his bombs could be dropped, his plane was hit by flak which started it on fire at 23,000 feet. He dropped out of formation and was attacked by German fighters. Stanley told his crew to bail out as he fought with the controls and stayed with his aircraft. Five of his 10 man crew parachuted and became POW's, three crewman were found dead at or near the crash site. Stanley and his flight engineer are still missing in action. For his actions, Stanley was awarded the Air Medal with an Oak Leaf Cluster and a Purple Heart along with an accompanying certificate signed by President Harry Truman. To this day, people are still searching for Stanley.

**Harold Dwyer** was born September 23, 1924, near Council Groves, Kansas and moved with his family to Hastings, Nebraska when he was a junior in high school.

He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1942, was classified as a pilot and sent to California to start his flight training. It was during this training that he was told his brother was missing in action. In August of 1944, Harold started flying B-17's out of Hobbs, New Mexico.

In February 1945, Harold and his crew flew from Lincoln, Nebraska through Bangor, Maine to Prestwick, Scotland. In March 1945, Harold arrived at Station 156, Medlesham, England. It was there he flew bombing missions over Germany, France and Czechoslovakia. At the end of the war he flew Chowhound Missions to feed the people in Holland. Harold was promoted to First Lieutenant. In

April 1945, he received the Air Medal, Unit Citation, and the European Theater Medal, and was discharged in the fall of 1945.

After returning to the States, he attended Hastings College and joined the Reserves and served a few years with the Civil Air Patrol. From 1954 through 1958, Harold flew a B-17 for Biegert Brothers from Shickley, Nebraska. This B-17 was modified and used for low level spraying operations which he flew all over the United States to combat the gypsy moth, fruit flies, grasshoppers, and spruce bud worms. In 1960, Harold became the manager and pilot for Westland Homes factory in Hastings. He first soloed in an Aeronca Chief and his last flight entry in his logbook was August 1989 with 5,247 flight hours in dozens of aircraft.

**Evelyn Cowing** was born in Tilden, NE in May 1938 and began her life-long desire to fly in 1961, taking lessons at Flight Line Aviation at the Union Airport in Lincoln. Cowing holds a commercial pilot license with instrument rating, flight instructor, multi-engine and basic ground instructor ratings.

Evelyn graduated from the University of Nebraska with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education and a Masters of Education with a major and minor in Aerospace Education from Middle Tennessee State University. Having both the education and experience in the two major career fields of teaching and business, she intertwined aviation into both.

Cowing's first employment in aviation was in Omaha at Sky Harbor flight operation as secretary, ferry pilot, and flight school dispatcher. While getting her degree, Cowing worked summers at Lincoln Aviation Institute as secretary and assistant bookkeeper. In 1967, she worked with the Nebraska Department of Aeronautics and the Nebraska Department of Education, assisting in the development of the first airframe/powerplant mechanics course at Western Nebraska Vocational Technical School.

Cowing taught in the Lincoln Public School system for several years, spending a special one-year assignment as Aerospace Mobile Teacher, in which she assisted in developing aerospace education material, curriculum development, and presented aerospace demonstrations to over 4,000 elementary children. She taught basic aviation ground school for twelve years at Lincoln Public Schools and Southeast Community College.

Cowing was one of the co-founders of the Nebraska Association of Aerospace Educators (NAAE), and served as its first president. NAAE's biggest accomplishment was initiating the Lincoln Aerospace Awareness Days, which brought NASA's educational program to Lincoln.

Cowing was active with the Ninety-Nines, an international organization of women pilots, at both state and national levels. In 1962, she entered her first All-Woman Transcontinental Air Race. This



Harold Dwyer





was the first time Nebraska had been represented in the race. She also flew in the 1969 and 1971 Derbies.

Cowing held the office of Chapter Chairman of the Nebraska Ninety-Nines from 1968-1970, during which she was appointed Aerospace Education Chairman for the South Central Section of the organization. Later she became the International Aerospace Education Chairman from 1979-1983. Cowing received several awards in recognition of her service to the 99's, but according to Evelyn, her greatest honor was receiving the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship in 1970. After leaving Nebraska in 1980, Cowing continued her aviation interests in Montana and Wyoming. She was employed by the Montana Aeronautics Division as the Supervisor of Aviation and Space Education, and served as External Aerospace Education Director of the Civil Air Patrol. She received the Civil Air Patrol's Frank E. Brewer Award for the Rocky Mountain Region in 1985, given in recognition of outstanding achievement.

In the spring of 2013, Cowing returned to the world of flight for her 75th birthday after being out of the cockpit for 30 years, showing the same enthusiasm and love of flying. She was ready to accept the challenge of meeting pilot currency requirements with a flight review.

## UNO Guest Lecturer

By Scott Vlasek

Since 1990, the University of Nebraska at Omaha Aviation Institute annually holds a Durham Lecturer series and gives out the William F. Shea Award. On November 21st, the 2013/2014 recipient was Stephen Forte.

Steve Forte is Virgin America's Chief Operating Officer and Director of Operations, with oversight of flight operations, aircraft maintenance, safety, security, guest services, and the operations control center.

Mr. Forte spent most of his career at United Airlines, starting as a pilot, progressing through the ranks of flight operations management, and ultimately serving as Senior Vice President-Flight Operations and Director of Operations, a position he held from



L to R: Steve Forte, Bill Shea, and UNO Aviation Institute Director Scott Vlasek

1999 to 2006. As a senior executive at United Airlines, he played a critical role in leading the company through complex business events, including the cri-

sis on 9/11/2001, and United's financial restructuring.

He has accumulated more than 14,000 flight hours in dozens of aircraft types, and is qualified on the Airbus A320, the family of aircraft operated by Virgin America. In addition, he was the former Chairman of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Operations Committee. Mr. Forte has worked closely with global airlines, manufacturers, and regulators on a variety of industry issues. He currently serves on the Executive Board of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce.

## Alma Project of the Year

By Anna Lannin

This is an award for several groups of people that worked together to meet a goal. First was the airport sponsor, who identified a need and did not give up on their goal. Second is the project team, that includes the city, consultant, and FAA, all of whom worked on a tight schedule to make the project work. Finally, this is an award for all the Nebraska airports that gave their entitlement towards



Alma's airport project. Many airports pulled together to help meet Alma's needs. Great things can happen in Nebraska when we all work together.

On October 10, 2013, the City of Alma celebrated the grand opening of their new paved runway. It was the final step in a project that had been decades in the

making. The city first identified the need in the late 1960's for a paved runway. The first formal request is dated October 1972. It has been a long journey from that first request to the opening of the runway. The city teamed with Olsson Associates for design and construction phase services. The new runway is 3200' x 60 with medium intensity runway lighting, beacon, and a wind cone. The contractor, Paulsen Inc, began construction on April 1, 2013 and the project was substantially complete by August 20, 2013.

The city received an AIP grant on August 12, 2012 from the FAA to fund 90% of the construction costs. The grant was funded with non-primary entitlement from Alma and eleven other Nebraska airports.

NDA would like to recognize the following for their work on this project: The City of Alma and the Airport Advisory Board: Hal Haeker, mayor; Doug Wilson, city administrator; Doug Walker, attorney; Ron Hawley, Rick Neilson, and Bryan Lubeck, airport advisory board members; Olsson Associates: Diane Hofer, Jeremy Olson, and Dave Post. Paulsen Inc.: Dennis Sandrock; and all the Nebraska general aviation airports that transferred their entitlement for the Alma project.



L to R: Anna Lannin, Diane Hofer, Ron Hawley, Hal Haeker, Dave Post, Doug Walker, Bryan Lubeck and Rick Neilson

## PIREPS

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## Events Calendar

- **York Airport (JYR)**, EAA Chapter 1055 Fly-in breakfast (free will donation) on the 1st Saturday of every month. 8:00-10:00.
- **Crete Airport (CEK)**, EAA Chapter 569 Fly-in breakfast on the 3rd Saturday of every month. 8:00-10:00.
- **Seward Airport (SWT)**, Midwest Aerobatic Club has regular meeting on 3rd Saturday of the month.
- **Nebraska Aviation Trades Association Convention**, February 24th-26th in Kearney. For more information visit: [gonata.net](http://gonata.net).
- **Wayne Municipal Airport (LCG)**, Several months ago, a tornado damaged the airfield. Rebuilding efforts are in full force. The airport is open with fuel available.
- **State Fly In at York Airport (JYR)** on June 7th, 2014. Festivities start at 8:00 am with a Fly-In Breakfast and an afternoon airshow. More details to follow.
- **Defenders of Freedom Open House and Air Show** will return to Offutt Air Force Base on July 19-20, 2014.



## AVIATION ART CONTEST 2014

By David Morris

The Aviation Art Contest 2014 closing date for submission of the entries was Friday, January 17. Judging at the state level took place on Tuesday, January 28. The total number of entries this year were up 20% over last year's contest and this made for some tough decisions throughout the judging process. Each winning youngster will receive a letter from the Department of Aeronautics acknowledging the results. An awards ceremony is scheduled for April, to be held at the Nebraska Air National Guard facilities near the Lincoln Airport. On behalf of everyone involved in the management of this program, we here at the Department want to express our sincere gratitude for the interest and enthusiasm shown by the youngsters participating in the contest, as well as teachers and parents. Without this outstanding support, the program simply would not exist. The winning art will be available soon on the Department's website, [www.aero.state.ne.us](http://www.aero.state.ne.us), and will be published in the next issue of PIREPS.