

PIREPS

A monthly newsletter for Nebraska pilots and aviation enthusiasts



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

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Celebrating 100 Years of Powered Flight



Orville Wright



Charles Taylor



Wilbur Wright

Pictured above are the men who diligently studied how to fly and made it work on December 17, 1903 at Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina. Orville and Wilbur were the two inventors who studied the effects of drag, adverse yaw and lift; developing mathematical formulas many of which are still in use by today's "aeronautical engineers". An engineering field born in the year 1903! Charles Taylor was the world's first aircraft mechanic, building the four cylinder engine which powered the world's first heavier than air aircraft.

A new era began on that historic day, one that perhaps was only guessed at by those great minds. As with any invention, others could now add on to this new found knowledge that heretofore only the birds knew anything about!

The previous three editions of this publication have dealt with developing gliders that had wings that warped for making turns, movable rudders for controlling yaw while in those turns, and now the brothers were ready for powered flight! On the inside, you will read about the first engine. During test running it developed a seized bearing on the crankshaft from lack of lubrication, destroying the cast aluminum crankcase which held it all together. Another casting was obtained, improvements were made in lubrication, and a reliable "aircraft" engine came into being. Powered flight in a man carrying vehicle was becoming a reality.

In 100 years aviation has developed into a major business. Airlines employing thousands now carry more passengers than any other conveyance and at a more rapid pace. Aircraft manufacturers, engine builders, fuel suppliers, pilots, flight attendants, mechanics, baggage handlers, ticket agents, caterers, air cargo personnel, medical flights; all of these jobs are aviation related and there are probably hundreds of others that could be named if we took the time to list them.

In 100 years aviation has taken on major military significance as witnessed by delivery of laser guided bombs by stealth aircraft that can hit pin point targets from thousands of feet, fighters that can exceed the speed of sound, and cargo planes that can carry thousands of pounds. Aviation is in all the branches of our military! Aviation has been an astounding success! What do you think it might become in the next 100 years? We can only make educated guesses about this and they could easily be changed by the next great invention! What do you suppose that might be??



The Anniversary

Take time to celebrate, remember, teach, and set a goal for the first year of Aviation's second century. Those are the thoughts that immediately come to my mind this December. It is funny to me as I think about it, that the anniversary of the Centennial of Flight is fast approaching and will be a memory before we all realize it. What will always be in front of us, however, is the day before us and the tasks at hand. This I believe is how the Wrights saw their days and their goals a century ago. They stuck to those goals and to the task at hand and everything came together on December 17, 1903. To them it was just another day of trial and error that resulted in the first successful powered flight. But they did not stop there, December 17th to them was only the date that proved their theories. December 18th they began the next phase of showing aviation's practical use. We're all working on this task, to this day, as we seek to help those outside of aviation see the value of aviation. So on December 17, 2003 make it a point to celebrate, make a memory, teach those around you, and set a goal of what you are going to accomplish in aviation in 2004.

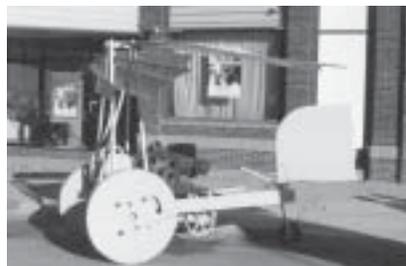


Kent Penney
Director, Nebraska
Dept. of Aeronautics

Editor Comments

The year is almost over and what a fun ride it has been. Several months ago I asked for YOU to help me make PIREPS a better publication! YOU have responded with a tremendous outpouring of articles and pictures on almost every Fly-in Breakfast, Airshow, and other aviation related event throughout Nebraska. I especially wish to thank Thomas Gribble, Lee Svoboda and Scott Stuart for their insight and writing about the many aspects of aviation which they have experienced. Another writer who has joined our ranks is Jess Banks with his contribution of aviation related short stories. To all the other people who have sent in articles, THANKS! It makes my job a whole lot easier and certainly more fun when YOU have responded in such a positive manner.

One last picture from Cozad. This is the "Prehistoric Airplane" created by Jim Marshall. Jim actually drives this in parades, with the wings flapping and its one cylinder engine merrily chugging away. We've come a long way in aviation! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



The Prehistoric Airplane

Congratulations



Private

Matthew Lorenzen - Blair
Wayne Bates - Bellevue
Robert Wilson - Clay Center
Alexander Raines - Lincoln
Stephen Webb, IV - Omaha
Terry Schwarzenbach - Omaha
Adam Shaw - Omaha
John Pogge - Omaha
Jesse Peterson - Papillion
David Leis - Scottsbluff
Jason Stephens - Staplehurst

Benjamin Yosfan - Bellevue
Adrian Rivera - Bellevue
Dale Nielsen - Lexington
Lloyd Blessington - Lincoln
Zachary McCoppin - Omaha
Steven Bojanski - Omaha
Matthew Bogard - Omaha
William Maxey - Omaha
Randall Ott - Papillion
Trent Sandberg - Scottsbluff
Lloyd Morrow - Wahoo

Gerald Waldrop - Bellevue
Joseph Fullenkamp - Bellevue
Rodney Silva - Bellevue
Jeffery Mulbery - Crete
Mason Rothwell - HyannisDouglas
Christopher Knoche - Lincoln
Kenneth Bowers - Omaha
Gregory Holm - Omaha
John Byrnes - Omaha
Mark Taylor - Omaha
Alan Arps - Schuyler

Steven Pecha - Yutan
Mark Klecha - Bellevue
Rachel Reineke - Burwell
Lynn Hartzell - Hallam
Douglas Carlo - Lincoln
David Zichek - Lincoln
Robert Semaan - Omaha
Arnold Robinson - Omaha
Rex Johnson - Omaha
Eric Lapham - Papillion
Frank Cuba - Silver Creek

ATP

Robert Gilsdorf - Lincoln

Helicopter

Jerry Ondrack - WoodRiver

Instrument

Levi Gray - Harrison
Scott Ekstrom - Bellevue
George Morrissey - Omaha

Commercial

Andrew Bunger - Hildreth
Steven Brinkman - Omaha
William McClure - David City

Ryan McGrail - Papillion
Christopher Wemhoff - Grand Is.
James Haire - Lincoln

Flight Instructor

Bob Burbach - Lincoln
Ross Lammers - Omaha
Jason Hartwig - Archer
Joseph Gegzna - Papillion
Benjamin Lashley - N Platte
James Oleary - Fremont
William Post - Gretna

Multi-Engine

Wade Westpahl - Bellevue
Bruce Heinlein - Bellevue
Chris Beard - Kearney
Jeffrey Braunger - Omaha
Michael Koenig - N Platte



The World's Most Significant Engine



Thomas Gribble

By Thomas Gribble
Steven W. Ells, writing in the July 2003 [AOPA Pilot](#), gave us a very detailed and highly accurate description of the motor Orville and Wilbur used in their 1903 Wright Flyer.

Many historians claim the Brothers built their own engine because motors of suitable power and weight were not available from established manufacturers. Fred Howard, in [Wilbur and Orville, A Biography of the Wright Brothers](#),

gives us a more plausible reason for building it themselves. The Brothers had written to several manufacturers, but only a few replied. It seems most did not want to undertake the unprofitable business of building a single, special purpose motor designed by someone else.

When one reads more about the Wrights, another, probably even more significant, reason for building their own becomes obvious: they were, of necessity, penny pinching skinflints. They had no government funds nor a wealthy patron. Every cent poured into this flying passion came from their small bicycle manufacturing and repairing shop. Compare the mostly taxpayer supplied \$73,000 cost of Dr. Samuel P. Langley's 1903 "Aerodrome" to the less than \$1,000 the Wrights spent in total on their 1903 "Flyer". This includes round trip travel between Dayton and Kitty Hawk. Building their own motor just because of cost is one of the things I so admire about the Wright Brothers.

While some writers point to this 1903 Wright motor as being way ahead of its time, it was in fact, anything but a modern marvel of that era. It was overweight and underpowered. It was, as Ells points out, uncontrollable; it ran wide open or not at all.

The low cost Wright engine, with its 4" x 4" bore and stroke giving a displacement of 201 cubic inches, did indeed have that poor power to weight ratio of 1 to 15 that Ells mentioned. It weighed an astonishing 180 pounds and developed a meager 12 horsepower at 1,090 RPM (that original 1,300 RPM Ells alludes to did not last very long). Its power per cubic inch was a measly 1 horsepower per 16.75 cubes.

In contrast, the engine powering Langley's twice-dunked monumental failure was very modern and efficient. Originally producing an anemic 8 horsepower, it was redesigned and built by

Continued on page 6

Check Airman's Corner

By Lee Svoboda

Last month we discussed the responsibility of the flight instructor in preparing the applicant for the practical examination. Let's now discuss some things that an applicant should do before and during the practical examination.



Lee Svoboda

BE ON TIME: If an applicant is late for the appointment with the examiner, be assured the examiner has started to develop an attitude toward the applicant.

MAKE SURE ALL PREREQUISITES ARE MET: Showing up for a practical examination with only two full stop solo landings at a towered airport wastes both your time and that of the examiner.

HAVE ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS READILY AVAILABLE These include an application signed by the instructor and the applicant, a photo identification document, a pilot certificate, a medical certificate, results of the knowledge examination, a flight logbook with the required endorsements, etc. When the examiner has to sit around and watch the applicant dig through a wallet for five minutes to find a pilot certificate, the examiner's attitude toward the applicant is not improving. Especially if the applicant cannot find his/her checkbook!

INSURE ALL REQUIRED PUBLICATIONS ARE CURRENT: When an applicant shows up with a sectional chart that has airports shown on it that were closed five years ago, the examiner continues to develop an attitude!

INSURE THE AIRCRAFT TO BE USED FOR THE PRACTICAL EXAMINATION HAS ALL REQUIRED INSPECTIONS DOCUMENTED: Showing up with an aircraft that has a transponder installed that has not been checked for the last five years, can also contribute to the attitude of the examiner.

The bottom line to this discussion is the fact that, in most cases, the first time an examiner sees an applicant is during the oral portion of the practical examination. The impression given by the applicant to the examiner goes a long way toward the successful outcome of the examination. If the oral portion of the practical examination goes well, both the applicant and the examiner have a good feeling as they walk out to the aircraft for the flight portion of examination. If the oral examination was "So So", the applicant goes into the flight portion of the examination under added pressure, thinking that now the flight must be perfect in order to pass. The examiner also approaches the flight portion of the examination with less than an optimistic attitude!



“Lost”

By Scott Stuart

No, this is not a story about being lost, that is, not knowing where you are in “space”, rather one about another plane down that did not have to happen!!

A friend of mine recently purchased his first plane, a Cessna 182. The seller then



Scott Stuart

bought a Cessna 210 for his use, and crashed less than ten hours later, injuries critical. Care to guess what happened? You got it, he ran out of gas!! What is up with that?? If we remember to put the wheels down and put plenty of good, clean gas in the tanks, we will stop 90% of all general aviation accidents!! Why don't we do it?? Why do we have to keep FAA accident investigators in work??

On a recent trip to TEB in the Bonanza I had scheduled a stop in Kendallville, IN for fuel. IFR minimums as reported on the AWOS would not allow me to make it in. So, FWA became the option for the ILS there. It was 300/1 in rain and fog. Worse, gas was \$3.17 per gallon!! Worth every dime!

As I took off for HZL in eastern Pennsylvania only to find the VOR approach there below minimums, and the localizer approach right at minimums. I made it in, and guess what? The FBO had folded that day, THAT DAY, and no fuel was available!! The next day I had to hop over to Wilkes-Barre (AVP) for gas, another ILS, and it was then, again, I was glad I paid the \$3.17 per gallon in FWA so I would have enough to take-off and comfortably complete the flight to AVP. My insurance carrier was most likely happy, too. Gas is good, more is better. When you start calculating your fuel burn and your time in flight, maybe it is time to land for more, just to be sure?? Statistics do not lie. Dead men tell no tales. Either one is not a good option!

In 1992 I had nearly purchased a PA28-140 for my wife and sons to learn to fly in. It crashed 7 miles short of the runway the same day I was to see it. It ran out of gas! The owner was trying to save a buck. He lost his plane, and I would hate to be paying his insurance premiums right now, if he can get insurance at all!! And, who wants to fly with someone like that?? Do you want to do all your flying alone?

Finally, as we approach winter, just remember that to produce the same amount of power in our planes, we will burn more gas than the summer, maybe not a lot, but more. Be careful out there, the guys that publish this stuff don't want to hear about you/me/us other than “had a great flight!” Gas? Man's best friend in an airplane!

Cozad: “100 Years Over the 100th Meridian”

By Dr. Marilyn Peterson

The Centennial of Flight: Celebrating “100 Years Over The 100th Meridian” has been marked as the “Event of the Century” spanning 14 days. In the last edition of PIREPS, the Gala Flight Banquet was highlighted, plus the events surrounding that weekend.

Astronaut Anderson Welcomes You to Cozad



Beginning on October 20, educational programs were presented in the Cozad City Schools, plus area rural schools. Examples of those offerings were Ballooning by Dr. Gordon Emry, Balloon Pilot; Vietnam Helicopters by Eldon Terrell; Airplanes and the History of the Planets by Dick Hansen; Katharine Wright telling stories about the Wright family and Astronaut Clayton Anderson sharing extra time with students.

Melanie Johnson, Flight Attendant for Continental Airlines, spoke at the Flying Royalty Brunch, where several people were honored with citations, including International Aviation Duchess, Mary Jane Vasey of Cozad.

The “Living History Portrayal” by Wright brothers' sister Katharine Wright, provided insights into the lives of the Wright family. Katharine (portrayed by Betty Darst) was inducted into the 100th Meridian Aviation Hall of Fame and guests were recognized for their involvement in flight.



Portrayed by Betty Darst



1929 Arrow Sport in Front of 100th Meridian Museum

The only flying example of a 1929 Arrow Sport aircraft traveled Highway 30 into the city of Cozad on Saturday, October 25. It was a “traffic stopper,”

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Cozad" "100 Years Over the 100th Meridian"

escorted by the Cozad Pilot Department. The plane was placed on the main street, with everyone coming to inspect it and asking if it "were flown to the location"! Veterans were honored with citations, thanking them for their service to America.

Students portrayed the History of Flight in Central Nebraska via a playlet they had written. It included a historical power point and musical selections on Sunday, October 26.

First Graders Parachute Routine (1)



Routine (2), It Goes Up!



Routine (3), All Under the Parachute!



"Happy Landings" was the wonderful closing ceremony. There was a fly-over and 70 first graders displaying the parachute routine they had created. The football and volleyball teams also flew balloons they had designed and built.

The "Event of the Century" for the 100th Meridian at Cozad provided many happy memories, unique stories and times of celebration. It is rewarding

"Centennial of Flight Leaders"



L to R, Glenda France, Dick Hansen, Marilyn Peterson, and Dave Malcom

to note the number of people involved in this endeavor, with interest generated throughout America. Special thanks are extended to the people of Cozad, surrounding

communities and the Nebraska Humanities Council.

Eagle Makes Map

By Susan Biba

When Brandon Biba first began thinking about possible ideas for his Eagle Scout project, his thoughts eventually turned to aviation. After all, he had been flying in and out of Fairmont State Airfield with his parents since before he was born. He knew there was no information available for those who stopped at the small airport for fuel or for a rest break to satisfy their curiosity. After discussing his plans with the Fillmore County Historical

Society, he learned that they would like to have a large, to-scale, map painted on the concrete to orient visitors to the airbase. He tracked down plans of Fairmont Army Air Field from 1946 with the help of the Department of Aeronautics. He also found some photos of the Air Base at the Fillmore County Museum and from local historian, Doug Rung. Brandon also returned to the airport several times to take pictures from various angles. He worked to match the 1946 views with the 2003 reality. He also took some pictures from the air over the former Air Base. Footprints of the AvGas storage tanks and the roads around them showed up clearly in the lush spring grass.

Brandon scouted the Airfield for a good visible location for the map with reasonably smooth concrete. The local Ninety-nines loaned him their pavement-painting equipment. Brandon recruited younger Scouts to do the cleaning and background painting. He then asked older members of the Troop to help him with the scale layout and detail painting. Their attention to detail paid off when veterans and others commented about the detailing of the map.

Brandon's Display Map of Fairmont Army Airfield



During the Celebration of Aviation at the Fairmont Army Air Field, Brandon was available near his map to answer questions. A large map of the Base and a collection of then and now photos were also on display. Brandon said some of the most interesting times were when veterans who had served at Fairmont would stop and tell Brandon where they had worked and some of their memories of those times during World War II. Many of them proudly pointed those locations out to family and friends as they stood there taking in the huge old bomber hangars and standing among the historic planes gathered for the airshow later in the day. He enjoyed showing them photos of remnants of the Base that were still visible from the air.

After the Air Show was over, Brandon completed the last step of his project by hanging the map and photos inside the pilot's lounge at Fairmont State Airfield. Members of the Nebraska Chapter of the Ninety-nines provided the "elbow grease" to give a new coat of paint to the interior of the pilot's lounge which provides a great back drop for the photo display. Now pilots "passing through" or waiting for a ride or fuel can learn more about the history of Fairmont Army Air Field during World War II. Brandon Biba became an Eagle Scout on August 6, 2003.



The World's Most Significant Engine *Cont. from page 3*

Langley's assistant, Charles M. Manly, and bore little resemblance to its prototype, Stephen Balzer's pathetic rotary. Manly's expensive creation was a five cylinder, water-cooled radial. According to Harry Combs in *Kill Devil Hill*, it produced an astounding 52 horsepower and weighed a mere 125 pounds, yielding an incredible 1 to 2.4 power to weight ratio. Fred Howard also cites 52 horsepower. In *Who's Who in Aviation History*, William Longyard gives it "at least" 42 horsepower with a weight of 208 pounds. Even with this skimpiest power from a heftier engine, it is still an amazing 1 to 4.95 power to weight ratio.

The 1903 Buick overhead valve engine was a two cylinder, with a displacement of 159 cubic inches. It put out 21 horsepower at 1230 RPM. This 1 horsepower per 7.57 cubic inches was more than twice as effective as the Wright's motor. David D. Buick had already developed this motor when Orville and Wilbur began looking for a power plant in late 1902. Even Henry Ford's 1903 automobile motors produced 1 horsepower per 12.56 cubic inches. And, the RPM of all these automobile motors was controllable.

When Charles E. Taylor began building the Wright motor in early 1903, there were more than a dozen different makes and models of engines available, including some from motorcycle manufacturer and future Wright competitor and antagonist Glenn Curtiss. They were all more suitable in power, weight, controllability, and durability than the motor powering the 1903 Wright Flyer. Their only drawback was cost.

Charlie Taylor is rightly credited with building the first Wright Brothers' engines from plans developed by "The Boys", as Charlie called them. He did all the work which could be accomplished by machining; he was, after all, a machinist. However, the castings, such as the crankcase, were produced outside their own shop. By the lowest bidder, no doubt.

Ells tells us the cooling system consisted of a water tank that replenished the engine's water supply as it evaporated away. However, during an interview in 1949, Charlie Taylor said the motor had a radiator made of metal speaking tubes of the type then used in apartment buildings. In his biography of the Brothers, Fred Howard says these tubes were flattened somewhat to reduce their capacity, and arranged in a slim radiator. The use of this second-hand material would certainly be in keeping with the Brothers' tight-fisted ways.

This quite crude engine was tested in February 1903, and on the second trial, a bearing froze, breaking the crankcase. It took another two months to get a new one cast. It was ready in plenty of time, however, and with improvements to prevent another catastrophic failure.

That this engine was, in all probability, totally inadequate for flights of great endurance was unimportant to the Wrights. They were not at this time intent on building a practical airplane. That would come later, in 1904 and beyond. This 1903 Flyer was to be what later theorists would call a "proof of concept vehicle". It merely had to maintain sustained flight, under its own power, with one man aboard controlling it, and be able to land at a point at least as high as that from which it began. These were their own self-imposed requirements. And, they were most wonderfully attained that Thursday morning over North Carolina's Outer Banks.

This, the world's most significant airplane engine, flew only five times. The first flight, on Monday, December 14, 1903, was considered unsatisfactory, not even a flight at all, by the Brothers. The Flyer traveled a scant 105 feet in a short 3 seconds and ended its brief hop out of control. Wilbur had overcontrolled, pitching the nose up until airspeed had dissipated precariously. The Flyer munched down onto the sand, breaking the elevator's rear spar, one landing skid, a strut and its brace wire.

Repairs were quickly made and the Flyer was ready for flight the next day. But a dead calm prevailed on Tuesday and Wednesday. They, like carrier pilots, needed a head wind in order to get airborne on the short take-off track. On December 17, the wind was blowing a gale. Up to 30 MPH. Far too high for an aircraft weighing 751 or 761 (depending upon which Brother was flying) pounds and having a wing loading of less than one and a half pounds per square foot! But, it was now or not till spring. Contrary to popular folk lore, Orville did not win the coin toss for the first flight attempt. He had lost the toss on the 14th, so today it was his turn to go first.

The rest, as the saying goes, is history. That first flight, or all four flights made on December 17, 1903, did indeed satisfy the Brothers' narrow, precise and exacting definition of actual human flight in a powered airplane. However, these are the world's second most significant flights of all time, made in the world's second most significant aircraft of all time. The Wright Brothers' truly towering achievement, made in the most significant aircraft ever built anywhere in the world at any time, had come in October 1902.





"THE GIFT"

By Jess Banks

Joe was out on a five day trip in the middle of a winter storm and wondering why it had to be him? He was on the sixth leg of day four in the foulest, most miserable weather a winter storm could dish out. Nearly every takeoff that day had been preceded by a de-icing followed by a lengthy wait in the takeoff lineup that almost caused a trip back to the de-icing area for more of the latest type IV de-icing fluid. Joe mentally thanked the experts who had developed a fluid which could keep the aircraft free of ice for a good thirty minutes. He felt sympathy for the line crew who had to spray the aircraft in these miserable conditions, especially the ones who didn't have that comfortable cab with all the windows that protected them from the elements and the spray.

The second problem Joe had, this was Christmas eve and he had been shopping hard for gifts for his wife and two kids! He had a gift for each of them but just didn't feel they were the right ones. Time to think about that some more in a little while, right now Joe needed to focus on his Instrument Landing System (ILS) approach down to a reported ceiling of 200 feet above the ground and one half mile surface visibility in driving snow! Joe's copilot was making the radio calls and watching the instruments, backing Joe up as needed. Normally, Joe would have coupled the autopilot to the ILS signal but that function had quit working just before the approach began. Joe was hand flying the aircraft loaded with 128 passengers all of whom were trying to get home for Christmas!

Another problem that kept dogging Joe was his suitcase! You've seen those little roller suitcases with the extendable handle the flight crews all seem to have and its difficult to carry everything you need for a five day trip in one of them! You need an extra pair of shoes, your shaving kit, and enough socks and underwear, plus a couple of clean uniform shirts an extra pair of uniform pants and some regular clothes for those short evenings in a hotel. Joe always folded everything very precisely for that suitcase because that was the only way he could get everything into it for his trips. He had even demonstrated to his nephew, who had a yen to travel, how to fold and not crumple things for the suitcase! You could almost say it was an obsession with Joe on how to pack the suitcase that kept him comfortable for five day stretches. This time it bulged with the little gifts he had picked up for his family and it just didn't look right! The zippers wouldn't zip right and he had to allow perfect strangers at each security checkpoint go through his personal possessions as if he were a criminal!

The controller was giving Joe headings and altitudes to fly while fitting the aircraft into the sequence for landing. "Turn right heading 100 degrees, maintain 2400 feet until established on the localizer, cleared for the ILS approach to runway 14 right, contact tower on 120.75". Joe heard his copilot read back the clearance and check in on tower frequency. They were "cleared to land on 14R", now all Joe had to do was "fly the airplane". His copilot of the last four days was advising him, "localizer alive", which meant Joe was intercepting the desired course and needed to fly the aircraft to the

on course heading and maintain 2400 feet. Turbulence started with the early part of the approach and Joe had his hands full maintaining the localizer course and altitude. So far no one in back had gotten sick! Now Joe's copilot was advising "glide slope alive", the ILS needle was moving down from the top of the instrument case and Joe had almost forgotten to configure the aircraft for landing!! Joe called for approach flaps and as the glide slope was intercepted, "landing gear down". Now all that was required was to maintain that 300 foot per nautical mile angle of descent! The global positioning system (GPS) was indicating a 20 knot tailwind so the rate of descent had to be increased from a normal 700 feet per minute to 800 feet per minute down. Normally a minor correction in calm wind but now with the turbulence the vertical velocity indicator was jumping all over the place! Joe kept thinking, "fly the plane", "fly the plane", worry about the gifts on the ground! Now, "full flaps!" At 300 feet the copilot was calling out, "approaching minimums", "no visual on the runway". This was becoming a difficult approach! Precisely at 200 feet above the runway, the copilot called "minimums, approach lights in sight". Joe had about 10 seconds to visually transfer from instruments, keeping the rate of descent going, maintaining airspeed and land the aircraft with a now 15 knot crosswind in blowing snow! At 100 feet, Joe saw the runway! It wasn't the smoothest touch down Joe had ever made but the aircraft didn't bounce and stayed straight on the centerline! Joe's feet were almost shaking on the rudder pedal brakes and he was worn out from all the instrument flying, ready for a quiet, lonely Christmas Eve's night at a hotel!

Christmas Day dawned bright and clear, the storm had run itself out and now only two legs to fly before Joe could go home and celebrate with his family! Joe had spent a lot of money on those little gifts in his bulging suitcase but still wasn't sure they were the ones his family would enjoy! Finally the trip was over. Joe was on his way home, stopped at a light waiting for the green when he happened to notice a small patch of fluff next to the road. Joe got out of the car and discovered a young dog, shivering in the cold and snow. Without thinking he picked it up and snuggled it up in his overcoat, taking it back to his car.

Joe arrived home, carried the dog and his suitcase with the three expensive gifts into the house. His wife and children gathered around and were excited to see Joe and the "little dog" who they immediately named. Two bowls quickly appeared, one filled with warm milk and the other with leftovers from the previous evening meal. Everyone watched as the little dog drank the milk and ate the food. He was "home" and knew it!! The expensive gifts everyone had searched hours for during the previous weeks weren't even thought of, all efforts were focused on the little dog and his needs. That was a Christmas Joe and his family would remember! Their greatest gift appeared to come from heaven, was nothing they had earned or even deserved but gave them unconditional love with a faithfulness that none of them could even begin to comprehend. With the little dog's presence, they began to understand what Christmas was all about!

PIREPS

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Member National Association
of State Aviation Officials

“Merry Christmas and Happy New Year” From All the Staff at the Dept of Aeronautics

The Nebraska Aviation Symposium is Coming!

The twelfth annual Nebraska Aviation Symposium and Aircraft Maintenance Seminar will be at the Holiday Inn, Kearney, NE., January 21-24, 2004, and is open to the public. Early registration fees will be \$55 for the first two days (Pilot portion), \$55 for the last two days (Mechanics portion) or \$85 for the entire four day event. If you register at the door, fees will be \$75 for the first two days, \$75 for the last two days or \$105 for all four days. Early registrants, please send check to: Aviation Symposium, PO Box 80292, Lincoln, NE 68501.

Aerial Applicators Seminar & NATA Convention

The 56th annual Aerial Applicators Seminar will be held at the Sandhills Convention Center in North Platte, NE., February 9-11, 2004, and is open to the public. On Tuesday, Feb. 10, the Professional Aerial Applicators Support system (PAASS) will be presented followed by an evening banquet. On Wed., Feb. 11, the Dept. of Agriculture and Univ. of NE will present recertification topics and discussions. The NE Aviation Trades Assoc. (NATA) is a state organization which represents aerial applicators and representatives from related businesses across the state and region. More information: Judy McDowell 402-475-NATA or Convention Chairman, Bob Boardman 402-723-4952.

Dec 17 Lincoln. “From the Wright Brothers to the Future” presented by Air Force Assoc., Lincoln Chapter 187 and NE Centennial of Flight at the Penterman Armory, Lincoln ANG Base, 1130 a.m. Lunch followed by Billy Diehl, F-35 Project Director, presenting an overview of the next generation fighter. Also, Governor’s proclamation and presentation of the “Charles E. Taylor” plaque. Reservations required by Dec 15. More information: Diane Bartels, 402-489-3059, Email: DBSharpie@aol.com

Jan 3 and Feb 7 York. Snow or shine. York EAA Chapter 1055 serving Fly-in’s and Drive-in’s breakfast 8 to 10 a.m. Free to PIC.