

PIREPS

A monthly newsletter for Nebraska pilots and aviation enthusiasts



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

PIREPS

March 2004

Volume 56, Issue 2

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Official Publication of the
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Circulation: 3725

Nebraska Aviation Symposium, “Another Successful Event”

Nebraska Aviation Council Chairperson Sandi Decker and the Director of NDA Kent Penney, officially opened the 12th annual NE Aviation Symposium at Kearney, NE., which began on January 21st.



Sandi Decker

This was a combined Aviation Conference and Aircraft Maintenance Seminar where pilots, maintainers, fixed base operators, airport managers, contractors, and anyone else interested in aviation came together to have a great experience and learn more about what's going on in Nebraska aviation. Day one consisted of the Exhibit Hall reception with Exhibitors and an



Kent Penney

evening FAA Aviation Safety meeting conducted by the Lincoln Flight Standards District Office.

Day two began with registration in the Exhibit Hall and then opening remarks by both Sandi Decker and Kent Penney. This was closely followed by Douglas Cairns, the first licensed pilot with Type 1 diabetes to fly around the world. Over five months he made 63 flights, traveled over 26,300 miles and visited 22 countries. The last leg of the trip was from North Platte, NE to Council Bluffs, Iowa on February 19, 2003. Douglas gave a power point briefing on his around the world flight and an inspiring talk on how to cope with diabetes and still be able to accomplish your dreams. Prior to being diagnosed with diabetes, Douglas was an instructor pilot with the Royal Air Force in the United Kingdom.



Douglas Cairns

A variety of concurrent sessions took place during the remainder of the day and were well attended. The luncheon guest speaker was Captain Jim Tucker, who had been severely wounded during an attempted hijacking of FedEx Flight 705 on April 7, 1994. His enthralling narrative of events held everyone spellbound!

The evening banquet was the highlight of the four day event where five individuals were inducted into the Nebraska Aviation Hall of Fame. Look inside this edition for their biographies and pictures.

Friday and Saturday consisted of the Aviation Maintenance Seminar where 153 mechanics received their annual recertification by attending at least eight hours of various maintenance presentations. More information about the Symposium is included inside this issue.



Economic Impact of Aviation in Nebraska

By Kent Penney

The results are in and the economic impact of aviation in Nebraska is \$1.7 billion in total revenues per year. In addition, there is \$681.3 million in annual payroll and over 29,400 jobs in Nebraska attributed to aviation and serving visitors who come to Nebraska through aviation.

Nebraska airports do generate revenues, wages, and jobs for the State. Not only do the airports themselves generate economic benefits, but also many other non-aviation employers rely on Nebraska's system of public use airports to support their daily business activities. While most people in Nebraska are quite familiar with large airports in the state, such as Omaha's Eppley Airfield with airline service, many are less familiar with the other public-use airports in the state. In order for citizens to more fully understand the relationship between Nebraska public-use airports and the statewide economy, an economic impact analysis was under-



Kent Penney
Director, Nebraska
Dept. of Aeronautics

taken by the Nebraska Department of Aeronautics.

This study shows that many people, even beyond the immediate environs of each airport, derive significant economic benefits from the daily operation of the airport system. These groups include the commercial and industrial employers whose shipments arrive or depart via the airports and employees of businesses and corporations who base corporate aircraft at Nebraska airports. Quite significantly, visitors to Nebraska use our hotels and restaurants and get here by using general aviation aircraft and airlines.

Using McCook Municipal Airport as an example (it is only one of Nebraska's 88 public use airports) the study indicated that the airport created a total of 57 jobs and generated \$1.2 million in annual aviation related payrolls. Additionally, \$8.9 million was generated from other activities related to its having a municipal airport.

Further details of the study can be found at the Department's website www.aero.state.ne.us. Once there, on the left side scroll down to Publications and then click on "Economic Impact of Aviation in Nebraska". This information includes the technical report and individual airport economic impact data sheets. In addition, the Department is preparing a template PowerPoint presentation regarding the Economic Impact of Aviation in Nebraska which will be sent to airports and also be available on our website.

Nebraska Aviation Maintenance Seminar

The Nebraska Aviation Maintenance Seminar began Friday morning and continued through Saturday (January 23-24). Day-time activities consisted of briefings on Balancing and Vibration Analysis Systems; Turbine Engine Ignition Systems; Aircraft Tires - Construction, Care and Maintenance; Aircraft Wiring, and Aircraft Windows - Installation and Maintenance.



Jim Slade

Friday evening included a banquet with guest speaker Jim Slade giving a slide show talk about the Wright brother's remarkable achievements and the contributions of the world's first powered aircraft mechanic, Charles Taylor, who worked in

both Lincoln and Kearney, Nebraska.

The FAA Aviation Maintenance Technician's Awards were presented at the banquet by Jerry Crowley, Lincoln Flight Standards District Office (FSDO). An award is presented to a company if at least three of their maintenance personnel attended the Seminar and it has five levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Ruby and Diamond. Award of the Diamond means the company had at least 25% of

their maintenance personnel attending while award of the Bronze means that 5% of their maintenance people attended. The following companies received the Diamond award: Elliott Aviation, Garrett Aviation, and ConAgra. Duncan Aviation received the Bronze award.

Saturday began with presentations concerning Field Approvals; Maintenance of Raytheon Aircraft: King Air, Baron and Bonanzas; Human Factors in Aviation Maintenance; Conversion of Freon Air Conditioning Systems and the Impact of Aging Aircraft. The Seminar ended with the awarding of door prizes followed by closing remarks from the Lincoln FSDO.

All maintenance technicians who attended eight hours of the Seminar received renewal of their Inspection Authorization as this was an FAA approved course.





“The Briefing”

By Thomas Gribble

Tradition dictated an arrival fifteen minutes before the shift was scheduled to begin. This would allow the oncoming controller to check NOTAMs, obtain a weather briefing, and get “The Picture”, a feel for the traffic situation from the controller being relieved. However, this is Cheyenne, Wyoming. A half dozen aircraft would normally be the most that would make up “The Picture”. Weather briefings during the summer were usually short: “Expect afternoon thunderstorms”. The only NOTAM today was the same old ongoing one we’d had for a week or more. So, to the unspoken annoyance of my co-workers, I probably got there by my usual five minutes early.



Thomas Gribble

About the time I was so engaged, a training Captain was doing the airline equivalent of this at the United Airlines Training Center in Denver. He had read the same NOTAM for CYS every day since last week. This was before today’s modern simulators, which permit all training and qualifying to be done without ever getting airborne. So, on this day he would be visiting Cheyenne in a Boeing 727 with a couple of upgrading crewmembers. Having United trainers in the Cheyenne pattern was always a pleasant and fairly regular occurrence in those years.

Sometime later in the day I was working “local control”, the position identified on the radio as “Cheyenne tower”. To my left sat “Cheyenne approach control”. That controller now told me United would call at the marker shortly. The big Boeing tri-motor had been making ILS approaches to runway 26 for quite some time, terminating in missed approaches, touch and goes, and full stops with taxi-backs.

When the flight called over the marker, they said they wanted to try something different this time. “How about a circle to runway 12” was their request. Welcoming a change of pace, I said, “That’s approved, plan a left circle”. No need to ask for a report breaking off the ILS; with the outstanding visibility, I had the 727 in sight at all times.

When United was north of the airport on a left base for runway 12, I pivoted around checking the position of other traffic in the pattern for runway 26. The spacing looked good. I cleared the United trainer for the “option”.

It was just habit. When the airliner was on short final to runway 12, I stood and let my eyes sweep the runway from approach end to departure end. When I saw them, it was as if I’d been given a mighty blow. I reeled as the NOTAM instantly filled my consciousness. Grabbing the mike, I swung around pointing at the big airplane now over the threshold. “United Trainer, GO AROUND,

Continued on Page 8

“Aircraft & Attitudes”

By Lee Svoboda

What kind of aircraft must a private pilot applicant use for their practical test? In accordance with 14 CFR section 61.45, it must be an airworthy, certificated aircraft and it must:



Lee Svoboda

1. Be of U.S., foreign or military registry of the same category, class, and type, if applicable, for the certificate and/or rating for which the applicant is applying;
2. Have fully functioning dual controls, except as provided for in 14 CFR section 61.45(c) and (e); and
3. Be capable of performing all AREAS OF OPERATION appropriate to the rating sought and have no operating limitations, which prohibit its use in any of the AREAS OF OPERATION, required for the practical test.

Okay, lets boil this down and discuss exactly what the FAA is saying. Basically, the private pilot applicant must show up with an aircraft, if not military, of U.S. registration. It must have a registration certificate issued by the FAA. The aircraft must have fully functioning dual controls. Of course, the dual controls are for the safety of the examiner. If things get out of hand, the examiner can take over and save everybody’s bacon! However, if the examiner determines that the practical test can be conducted safely in the aircraft and there is no requirement to demonstrate instrument skills, the practical test can be given in a single control aircraft. And of course, the aircraft must be able to perform all the maneuvers required for the private pilot certification.

This covers all the regulatory requirements; however, there are a few common sense items that an applicant and/or the instructor should look at before the applicant goes for their private pilot practical test. For example, is the aircraft clean both on the inside and outside? If the examiner walks up to the aircraft and there is oil all over the cowling, he/she really gets a bad feeling! If there are empty coffee cups and candy bar wrappers all over the inside of the aircraft, the examiner gets a bad feeling! If the windshield is dirty and the tires are low, the examiner gets a bad feeling!

Now we know the aircraft must meet the regulatory requirements or the examiner will not administer the practical test. As for the common sense items, they may not be the cause of a failure, but they sure do affect the attitude of the examiner!



NE Aviation Hall of Fame

Don Brown

Donald W. Brown grew up in the Denver, Colorado area. In 1935, Brown was working as a pharmacist's apprentice in a drug



Don Brown

store across the street from his home and was attending Denver University. His only transportation was a bicycle, which he rode daily ten miles to Denver University, ten miles to Denver Municipal Airport (later Stapleton) and then ten miles to work at the drug store. It was

during this time that he first soloed a Rearwin Junior aircraft.

In 1940, Brown started working for Ray Wilson, splicing wing spars for \$1.00 per hour. Mr. Wilson later founded Monarch Airlines which became Frontier Airlines. The Browns moved with Wilson to Chickasha, OK, where Brown helped originate W&B Army Primary Flying School. The next move was to New Mexico, where Brown was working for the Cutter-Carr Flying School as Test pilot and Superintendent of Maintenance. He changed the pace of wing repairs by introducing the wing spar splicing that he had developed, making a huge impact on military maintenance costs and aircraft down time.

1943 found Brown working as a Maintenance Inspector for the Civil Aeronautics Administration in Lincoln, NE. The CCA terminated its war training service in 1944, so Brown went to work for Trans World Airlines, transporting home-coming troops from coast to coast for the government.

In 1946, the Browns moved to Lodgepole, NE, which was Ruth Brown's hometown. They started Lodgepole Flying Service, moved a home onto the airport, created a carefully manicured dirt strip, then built a hangar and maintenance shop. Brown also started a fixed base operation in Sidney and Kimball. Lodgepole Flying Service was first in the state to use twin engine aircraft in its charter operation. Brown flew pipeline patrol for Marathon Oil and Arapahoe Pipeline Companies, conducted agricultural fertilizing, corn pollinating and a spraying and dusting operation.

During the blizzard of 1940, using ski equipped aircraft, Brown flew around the clock operations, flying stranded travelers to safety, transporting people to hospitals, delivering fuel and groceries to farmers and herders and food to stranded livestock.

In 1961, Brown became Airport Manager at Alliance and opened a fixed base operation, Don Air Service. The charter and air ambulance service picked up so pipeline patrol pilots were hired.

Don Air Service was a distributor for Brantly helicopter, Champion aircraft and a dealer for Cessna and Mooney Aircraft. Brown also sold Bell helicopters. Brown was one of few designated maintenance inspectors and flight examiners in the region. Business was so good, JP-4 fuel was added to accommodate the increasing corporate customer.

In 1965, Brown took delivery of the first 5-place Brantly 305 helicopter. Don's Brantly helicopter distributorship was ranked first in the world. Brown conducted an altitude test for a prototype Brantly B-2B with turbocharger. The flight was made from the top of Pike's Peak, 14211 feet, landing at each 500 foot level.

Besides the FBO, Brown started Mid-Continent School of Aeronautics, a government-approved school for fixed wing, rotor, private pilot, commercial pilot, flight instructor and instrument ratings. In 1971, Brown started Trans-Nebraska Airlines which served Lincoln, Kearney, McCook, Scottsbluff, Chadron and Ames, Iowa as well as hubs of Denver, Omaha and Chicago.

Brown and his wife, Ruth retired to Meeker, CO, where she passed away in 1997. Don is still an aviation consultant but spends most of his time tending to his garden with his Labrador retriever and co-pilot, Ace. Donald W. Brown has logged over 50,000 accident free hours in almost every aircraft including the Learjet 24B.

Harrison Tull

From Woodbury, NJ, Harrison Tull was drafted into a segregated Army Air Corps in July 1943, to begin a 27-year career. When he entered the military, most opportunities for African-American officers were limited. While attending basic training at Keesler AFB, MS, Tull was accepted to the Aviation Cadet Program at Tuskegee, Alabama. Assigned to the Aerial Bombardment School at Midland, TX, he received his rated observer wings on November 4, 1944, and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant.



Harrison Tull

Tull's first operational assignment was with the prestigious 477th Bombardment Group to fly in the B-25. He still recalls with pride being selected to fly with this elite unit. In 1945, as World War II was winding down, Tull was released from this unit and eventually stationed at Selma Army Air Field, LA, for navigation training. In November of that year, Tull was released from active duty for being among a group of black officers who visited an all-white Officers Club.

Remaining in the military reserves for the next seven years, Tull would again serve his nation as he was recalled to active duty for the Korean War. He was assigned as a navigation instructor at



Ellington AFB, TX, even though he had never completed formal navigation training. In 1953, he was transferred to Randolph AFB, TX, for B-29 crew training with further assignment to the 90th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW), Forbes AFB, KS. Since desegregation was still a new idea in the armed forces at the time, assigning a black officer to an aircrew required a vote of acceptance by the rest of the members. Tull was accepted unanimously, and in August of that year his crew was assigned to Yokota Air Base, Japan, with the 98th Bombardment Wing, flying Korean post-war support missions.

As the conflict cooled down and the Cold War heated up, the need for information about the Soviet Union became critical to the defense of our nation. In 1954, Tull finally attended navigation training and received his first promotion in 11 years, to the rank of First Lieutenant. After graduation, he went on to attend the Advanced Observer Electronic Countermeasures Course and entered the emerging career field of electronic warfare. Returning to Forbes in February 1956, he served as an Electronic Warfare Officer in the 55th SRW where he spent the next 14 years making an unprecedented impact in the field of electronic warfare. He would serve as an equipment operator, instructor and evaluator. In 1965, the 55th began receiving the RC-135C, ushering in a new era in electronic reconnaissance with a greatly improved ability to collect and exploit signals. At Offutt AFB, NE, Tull was assigned to the 55th Electronic Intelligence Operations Squadron. He commanded the squadron until his retirement on April 1, 1970.

Lieutenant Colonel Tull and the rest of the Tuskegee Airmen played a critical role in the Air Force by paving the way for African-Americans in military aviation and subsequently, space exploration. He is an active member of the local chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. (TAI) and continues to inspire and motivate Omaha's youth to dream and aim high.

Charles A. Lane, Jr.

Lt. Colonel Charles A. Lane (USAF Retired) was born on June 2, 1925 in St Louis, Missouri. He graduated from Sumner High School in 1943, then attended the Harriet Beecher Stowe Teachers College. His studies were interrupted when he entered the Cadet Corps at Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama in 1943, subsequently graduating from flying class 44-H on September 8, 1944.

As a brand new fighter pilot, he joined the Army Air Corps, flying with the 99th Pursuit Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group. He flew 26 combat missions in Italy during World War II. His near 7,000 flying hours include experience in the P-46, P-47 and P-51 fighters escorting B-17s; transport aircraft such as the C-47 and T-39 and B-52 aircraft. The Tuskegee Airmen participated in over 1,500 missions in Europe and North Africa during World War II, losing only 98 pilots--the only unit to achieve such distinction.

After World War II, he entered the electronics field, serving as a Communications Electronics Officer. He also worked for 12 years in the Air Force Special Security Service. He began his SAC career in 1963, serving in Vietnam from 1964-1968 and amassed



Charles A. Lane, Jr.

numerous flying hours in the B-52 from 1968 -1970 from Anderson AFB, Guam. He flew his final mission in the B-52 on June 1, 1970 and retired from the Air Force on September 1, 1970.

Lt. Colonel Lane has lived in Nebraska since September 1970. He directed and managed the Greater Omaha Community Action program from 1970 to 1992, when he re-

tired. Throughout his tenure, he administered up to 58 programs dealing with poverty and its impact on children as well as seniors, the mentally and physically challenged. These programs also encompassed housing rehabilitation and transportation issues for the disenfranchised.

He is actively involved with the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) in North Omaha, currently serving as the CAP Squadron Commander. This organization targets inner city youths who participate in a variety of activities, including military education, leadership training, and a myriad of community services.

Lt. Colonel Lane and the rest of the Tuskegee Airmen played a critical role in the Air Force by paving the way for African-Americans in military aviation and subsequently, space exploration. A dynamic member of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc (TAI), Lt. Colonel Lane is one of four original Tuskegee Airmen known to be residing in Nebraska. TAI strives to honor the legacy of these pioneers and to use their example of moral character, proficiency, professionalism and perseverance as a means of educating and inspiring Nebraska's youth. Lt. Colonel Lane currently represents Omaha's Alfonza Davis Chapter at the TAI National Board of Directors.

Paul Adams

Lt. Colonel Paul Adams was born in Greenville, South Carolina, in 1920. He graduated from Sterling High School and attended South Carolina University. Dreaming of being a pilot since childhood, Paul entered Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama, in 1942. As a cadet, he graduated as a fighter pilot from class 43-D, and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. In 1943, he was assigned to fly the P-40 Warthog in the 332nd Fighter Group. Upon arrival in Italy, 2Lt. Adams was



Paul Adams



reassigned to fly the P-39 Belaire Cobra to patrol the Naples harbor. During World War II, the Tuskegee Airmen participated, as members of the four-squadron 332nd Fighter Group, in more than 1,500 missions in Europe and North Africa, losing only 98 pilots. This was the only unit to lose so few pilots in this type of operation.

In 1945, Capt Adams returned to the US and was discharged from the Army Air Corps. In 1946, he reentered the Army as 1Lt. Adams to attend Supply School. Subsequent to assignments at Lockborne AFB in Columbus, Ohio, as the Supply Officer, and Travis AFB as the Fleet Service Officer, he was assigned to Hickam Field in Honolulu, as an instructor at Howard University, Washington, DC, and in Denver, CO for Photo Interpretation School. In addition, he served at Westover, MA with dual responsibilities as Supply and Intelligence Officer, in Goose Bay, Newfoundland as Intelligence Officer, and finally as Deputy Base Commander at Lincoln AFB, NE. He obtained the rank of Lt. Colonel in the Air Force, retiring after 20 years of service in December 1963. During his service, Lt. Colonel Adams served in nine major campaigns and received the Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf clusters.

After retiring from the Air Force, Paul joined the staff at Lincoln High School as an Industrial Arts teacher in 1964. He was one of the first three African-American teachers. He continued to teach until 1982, when he retired. Paul is a member of the Capital City Kiwanis, served as president of the Lincoln NAACP, and as an officer with The Retired Officers Association (currently named the Military Officers Association of America). He organized a Builders Club at East High School and served as a Kiwanis Grandpa at Elliott School. He remains active in the Masons and his church.

Lt. Colonel Adams and the rest of the Tuskegee Airmen played a critical role in the Air Force by paving the way for African-Americans in military aviation and subsequently, space exploration. Lt. Colonel Adams is an active member of the local chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc, the Alfonza Davis chapter in Omaha. As one of the original Tuskegee Airmen, he continues their legacy as he tirelessly lectures to Omaha's youth on a year-round basis, educating and motivating them to strive for higher goals. He is married to the former Alda Thompson and has three children.

Tommy Martin

Thomas William Martin, Jr. (Tommy) was born on September 9, 1899 in Sioux City, Iowa. In 1917, he joined his father in an auto body paint shop. The shop was owned by Art Hanford, who later started Hanford Airlines at Rickenbacker Field in North Sioux City, South Dakota. A fire in a hangar at Rickenbacker Field damaged Charles Lindbergh's Spirit of St. Louis sister ship. Tommy helped repaint the plane and also had the privilege of changing the spark plugs on the Lindbergh aircraft. This sparked Tommy's love for aviation. He soloed on July 4, 1931 at Rickenbaker Field in a Buhl Pup. He started a partnership with George Phipps that lasted until 1949, when Martin went out on his own and began operating

Sioux Air, Inc. at the Sioux City, Iowa Municipal Airport. He offered crop dusting and other services. Martin was an early member of the Civil Air Patrol.

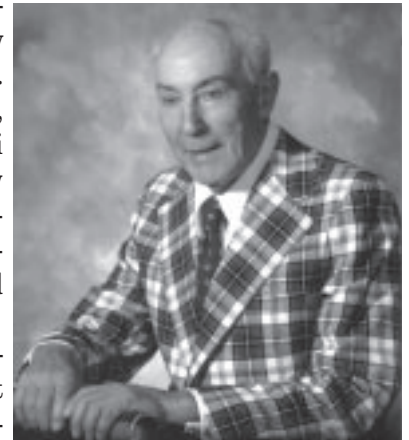
In the winter of 1948-49, Tommy flew missions in a ski plane, taking doctors to snow in's in isolated areas of northeast Nebraska. He also delivered supplies to the stranded farm families.

In 1957, Martin purchased land for the present Martin Field and it was operational by 1958. He continued

aerial application, flew charter flights, provided flight instruction and aircraft mechanical services. At the age of 79, Tommy became a licensed glider pilot and instructor.

In over 50 years of flying and over 30,000 hours, Tommy had only one accident due to carbon monoxide inhalation from a defective muffler. He and his student both walked away from the crash. In 1979, Martin was named Flight Instructor of the Year and received membership in the Silver Wings. He was awarded the Legion of Merit from OXS Aviation Pioneers. The localizer outer marker/initial approach fix for ILS runway 13 and NDB runway 13 at Sioux Gateway Airport, was named TOMMI in Martin's honor.

Tommy was 80 years old when he flew with his grandson, J.P. Martin, and checked him out for his glider pilots license. Tommy left the airport after that flight and drove to the hospital to begin cancer treatments. That flight was his last, but it continued a third generation of flying Martins. He also soloed Chip Martin on his 16th birthday in a J3 Piper Cub, which the family still owns. Tommy died on July 29, 1983. Martin Field continues today as a major primary and advanced flight instruction facility for northeast Nebraska. Perhaps Tommy's greatest reward came from his son, Gene who stated: "I hope someday my past will be as bright and as honorable as my Dad's".



Tommy Martin

Tommy Martin's Son and Extended Family Accepting Nomination



L to R: Son, Gene Martin, Grandsons Chip Martin and J.P. Martin, Great Grandsons, Thomas W. Martin III and Kyle Parkhill



Project of the Year

By Russ Gasper

Each year the Department of Aeronautics gives an award to the best airport project: the project that was on-time, under budget, had no major change orders, no disruption to airport activities and was good quality work. In other words, a good, smooth project.

This year's winner was a project that: came in under budget; had no change orders (which is quite an accomplishment for a \$1 million project); and had no disruptions in airport operations. The project consisted of resurfacing runway 35/17 and a subdrain and storm drain installation at North Platte Regional Airport.

This project got off to a great start. North Platte Regional Airport Authority selected their engineering consultant and had an engineering agreement in place and executed in the fall of 2001. Due to their initiative and go-getter attitude, plans and specifications were completed during the summer of 2002.

The airport sponsor was first in line for Federal funding that was to be available after October 2002. Through very good communication, the airport sponsor, engineer and contractor were very aggressive and responsive to notification of the availability of Federal funds which occurred during mid 2003. Construction started within a few weeks of being notified that funds were available.

Going into the project, it was anticipated that night construction might be required in the vicinity of the main runway and taxiway. Through excellent preparation, planning and communication by the airport sponsor, engineer and contractor; no construction delays, no disruptions in airport operations and no night construction activities occurred. It should be noted that no delays and disruptions are significant accomplishments. The project was completed approximately a week ahead of schedule. The airport sponsor was very pleased with the performance of the contractor and the



L to R: Matt Ressler, Mike Sharkey, Clint Cooper, Don McElravy

engineer.

This year's winner was AIP Project 18 for the North Platte Airport Authority. Accepting the award were: Mike Sharkey (North Platte Airport Authority), Don McElravy (Resident Observer HWS Consulting Group), Clint Cooper (Superintendent Simon Contractors of North Platte) and Matt Ressler of Simon Contractors.

Airport of the Year

By Kent Penney

The seven nominations for Airport of the Year were (in alphabetical order): Ainsworth, Alliance, Central City, Grand Island, Hay Springs, Kearney, and Seward. It was exciting to see that so many are proud of their airports and have so many good things to say about them. This year's winner was chosen by a 5 member committee representing: Experimental Aircraft Association, FBO/Air charter service, Nebraska Flying Farmers and Ranchers, Nebraska Aviation Trades Association, and the Nebraska Ninety-Nines, a National Association of female pilots.

There were several outstanding nominations, and it was a tough decision for our judges. This year's winner received several letters of support from local government and businesses that indicated

the airport is a first class facility and a major asset to the community. One letter of support indicated that nothing would kill economic development quicker than isolation. It was felt that without this airport, economic development in the area would be nonexistent due to isolation. The airport also provides a favorable image of aviation for the local community.

Airport activities and information were distributed to the community through: the Airport Manager participating in a talk show on a local radio station, having airline schedules on a local public access channel, community newsletters, a new airport website and inviting the community to catered events to meet Airport Authority members and Airline officials. One big event that occurred this year was that the airport was chosen as a host for the 2003 Fly'N for Make-A-Wish Air Rally/Race. This event was a success due in part to local support and the volunteers from the community who helped with a steak cookout for all participants and was hosted in the local FBO's hangar.

Two items that contributed to the selection of this airport were: strong community support and well maintained existing facilities. The airport has a full service Fixed Base Operator with 100 Low Lead and Jet A fuel available 24 hours a day. Additionally, there is an NDB, VOR, VASI, REILs, Automated Surface Observing System and a Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System which is near completion. Courtesy cars for transient aircrews are always available at the field. This year's winner of the 2003 Airport of the Year Award was Alliance Municipal Airport.



Kent Penney and Alliance Airport Manager Barbara Watson

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“The Briefing”, Continued from page 3

Runway 12-30 closed! Men and equipment working on the runway!”

There had actually been no need to make that last transmission. The flight crew had seen the people on the ground about the same time I did, and had initiated a go-around on their own. By the time I saw the aircraft, the nose was up, the gear was coming up and jet exhaust was streaming from the tailpipes.

About one hundred men were on the southeast two thousand feet or so of the runway, facing southeast. They had been cleaning debris and old tar from the joints in the pavement. Seeing United on the “go”, I turned my attention to the runway construction workers. The sound of the jet must just now be reaching their ears, for they turned as one, looking over their shoulders. Then, picks and shovels and brooms flew into the air, and a hundred men ran for the grass on either side of the runway.

I couldn't believe I had forgotten about the work which had been going on in front of my very eyes for several days. Extremely embarrassed, I apologized to United on the tower frequency. The Captain said he also had seen the NOTAM that morning, and in addition had been here on training flights earlier in the week. We had both been briefed. We had both seen the men and equipment many times. But, in our comfortable complacency with the everyday routines of the tasks at hand, we had both completely forgotten all about the NOTAM, and the men, and the equipment.

Soon, summer will be here, bringing to many of our airports this year's construction activities and runway closures. I urge you: don't just check the NOTAMS; REMEMBER THEM!

Calendar

- York Municipal Airport**, EAA Chapter 1055 sponsors a Fly-in breakfast on the 1st Saturday of every month. 8-10am. Snow, shine or rain. Free to PIC.
- Crete Municipal Airport**, EAA Chapter 569 sponsors a Fly-in breakfast the 3rd Saturday of every month. 7:30-10:30a.m. The dedicated breakfast crew vows it will never be cancelled.
- March 10** 7pm – 9pm. **AOPA Air Safety Foundation –“Maneuvering Flight - Hazardous to Your Health”**, Bellevue West High School, Bellevue.
- March Aviation Safety Meetings, all meetings 7pm - 9:30pm**
- 16 - Sidney - Western NE Community College at Airport.
 - 17 - Scottsbluff - Terminal Building Conference Rm at Airport.
 - 18 - Chadron - L & D Aero Service Hangar at Airport.
 - 25 - Grand Island - Runway Safety Meeting - Arpt Auth Conf Rm.
 - 30 - Columbus - AVCraft, Inc. Hangar at Airport.
- April Aviation Safety Meetings, all meetings 7pm - 9:30pm.**
- 01 - Valentine - New Courthouse meeting room.
 - 06 - Falls City - Falls City Aero Service Hangar at Airport.
 - 07 - Omaha - UNO Campus, **Certified Flight Instructor Meeting** at W.H. Thompson Alumni Center.
 - 08 - Hastings - Airport Terminal Building.
 - 13 - Ogallala - Airport Terminal Building.
 - 14 - Kimball - Kimball Air Service Hangar at Airport.
 - 15 - Alliance - Heartland Aviation Hangar at Airport.
 - 20 - Plattsmouth - Flight Nebraska Group Hangar at Airport.