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THE CROSSROADS OF WEST TEXAS

By Chris Sasser,
Texas Transportation Institute

If you ask retired Air Force Colonel and current Big Spring McMahon-Wrinkle Airport Manager Jim Little if winning the Texas Department of Transportation's 2010 Airport Manager of the Year award was the culmination of a great career, he would respectfully argue instead that he is just getting started.

From overseeing recently completed airport improvements that included reconstruction of a concrete runway (17-35) to assuring the airport was prepared to serve as a critical hub for ALON USA Refining personnel after the 2008 explosion, Colonel Little oversees a thriving airport that makes the citizens of Big Spring proud. *continued on pg. 4*



The newly reconstructed runway (17-35) is visible in this aerial photo of Big Spring McMahon-Wrinkle Airport. Special thanks to Marc Marchesseault for the airplane ride.



MAJOR CHANGES RECOMMENDED FOR TXDOT:

On January 5, 2011, a high level committee, named the Texas Department of Transportation's Restructure Council, tasked with recommending change for TxDOT, delivered their findings in a Special Meeting of the Texas Transportation Commission. The Council members are David Laney, a Dallas attorney and former Chairman of the Texas Transportation Commission; Jay Kimbrough, counsel for the Texas A&M Board of Regents; and Howard Wolf, a well known Houston attorney specializing in assisting companies or organizations experiencing difficulties.

Together, they reviewed the Grant Thornton report, along with several earlier reports, examining various aspects of TxDOT. The purpose of the Council was to examine and extract from the reports, as well as any other sources the Council deemed appropriate, recommendations for the restructure, reform and modernization of TxDOT that would have the most valuable and lasting impact on enhancing TxDOT's organizational

performance. For those interested in reviewing the report, it can be found at http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/restructure/report_010511.pdf. The primary reason for including this information in my column is to highlight the Council's comments pertaining to aviation and air transportation. On page 29 of the report is a section on Aviation and Passenger Rail. The following comments pertaining to aviation are taken from that section.

"[T]he demands on transportation systems in Texas today are enormous and will increase in the foreseeable future. Texas' approach to these challenges must encompass more than just roads. Rail, aviation, ports, and transit, for instance, already play significant roles in moving people and goods. TxDOT's direct and indirect coordinating roles in the development of capacity and interconnectivity of all elements of Texas' transportation systems should be appropriately embodied in the organizational structure as strategic elements in addressing the future mobility challenges of Texas. General aviation and rail planning are of particular importance.

General aviation airports represent an increasingly valuable transportation asset for Texas and for the individual communities they serve. For instance, the approximately 270 general aviation airports are responsible for nearly 61,900 jobs and nine billion annually in economic impact. The Council recognizes TxDOT's efforts in building and maintaining a nationally recognized airport system and encourages the Commission to include general aviation, along with other modes as significant partners with rising importance in solving the state's transportation challenge."

The role of our state's airport system is not well understood by the general public. I am extremely pleased that the Restructure Council realizes the importance of general aviation and saw fit to acknowledge the work that has been done to make the Texas Statewide Airport System one of the best in the nation. I also appreciate the Council pointing out the fact that our system will play a significant role in helping solve our transportation problems and contributing to the future economic growth of Texas.◆



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AVN DIRECTOR DAVE FULTON WINS CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Each year during its Annual Airports Conference, the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission recognizes outstanding achievements and contributions to aviation by presenting "Awards of Excellence" in five categories.

This year the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission presented their "Career Contributions to Aviation" award to TxDOT Aviation Director Dave Fulton, a native Tennessean, stating that he has set a career example for others through leadership, dedication, persistence and overall commitment to excellence during 10 years of active duty in Naval Aviation continuing Naval Reserve duty until retirement. He served in the Tennessee Aeronautics Division for 17 years, 10 of them as director, before going to Texas to be the Director of the Aviation Division for 18 years. He has been instrumental in the development and maintenance of literally hundreds of airports in two states. ♦

KARON WEIDEMANN RETIRES FROM TXDOT AVIATION DIVISION

Karon Wiedemann retired from the Aviation Division on August 31 following 38 years of service. A reception was held in her honor at the Hyatt Regency in Austin.

Wiedemann's career in aviation started at an early age while working as the receptionist for the Texas Aeronautics Commission while attending the University of Texas. After two years, Wiedemann moved to the accounting staff where she eventually became chief financial officer for the agency in 1980.

"In 1991, our agency and the State Department of Highways were merged together to create the Texas Department of Transportation," said Wiedemann in an interview last winter with the State Aviation Journal. "I then became the Director of Grant Management for the Aviation Division of TxDOT."

Wiedemann's duties and responsibilities included management of the division budget and approval of the grants through the Texas Transportation Commission. In 2009, she received the NASAO State Aviation Distinguished Service Award in Tucson, Arizona, for her exemplary work and dedication to the progress of aviation in her state.

One person who will surely miss Wiedemann's contribution to the agency is Aviation Division Director David Fulton. Fulton said it is impossible to quantify Wiedemann's contribution to the program: She has contributed to more growth of the program than any other individual over almost four decades. "It will be impossible to replace her," he said.

Wiedemann said aviation has truly been an exciting and interesting career and encourages those interested to get involved. "There is a certain glamour and thrill associated with flying," Wiedemann said, "and working in this business has provided that excitement." ♦



Karon Wiedemann and AVN Director of Flight Services Jay Joseph share a lighthearted moment at Karon's retirement reception.



The terminal building at Big Spring McMahon-Wrinkle Airport.

THE CROSSROADS OF WEST TEXAS *continued from pg. 1*

Rich History

The Big Spring Airport opened in 1929 and the following year became one of the first air mail hubs in Texas. The airport also had a brief period of commercial airline service with Trans-Texas Airways (later to become Texas International). Trans-Texas Airways operated flights in and around the Lone Star State from 1947 to 1969, and is fondly remembered as "Tree Top Airlines" because of the radial twin propliners in its fleet, such as the Convair 240 and 600.

In 1942, the airport became the site of the United States Army Big Spring Bombardier School and subsequently trained over 6,000 aviation cadets in high altitude precision bombing as bombardiers. In 1945, the airport returned to municipal airport status, where it served as such for seven years.

Brought back into service because of the Korean War, the base was renamed Webb Air Force Base on May 18, 1952, to memorialize 1st Lieutenant James L. Webb, a Big Spring native and World War II (WWII) combat pilot in Europe, who was killed off the Japanese coast flying a P-51 Mustang in 1949. As a jet pilot training facility during the Korean and Vietnam wars, over 14,000 pilots earned their wings in Big Spring.

The Webb Air Force Base was formally deactivated in 1977. Housed in a restored WWII airplane hangar on the grounds of the Big Spring Airport, the Hangar 25 Air Museum opened in 1999 and is dedicated to the men and women who served at the Big Spring Army Air Force Bombardier School and Webb Air Force Base. Among the museum's collection are an AT-11, T-38, T-28 and Beech AT-11.

Moving Upward and Onward

Colonel Little has served as Big Spring McMahon-Wrinkle Airport Manager for over seven years. A graduate of the University of North Carolina and the University of Northern Colorado, he joined the Air Force after college and spent nearly 30 years in aviation support roles and command and staff positions. After his career in the Air Force, Colonel Little worked for the American Cancer Society. Having met his wife while training at Webb Air Force Base in Big Spring, they then decided to return to her hometown.

"When we moved to Big Spring, I became involved with the community and the airport board," says Colonel Little. "The airport director job became available, and I was asked by city management if I would take the position, which I did. It's worked out well and I've really enjoyed working on different projects with the airport board and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)."

Among the recent improvements at the Big Spring airport include the reconstruction of an 8,800-foot, 11-inch thick concrete runway.

"Our attitude in deciding to build a concrete runway (versus asphalt) was that we wanted this facility to grow," says Colonel Little. "We already had the long runways, but if you have a long runway that can't support a heavy plane, then what good is it? We worked closely with TxDOT and Big Spring Economic Development to build the runway, which will now support aircraft up to a 737. Right now we are in the process of upgrading the taxiways and aprons to support that expansion."

The improved runway and modern terminal facility make the Big Spring Airport a desirable destination for both industry and recreational fliers. While some people may question the need for such a large runway, the forward-thinking Colonel Little saw it as a necessity to support current and potential industries in Big Spring.

"For some people and companies, an airport is insignificant until they need it," explains Colonel Little. "When we had the explosion at the (ALON) refinery, it was amazing the number of people, such as insurance agents, company executives, reporters and fire fighters, who flew in to visit and work. The airport at that time underwent the biggest one-time usage that I have seen, and we were ready."

Executives from Western Container, HEB, Wal-Mart and Fiberod, as well as an onsite Air Evac helicopter for medical emergencies, regularly use the Big Spring Airport. Local corporations, as well as the Regional VA Hospital, and a very large prison industry, patronize the facility.

Above all, Colonel Little strives for not only a top notch facility for aircraft to land, maintain and refuel, but a place for guests to feel at home.

"My favorite story about the airport happened one Sunday morning not long ago. I stopped by the terminal after church just to check on things, and noticed five large corporate jets parked on the tarmac," relates Colonel Little. "I went inside and found 15 to 20 people conducting business in our conference room, using our pilot's lounge to relax and work, and basically making themselves at home, which was great. It certainly made me think we were reaching our goal of meeting the aviation needs of this community."

For more information on Big Spring McMahon-Wrinkle Airport, please visit <http://www.mybigspring.com/pages/airport>.

For more information on the Hangar 25 Air Museum, please visit: <http://www.hangar25airmuseum.com/main/index.asp>.◆

AT A GLANCE

Airport FAA Identifier

BPG

Elevation

2,573 Ft. MSL

Runway 17-35

8,802' x 100'

Runway 06-24

4601' x 75'

Latitude

32-12-45.236N

Longitude

101-31-17.950W

Traffic Pattern

Runway 17 & 06 - Right

Runway 35 & 24 - Left

Sectional

Dallas-Fort Worth

Navigation

PAPI-IV

WAAS Certified

Radio Aids to Navigation

VORTACW 114.3, BGS, Channel 90

Weather

AWOS

AWOS Frequency

118.025

AWOS Dial-Up Number

(432) 263-3842

Attendance Schedule

Terminal Hours of Operation:

Monday – Friday, 8-5

Terminal Access Hours:

Monday – Friday, 8-5; Saturday, 8-3

FBO Hours of Operation:

Monday – Friday, 8-5; Saturday, 8-3

FBO Call-Out/After Hours:

(432) 935-1238

Communication

Unicom 122.800

CTAF

122.800

City Population

25,233

Downtown to Airport

02 nm/SW

Lights

Dusk to Dawn

Fuel

Jet-A 100LL

Repairs

Power Plant (major)

Airframe (major)

PLAYING JEOPARDY WITH AVIATION'S FUTURE

By Robert Mark

That *Future of Flight Training* session at AirVenture in July left me feeling pretty cranky ... whiny even. Not because of the session itself. All the folks on the panel, including moderator Greg Laslo, couldn't have been nicer.

But we all walked away from the discussion with the same thought: now what? Considering the lousy turnout, I left wondering how anything we spoke about could in any way affect how the management types view flight training or its foundational position within the industry?

So here's an idea, let's not make the argument for flight training any longer.

Let's focus the light where it really needs to be: on the *Big Picture*, where everyone claims they're looking anyway.

Without pilots, there is no aviation industry, period. No Part 135 charter, no corporate flight departments, no sightseeing flights and most of all, no airlines ... nothing.

We need to stop fooling around trying to grab a few new students here and there to fly our shiny new Cessnas and Cirrus SR-22s and Piper Warriors. Let's be serious; none of the previous incarnations of any Learn-to-Fly programs have ever come even close to returning us to the old days when 17,000 new airplanes were delivered in a year and a commensurate number of pilot starts kept the Government Printing Office in business producing student pilot certificates. We're all so focused on Learn-to-Fly though as *the* solution as if the only audience we need to succeed with are those potential customers for flight schools.

Another Perfect Storm?

We all hate listening to the fact that 75 percent of new student starts last year quit before they ever earned their Private Pilot certificate. But for the moment, how we deal with that one issue is irrelevant.

The *Big Picture* question really is why only a few of us appear to see the writing on the wall ... that very soon, we're again going to be short of qualified pilots not simply to teach people to fly, but with the commensurate skills to compete for professional pilot cockpit jobs coming down the road.

Making matters worse is that fewer and fewer young people see flying as a career ... starting pay is almost food-stamp level and the amount of debt to pay for the training is beyond most. The military long ago dried up as a viable source of pilots and the passing of HR 5900 – the Airline Safety and FAA Extension Act – that could force airlines to require an ATP from all candidates (with a few exceptions) will only make the situation worse. We haven't even spoken yet about the rash of "Fly-til-their-65" airline pilots who will very soon be grounded.

It's time we stopped looking at each individual business as separate from what makes aviation fly ... airplanes. No pilots, no FBOs ... no pilots, no need for many training airplanes ... no pilots, no need for airlines, no pilots, no need to see John and Martha much down the road. But we all seem to look at the shortage of people learning to fly as if it really has nothing to do with these individual segments. But it does, all of them.

A Bright Spot

At AirVenture this year, I met a really bright young Singapore Airlines pilot who was just crazy in love with aviation. One reason he was so enthused was not simply because he had a job, but because he'd always wanted

to fly and was successful even though he lacked the funds to pay for the training. Originally from Mumbai, he mentioned it was a tad more expensive there to learn to fly.

So how did he reach the skill level of licenses and hours necessary to get hired by Singapore? Easy. He didn't, at least not the traditional way. He was hired through Singapore's cadet program, better known to us here in the states as an *ab initio* training system.

Singapore paid for all his flight training from his private right up through his turbine time via a Lear 45 type rating. His total time is somewhere in the neighborhood of 350 hours and he's soon off to school on the Boeing 777, all at the expense of Singapore Airlines. His commitment to Singapore for their commitment to him: seven years of his life after he completes training.

In the U.S., of course, no such programs exist. Our airlines – in fact every organization that uses pilots in this country – assume the pilots should bear the costs of learning the ropes because that's the way we've always done it. This strategy makes pilots rather expendable when it suits the company. That strategy is going to begin hurting us pretty soon though.

The *Big Picture* question really is why only a few of us appear to see the writing on the wall ... that very soon, we're again going to be short of qualified pilots not simply to teach people to fly, but with the commensurate skills to compete for professional pilot cockpit jobs coming down the road.

Our Future

The only item that has kept this pilot shortage chaos from running rampant right now is that our economy tanked, which forced many companies to lay off crews. But that life preserver is going to sink once we're all back in business again.

Think back, though, to just a few short years ago when anyone with a pilot's license was being hired and upgrade times were shoving questionable captains into a command role, a topic that forced some of the recent regulatory chaos in the aftermath of the Colgan crash in Buffalo.

The question again is why we aren't working as a group on this. One solution is for DOT Secretary Ray LaHood's Future of Aviation Advisory Committee (FAAC) seminars to address the foundation of the industry: people learning to fly.

Without a steady supply of men and women to drive these ever-evolving aerial machines, there won't be much of an industry for aircraft manufacturers like Cessna, Boeing, Airbus, Embraer ... the list goes on. That also means the parts and service suppliers are going to suffer as well. Flight training is simply the foundation upon which our industry is built, and trust me, the *low-fuel light* is on.

Whatever we do, we'd better get moving pretty quickly. Pilots are turning away from the industry much faster than they're signing up. If we're going to gather all the experts at the FAAC seminars together, let's put them to work on a problem that needs solving ... building a foundation for every other element of the aviation industry. That's a *Big Picture* idea.◆

Rob Mark, editor

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COTULLA-LA SALLE COUNTY AIRPORT EXPANSION IS ESSENTIAL TO MEET THE AREA'S DEMANDS

The Cotulla-La Salle County Airport (COT) is located one mile north of Cotulla, Texas, and it's been one of the prime hunting hubs in the state for some time. Recently, however, it's been earning more attention for an industrial boom located in the region. A classic Texan resource often referred to as black gold, Texas tea or simply as crude oil has been bringing more people to this small yet enthusiastic town.

During late-summer and early-fall, La Salle County in southern Texas becomes a haven for both novice and experienced hunters gathering for the plentiful doves, quail and white-tail deer in the area. Located in the Golden Triangle of South Texas—an area comprised geographically of five counties and nationally recognized for its trophy-buck potential—COT sees the influx of visitors to the region and accommodates their general aviation (GA) needs.

"The trophy bucks in the area routinely win competitions in the state and the country," Airport Manager E.T. Page says. "We have many customers who regularly fly in from places as far away as Los Angeles, Seattle, Boise, Detroit, Boston, Nashville, Jacksonville and St. Petersburg, as well as numerous nearby hunters from Arkansas, Louisiana and from within Texas. It's prime hunting ground here."

COT's one asphalt runway, 13/31, measures 5,005 feet by 75 feet and has two-light PAPIs on both approaches. Additionally, it has the two best straight-in instrument approaches within a 60-mile radius, plus local ASOS weather reporting. Other amenities provided by the airport's FBO, Page Aviation, include fuel (Jet A and 100LL), catering, hangar space, line service, Internet access, oxygen service, aircraft maintenance, ample parking, and most importantly, COT also has the only car rental services within 60 miles.



The Cotulla-La Salle airport serves South Texas hunters, ranchers and businesses at the Cotulla-La Salle County Airport by providing aircraft line services, maintenance and car rentals.

"We easily offer three times as many services as our competitors in the area," Page says. "If you have a need for services we don't have listed, please just let us know and we will respond to the best of our ability. It's always a pleasure to serve our customers."

The hunting draw once comprised a majority of COT's seasonal traffic, but improvements in oil drilling technology have given oilmen access to a fertile supply in the surrounding Eagle Ford Shale formation. Drilling through layers of clay and sediments to reach the rich oil and gas beneath the surface, companies from around the world are flocking to the area. This has also presented COT with great opportunities.

"The oil and gas industry has definitely upped the jet traffic to the airport," Page says. "We're a great hub for these businesses because we're centrally located in the heart of all of the operations."

With the traditional arrival of hunters and the new burgeoning economy from the now-accessible natural resources, COT is poised to capitalize on the arrival of all these visitors to the area. One way is the proposed 6,000-foot runway with a parallel taxiway and more parking.

"The construction of the new runway would mean a lot more jets to the airport," Page says. "It means more oil field businesses would start basing their companies in our county as opposed to others, which means more jobs locally. There would be a lot more direct and indirect jobs coming from the completion of this project."

COT is also planning a new privately funded hangar to accommodate current and projected jet patrons. As for the runway, the city and county are in the process of gathering the 10 percent matching funds toward the \$6 million needed to get the new strip completed. Page is committed to the principle that the obvious advantages of the new runway will help the area by setting it apart from competing cities and counties, as well as providing opportunities for growth.

"We're trying to get more of the oil field business here to Cotulla," Page concludes, "and I think it's going to work."

For more information on the Cotulla-La Salle County Airport, please visit <http://www.cotullaairport.com>. ♦

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AVIATION DIVISION WINS ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

TxDOT's Aviation Division received the FAA's Southwest Region Environmental Achievement Award at their annual conference in November.

In his remarks, Dean McMath, Regional Environmental Programs Manager at FAA, noted that since becoming a participant in the State Block Grant Program, the Aviation Division has been working diligently to protect the environment at general aviation airports in Texas.

McMath cited three successful environmental projects: protection of the original site of the historic Magnolia Grove Cemetery located at Galveston's Scholes International Airport; protecting surrounding wetlands at Port Isabel Cameron County Airport; and the wetland impact minimization and interagency mitigation project for Sugar Land Regional Airport.

"These were all efforts to do the right thing by going beyond the minimum regulatory requirements," said McMath.

During the presentation, McMath gave special recognition to Aviation Division's Environmental Planner, Josephine Jarrell.

"This was a great honor to accept this award on behalf of the TxDOT Aviation Division," said Jarrell. "TxDOT AVN has a great group of planners and engineers, and Airport Sponsors that made this a team award."

The FAA Southwest Region Environmental Achievement Award acknowledges those in the industry who have gone "above and beyond" the requirements of today's environmental regulations. It recognizes those who have truly taken to heart concepts embracing the protection, conservation and enhancement of the environment. ♦

RESTORATION CREW SHIPS LBJ PLANE TO TEXAS MUSEUM

A bit of presidential history departed from the Kingman Airport and Industrial Park in late July to former President Lyndon B. Johnson's Texas White House. Straube's Aircraft Services has been working during the summer on restoring the paint job of a Lockheed JetStar business jet that was used as a backup to Johnson's primary JetStar.

"Johnson was the first vice president to ask a sitting president (John F. Kennedy) for his own aircraft," said Lyndon B. Johnson Historical Park Superintendent Russ Whitlock.

Before Johnson, vice presidents had to ask the president if they could borrow an aircraft to make a trip.

"That wasn't Johnson's style," Whitlock said. Kennedy granted him the favor and Johnson asked to use the fleet of five JetStar aircraft already designated for the president's use.

He liked the JetStar and used it much more frequently (even after he became president) than the larger Boeing 707 that the president used, Whitlock said. The JetStar was smaller, faster and more fuel-efficient than the 707 and could land at smaller airports. It also seated fewer passengers (about 13) than the 707, which meant that Johnson could hand-pick the passengers, he said. He liked to refer to the plane as "Air Force One-and-a-Half."

The historical park has been looking for one of the planes for a while, because Johnson frequently used a JetStar to fly to his ranch in the hill country of Texas, Whitlock said.



The Lockheed JetStar parked at its new home at the LBJ Ranch.

Having the plane at the ranch is an important part of telling the story of the advances in communications technology that allowed Johnson to spend nearly a quarter of his five years as president at the ranch.

Whitlock was contacted by Jim Cross, Johnson's pilot a few years ago, about moving the primary JetStar that Johnson used from its location at Robins Air Force Base in Georgia to the historical park in between Austin and Fredericksburg, he said.

The base wasn't willing to give up the plane, Whitlock said. After a little research, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio was able to find the back-up plane, the one painted by Straube's, at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, he said.

The park came very close to losing the plane, Whitlock said. It was slated to be sold to a scrap yard for parts, but the parts yard decided at the last minute that it wanted another plane.

According to Air Force records, the plane entered into service in 1961 and was retired to Davis-Monthan in 1983 after serving as a VIP jet for Air Force personnel.

The plane is not in flyable condition. It was taken apart and moved to Kingman for its new paint job on three semi-trucks. In late July it was disassembled once more, placed on three trucks and driven to the historical park in Texas. The plane was then set up on the landing strip behind the Texas White House.

Johnson took over as president after former President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963. Johnson was elected to the office in 1964 and served until 1969. He was known for his "Great Society" legislation that included civil rights, public broadcasting, education and environmental protection laws.

He withdrew from the race for the presidency in 1968 due to the growing discontent with his handling of the Vietnam War.

He also served Texas in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1937 to 1949 and the U.S. Senate from 1949 to 1961.

Johnson died at his ranch in 1973 from a heart attack.◆

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AIR FORCE ONE A HALF

The Lockheed JetStar is a business jet produced from the early 1960s through the 1970s. Although the Morane-Saulnier MS-760 flew earlier, the JetStar was the first dedicated business jet to enter service. It was also one of the largest aircraft in the class for many years, seating 10 plus two crew. It is distinguishable from other small jets by its four engines, mounted on the rear of the fuselage.

Sixteen JetStars were produced for the United States Air Force. Six of the aircraft were operated as VIP transports by the 89th Military Airlift Wing at Andrews Air Force Base, near Washington, D.C. These VIP aircraft were designated as VC-140Bs. The VIP transport fleet occasionally served as Air Force One during the 1970s and 1980s. Several other countries, such as Germany and Canada, have used military JetStars as transports for their heads of state, heads of government and other VIPs.

SNYDER WINSTON FIELD MAKE-OVER COMPLETE

By Chris Sasser
Texas Transportation Institute

As I travel around Texas visiting airports, I am always pleasantly surprised by how impressive the general aviation airports are that serve their communities. Winston Field, located in Snyder, is no exception.

I arrived at Winston Field on a hot summer day about a half hour early for my scheduled interview. Upon entering the comfortable, and thankfully cool, terminal building I noticed someone blowing off leaves and lawn clippings from the back patio. The gentleman was Winston Field manager Rodger Sullenger. After introductions and a brief cool-down, we sat in his office and talked about his background, the airport and its role in the community.

"I've worked here since 1995," began Sullenger. "When I took over as manager, you couldn't see the runway out there because the weeds were so high. The manager prior to me was a mechanic who simply didn't have time to maintain the facilities."



The comfortable terminal building at Winston Fields serves as a welcome sight for weary fliers.

Despite not having a background in aviation, Sullenger understood the value of having a functional airport for the citizens of Snyder.

"Half the folks in Snyder didn't know we had an airport, and the other half didn't know what we did," chuckled Sullenger. "So I made it a practice to go around and speak to core city organizations and let them know how important we are to the community."

Every airport needs a champion, and Sullenger fits that role for Winston Field. Whether it's hands-on maintenance work or working to secure grants for airport upgrades, he is involved with every aspect of the airport.

In 2009, the airport received nearly four million dollars in grants to reconstruct their runways. The 1.95 million dollar partial reconstruction of runway 17/35 was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Other work included repair, overlay and marking of runway 8/26 and the taxiways. Improved signage was also installed.

"We went through a period in the '90s when it hardly rained at all," says Sullenger. "Because of that, we started getting a lot of cracks. We sealed them, but it was definitely time to have more extensive rehab work performed. Our runways and taxiways are stronger now. We can handle aircraft as heavy as a Gulfstream Five."

Despite the reduced traffic due to the recent economic downturn, Sullenger is confident that fliers will once again see Snyder as a destination, especially now that the renovations are complete.

"One of the things I enjoy is the opportunity to meet people from all over the world. You might not think that in a small community like this, but planes do have to refuel somewhere, and why not go to the best place with reasonable fuel prices?" says Sullenger. "I'm 68-years-old and I'm dreading the day I have to walk out the door and pitch somebody else the keys," Sullenger says with a big smile. ♦

WINSTON FIELD INFORMATION

Lat/Long

32-41-36.2000N / 100-57-01.7000W
32-41.603333N / 100-57.028333W
32.6933889 / -100.9504722
(estimated)

Elevation

2430 ft. / 740.7 m (surveyed)

AIRPORT OPERATIONS

Airport use

Open to the public

Sectional chart

DALLAS-FT WORTH

Wind indicator

lighted

Lights

DUSK-DAWN

AIRPORT SERVICES

Fuel available

100LL JET-A1

RUNWAY INFORMATION

Runway 17/35

Dimensions

5599 x 100 ft. / 1707 x 30 m

Surface

asphalt, in excellent condition

Weight bearing capacity

Single wheel: 24.0

Runway edge lights

medium intensity

Runway 8/26

Dimensions

4200 x 75 ft. / 1280 x 23 m

Surface

asphalt, in excellent condition

Weight bearing capacity

Single wheel: 24.0

MANAGER

Rodger Sullenger
2757 ROUND ROCK AVENUE
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SKYLINE CAFÉ TAKES OFF IN TYLER

By Chris Sasser,
Texas Transportation Institute

Hungry pilots flying into the Tyler Pounds Regional Airport will think they hit the mother lode after setting foot in the new Skyline Café.

Boasting the best Reuben in East Texas along with their thick Angus burgers, the Skyline Café has quickly gained a loyal following with aviators and Tyler residents alike. The restaurant opened this year in March, in the old terminal building at the Tyler Pounds Regional Airport, next to the Historic Aviation Memorial Museum.

"Even though this is my first restaurant, I grew up in the business," says restaurant owner Becky Kalmowitz. "My grandmother owned a restaurant in upstate New York, and my mother also had a restaurant in North Carolina. Opening a restaurant is something I had always wanted to do."

The opportunity came when a member of the Tyler Pounds Airport aviation board casually inquired if Kalmowitz, who ran a successful catering business, would be interested in opening a restaurant at the airport. As they say, the rest is history.

According to Kalmowitz, the success of their restaurant comes from a simple philosophy. "We want to give our

customers excellent food and service. Everything we prepare is fresh and made with love."

In addition to the burgers and Reuben, the menu also features their signature sandwich: Sonny's Steak & Cheese which is named after the owner's father. The Skyline Café also serves breakfast and healthy options such as salads, turkey burgers, veggie burgers and wraps.

And despite not having much experience with aviation, Kalmowitz has quickly become a fan of watching the planes park in "her backyard."

"All fly ins are welcome. We have parking at our gate just below the air traffic control tower. We will let them in through the gate, escort them into our restaurant and then back to their plane again after eating," says Kalmowitz.

Tyler residents eating at their restaurant also enjoy the floor-to-ceiling window view of the airport tarmac and watching planes take off and land.

"It's not every day you can chase your dream and have it come to your realization," says Kalmowitz. "I wake up every morning with a smile on my face."

For more information on the Skyline Café, visit their Web site at <http://www.skylinecafe.org/>. ♦



Larry and Becky Kalmowitz inside their Skyline Cafe restaurant.

GRANTS RECEIVED

Skylark Field/Killeen	\$2,432,040	Mill and replace and mark Runway 1-19 and taxiway improvements. This project is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).
Scholes Intl at Galveston	\$1,537,820	Renovate Terminal Building.
Llano Municipal Airport	\$574,532	Install new Fuel Farm.
Port Isabel-Cameron County Airport	\$484,200	Construct new Terminal Building and Auto Parking.
Majors Field/Greenville	\$488,800	Replace medium intensity runway lights with high intensity runway lights at runway 17-35 and voltage regulator/overrun taxiway lights and replace runway signage.
Palacios Municipal Airport	\$943,540	Remark and reduce width Runway 17-35; spall and crack repair Runway 17-35; joint sealant Runway 17-35; rehabilitate culverts and inlets; regrade shoulders; recut ditches for drainage improvements for Runway 17-35 and install security fencing at terminal area.
New Braunfels Municipal Airport	\$5,394,800	Overlay and mark Runway 13-31; overlay and mark Taxiway A, B, C, D, E, F and terminal apron; relocate jog in taxiway A; reconstruct northeast parking apron- Phase I, include slotted drain; terminal apron expansion and drainage; and incorporate area taxiway.
Sugar Land Municipal Airport	\$7,420,280	Construct Taxiway J.
Bruce Field/Ballinger	\$287,390	Rehabilitate and mark Runway 17-35, turnaround, stub taxiway, hangar access taxiway, AG stub taxiway; expand and rehabilitate AG apron; overlay airport entrance road and replace rotating beacon and tower.
Roy Hurd Memorial Airport/Monahans	\$710,115	Asphalt crack sealing on runways and taxiways; and install 8-foot cyclone perimeter fencing with 2 gates and replace beacon and concrete fueling apron.
Terrell Municipal Airport	\$2,589,120	Construct new terminal building, auto parking and new 24' wide entrance road.
Mid-Way Regional Airport	\$1,000,000	Renovate Terminal Building.
Levelland Municipal Airport	\$500,000	Construct Hangars.



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Make plans to attend the **29th Annual Texas Aviation Conference** to be held on **May 25, 26, 27, 2011** at **The Renaissance** located in Austin, Texas.

Be sure to check our Web site at www.txdot.gov or <http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/tac11/> for up-to-date events.

Social activities will include our annual golf tournament; Alton Young memorial motorcycle ride; Planes and Lanes Bowling sponsored by Garver; get acquainted reception; awards banquet and a fun evening reception sponsored by Rodriguez Engineering.

We are working to make this year's conference better than ever.

