

# WINGTIPS

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION  
OF THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION  
AVIATION DIVISION.

## 35TH TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE

*Attendees Treated to  
Memorable Keynote  
from Marcus Luttrell,  
the Lone Survivor*



SPRING 2017





## DAVE'S HANGAR

### Basic Med is Finally Here!

After much effort by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association and the General Aviation community, the long sought after change in FAA medical requirements for most private pilots has arrived. Effective May 1, 2017, most general aviation pilots now have a new way to meet FAA medical requirements. It is called Basic Med. To operate under Basic Med, a pilot must:

- Possess a valid driver's license
- Have held an FAA regular or special issuance medical on or after July 15, 2006

- Get a physical exam by a state-licensed physician and have the associated checklist completed by the physician
- Complete a **free** online aeromedical education course
- After meeting the initial requirements to fly under this program, pilots will need to visit a state-licensed physician at least once every four years and take a free online course on aeromedical factors every two years
- Fly aircraft on non-commercial VFR or IFR flights in aircraft weighing up to 6,000 pounds, having no more than six seats, no higher than 18,000 feet, at a maximum of 250 knots.

More information about Basic Med can be found on TxDOT's and FAA's websites. TxDOT's site is [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov). Click on the airplane at the bottom of the page. Under Helpful Texas Air Travel Information, click on "TxDOT's Aviation Division." Under Flight Information, click on "FAA Medical Reform." Information about the aeromedical course and access to the medical checklist is available. For more detailed information and a list of "Frequently Asked Questions, about Basic Med, search for AC No. 68 on FAA's website at [www.faa.org](http://www.faa.org).

Basic Med is the single most important thing to happen for the General Aviation Industry in a long time. More people will be learning to fly, buying more airplanes, and flying longer than ever before. ▾



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# TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE 2017 AWARDS WINNERS

General Aviation Airport Manager of the Year  
**Rob Blanchard, McGregor Executive Airport**

Most Improved Airport  
**Hale County Airport**

General Aviation Airport of the Year  
**Lamesa Municipal Airport**

Reliever Airport or Reliever Airport Manager of the Year  
**Morris Martin, Stinson Municipal Airport**

RAMP Coordinator of the Year  
**Rebecca Petty, TxDOT Tyler District**

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## Aviation Art Contest Winners:

### Category I (Ages 6 – 9)

1st Place – Canon Taylor, 8, AP Beutel Elementary, Lake Jackson, TX

2nd Place – Audrey Freitag, 8, Henderson Elementary, San Antonio

3rd Place – Lilly Elsakka, 8, West Foundation, Wichita Falls, TX

Honorable Mention – Jaston Drinkard, 9, Jackson Roosevelt Elementary,  
Port Lavaca, TX

### Category II (Ages 10 – 13)

1st Place – Kelly Xu, 13, Travis Middle School, Port Lavaca, TX

2nd Place – Adam Roth, 10, White Rock Montessori, Dallas, TX

3rd Place – Sreeniketan Sai Senapathi, 13, Katy, TX

Honorable Mention – Alexis Puryear, 13, Sibyl's School of Art, Wheeler, TX

Honorable Mention – Tess Braddock, 12, Sibyl's School of Art,  
Wheeler, TX

### Category III (Ages 14 – 17)

1st Place – Chi-yin Cheng, 14, Travis Middle School, Port Lavaca, TX

2nd Place – Linda Palominos, 17, Rio Hondo High School, Rio Hondo, TX

3rd Place – Adriana Gonzalez-Olvera, 18, Rio Hondo High School, Rio  
Hondo, TX

Honorable Mention – Shirley Yu, 15, Jasper HS, Plano, TX ■

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# WOOD COUNTY AIRPORT

TxDOT Aviation Division Director David Fulton delivers remarks during the Wood County Airport name rededication ceremony. Wayne Collins is seated on the stage. (Monitor photo by Doris Newman)



## WOOD COUNTY AIRPORT REDEDICATED AS WOOD COUNTY AIRPORT COLLINS FIELD

By Doris Newman

[editor@woodcountymonitor.com](mailto:editor@woodcountymonitor.com)

**T**he contributions of Wayne Collins to the Wood County Airport and the community were celebrated on May 27 as the facility was rededicated as Wood County Airport Collins Field. Those in attendance included family, state and city officials, friends and fellow aviators.

Collins, born in Mineola in 1924, was a World War II veteran, retiring as a Captain in the United States Navy. He first learned to fly at Mineola Wisener Field in the mid-1940s. Collins has flown his Bonanza around the world twice. He also created the Bonanza Formation Flying Organization that flies in parades and other celebrations.

"I've known Wayne for a long time," said TxDOT Aviation Director David Fulton. "Anything positive you can say about

Wayne's contribution to this airport will be an understatement. This airport would not be here, if not for him. I've been in aviation at the state level in two different states for 42 years and I've never known anyone who did more for their local airport than Wayne Collins. He is an amazing guy."

Fulton also said that naming Collins the first recipient of TxDOT's "Texas Aviator of the Year" award in 2008 was an easy decision to make.

In 1978 Collins began efforts to aid local economic development by creating a general aviation airport. He persuaded the cities of Mineola and Quitman to jointly fund the facility which opened as Wood County Airport in 1983. He chaired the board until 2008 and played a vital role in the addition of a parallel taxiway and a new terminal building, installation of

an automated weather system and the extension of the runway. And, thanks in large part to his hard work, the airport was named TxDOT Airport of the Year in 2010.

Former Wood County Judge Bill Alexander was also present and had worked with Collins to develop the airport.

"He is a man of great integrity that was inspired to do something and had a dream of what could be done," Alexander said.

"I'm very humbled and honored to have the name of the airport changed to the Wood County Airport Collins Field," said Collins.

The ceremony concluded with Collins boarding his airplane with Airport Board Co-Chairman John Wisdom to make a low pass over the airport. ■



# AVIATION DIRECTOR DAVE FULTON RECEIVES THE WRIGHT BROTHERS MASTER PILOT AWARD

By Chris Sasser

Texas A&M Transportation Institute

**T**xDOT Aviation Division Director Dave Fulton recently received the most prestigious award the FAA issues to pilots, The Wright Brothers **Master Pilot Award**.

Fulton was presented the award by Randy Loveless from FAA's San Antonio Flight Standards District Office during this year's Texas Aviation Conference.

The award is named after the Wright Brothers, the first US pilots, to recognize individuals who have exhibited professionalism, skill, and aviation expertise for at least 50 years while piloting aircraft as "Master Pilots."

To be eligible for the Wright Brothers MPA, nominees must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a U.S. Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) or FAA pilot certificate.
- Have 50 or more years of civil and military flying experience.

- Up to 20 years of the required 50 years may be U.S. military experience.
- The effective start date for the 50 years is the date of the nominee's first solo flight or military equivalent.
- The 50 years may be computed consecutively or non-consecutively.
- Be a U.S. citizen.

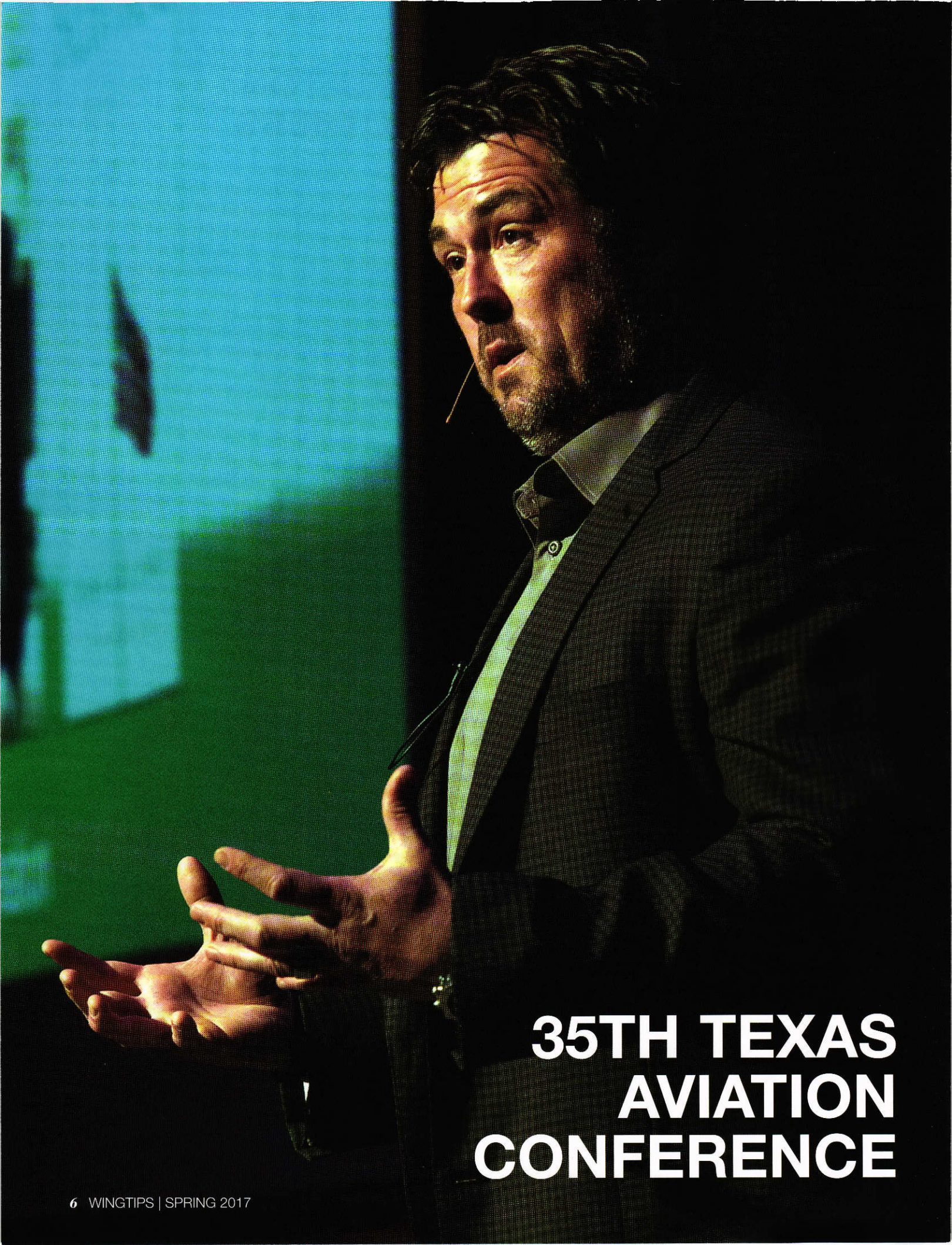
Asked by Loveless to describe his first flight, Fulton recounted the following.

"I'd never been in a small airplane before. I went down to Pensacola and got through ground school. And then went up in a plane with the instructor. After a while he took his hands off the controls and said 'ok, you've got it,' and I replied that I didn't know what to do. He then hollered 'dangit do something quick or else we're both going to die!'"

TxDOT Aviation Division Director Dave Fulton (center) is presented the The Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award from Randy Loveless from the FAA's San Antonio Flight Standards District Office during this year's Texas Aviation Conference. Dave was joined by his wife Charlotte.







# 35TH TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE



# Attendees Treated to Memorable Keynote, Full Schedule of Events

By Chris Sasser

Texas A&M Transportation Institute

Over 550 aviation professionals, supporters, exhibitors and enthusiasts converged at the Embassy Suites Hotel in San Marcos April 19-21 for the 35th Texas Aviation Conference. The conference is sponsored by the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Aviation Division (AVN).

This year's conference was highlighted by keynote speaker Marcus Luttrell, a former United States Navy SEAL, who received the Navy Cross and Purple Heart for his actions in June 2005 against Taliban fighters during Operation Red Wing. In Operation Red Wings, his four-man Special Reconnaissance team was discovered by local herdsmen, subsequently ambushed, and all killed except Luttrell. For more information on Luttrell's speech, please read the story on page 8.

The first day conference activities included the 8th Annual Alton Young Memorial Motorcycle Ride, which traveled through a scenic Hill Country route. Alton Young was a former Aviation Division employee and motorcycle enthusiast who passed away in 2010 after an illness. Other activities included a golf tournament and a get-acquainted reception in the evening.

After the presentation of colors, by Texas State University AFROTC Honor Guard, and National Anthem which was sung by San Marcos High School student Happy Davis, TxDOT Aviation Director David Fulton began the conference by introducing the members of the TxDOT Aviation Advisory Committee and Texas Transportation Commissioner Jeff Austin, who welcomed attendees to the conference.

Randy Loveless from the Federal Aviation Association's San Antonio Flight Standards District Office then presented Fulton with a surprise award; the prestigious FAA Master Pilot Award.

"There's very few of us that will ever achieve this honor," noted Loveless. "And it's hard to find a more qualified individual than Dave Fulton."

For more on this award, please read the story on page 5.

Fulton followed the award presentation with his annual State of the Aviation Division address.

"Thank you for all you have done to make the Texas aviation system the finest in the country," said Fulton. "The biggest challenge for us in the past 3.5 years has been the loss of discretionary funding. Through the efforts of a lot of people though, we have got that back on track."

Zane Lambert, Manager of Aircraft Operations for Sanderson Farms, Inc. then gave a business aviation in Texas presentation. During his presentation Lambert noted "In the time it takes for our employees to even get to the closest commercial airport, we can have them onsite using our own aircraft. It doesn't take a lot of brain power and spreadsheets to realize that having the aircraft is a benefit."

Luttrell's keynote finished out the morning's activities.

After lunch, attendees had the opportunity to attend a session presented by FAA's Texas Airport District Office Manager, Ben Guttery, and TxDOT Aviation

Division's Director of Planning and Programming, Greg Miller, which pertained to programming of airport development projects. Following the project programming session, attendees had their choice of breakout sessions. Various topics included an airport manager's roundtable, pavement and vegetation management, digital NOTAMs, airport self-sufficiency, and a RAMP session with interim RAMP manager Amy Slaughter.

Day one concluded with the annual awards banquet. For a full list of winners, please read the story on page 3.

The final morning began with an airport compliance session led by TxDOT Aviation's Wade Troth and Gary Loftus of the Safety and Standards Branch of the FAA's Southwest Region. NASAO President and Chief Executive Officer Mark Kimberling then provided a Washington update on legislative and policy matters including the upcoming FAA Reauthorization. The conference concluded with a TxDOT/FAA Listening Session with Dave Fulton and Ben Guttery the recently named manager of the FAA's Texas Airports District Office.

"This conference provides an opportunity for many of our airport sponsors to meet with TxDOT Aviation Division employees face-to-face," said Texas A&M Transportation Institute Research Scientist and co-conference coordinator Jeff Borowiec. "There are many critical issues with infrastructure and funding that need to be addressed and that face time along with the session topics are hopefully a constructive use of their time." ■



# MARCUS LUTTRELL DELIVERS STIRRING KEYNOTE AT TEXAS AVIATION CONFERENCE

By Chris Sasser

Texas A&M Transportation Institute

The 35th Texas Aviation Conference had a big task this year in following Captain Gene Cernan, the last man on the moon, and keynote speaker from last year's conference. Former U.S. Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell though held the rapt audience with his harrowing tale of survival.

Luttrell co-authored the *New York Times* bestseller *Lone Survivor: The Eyewitness Account of Operation Red Wing and the Lost Heroes of SEAL Team Ten*. A film version, starring Mark Wahlberg, was released in 2013.

During his speech, Luttrell spoke of his family and background that lead to him becoming a Navy SEAL. He then spoke of Operation Red Wing and during the emotional talk explained the bond he had with his comrades and coming home to talk to their families.

"I wanted them to hear from me what happened to their sons," said Luttrell. "I was only going to tell their story once, and they needed to hear from me when and where their son was when they were killed."

In 2007, Luttrell was medically discharged from the Navy and is now married with two kids.

"We were very pleased to have Marcus Luttrell as our keynote at this year's conference," said TxDOT Aviation Director of Grants Kari Campbell. "His story was pretty intense and his delivery was extremely captivating. It was chilling to hear what he went through in Afghanistan. Then unexpectedly, he would inject humor into his presentation, which was enjoyable. He is a remarkable human being who has chosen to use his adverse experiences to inspire and enlighten others. His integrity, gratitude, and humility are quite impressive! It was an honor to have him provide this year's keynote address." ■

Texas Aviation Conference keynote speaker Marcus Luttrell (standing center) with TxDOT Aviation Division staff and other honored guests.







*TxDOT Aviation Division Director David Fulton, TxDOT Aviation Advisory Committee Chairman James Schwertner, and new Texas Aviation Advisory Committee member Fred Underwood.*

## COMMISSIONER FRED UNDERWOOD JOINS TEXAS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

*By Chris Sasser*

*Texas A&M Transportation Institute*

**F**ormer Texas Transportation Commissioner Fred Underwood is the newest member of the Texas Aviation Advisory Committee. Underwood was appointed to the commission by then Gov. Rick Perry on Jan. 8, 2007 and served until March 17, 2015. He was appointed to the Aviation Advisory Committee on February 23, 2017.

Underwood is president of the Trinity Company, a cotton bale storage facility. He serves as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee of the Cotton Warehouse Association, where he previously served as president. He is both past vice president and past director of the National Cotton Council.

Underwood also previously served as chairman of the Lubbock International Airport Board and as a board member of the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce. Underwood received a bachelor's degree in management from Texas Tech University.

He is also an avid aviation enthusiast and began flying in 1990. He is a commercial-rated helicopter pilot and holds a fixed-wing instrument rating.

At this year's Texas Aviation Conference, Committee Chairman Jim Schwertner introduced Underwood's appointment to the audience noting that "he was instrumental in helping us in the Aviation Division and made sure we were taken care of while he was a commissioner. We are honored to have you as one of our newest members on the advisory board."

"I appreciate the honor of being appointed to the Advisory Committee and have always enjoyed working with Dave and his staff at the Aviation Division," said Underwood while speaking to the audience. ■



# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## Aviation Planner Daniel Benson



### **Tell us about your background.**

I went to college at Southwest Texas State University on a music scholarship in 1980. After my junior recital, I quit the music program and went on to earn my bachelor of science in Physical and Applied Geography.

After several years in San Antonio, I began work in state government with the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission and then accepted a position at TxDOT in the Environmental Affairs Division in 1999. Soon after that time, I took a discovery flight while vacationing in Washington. Pow! I was hooked. I went down the next week to the San Marcos airport and took my first flying lesson. It took some time to get my ticket following the restrictions to flight training that were spawned after the events of September 11, 2001, and the bigger-than-life experience of the birth of my son Ira. But I earned my private pilot license.

I jumped ship to the Aviation Division in 2002 and started working for Linda Howard, former director of Planning and Programming. For the first few years I helped formalize the environmental clearance process for the Division. Under Linda's mentorship, I joined the American Planning Association in 2004 and earned my planning credential in 2007 from the American Institute of Certified Planners. I have over 15 years' experience in the Aviation Division.

### **What are the best parts of your job?**

I get to travel all over Texas talking to people about airports and airplanes. How cool is that! Every once in a while we get to fly out to our airports – what I call day tripping. I also get to work with some terrific people who are passionate about what we do. My job has tremendous flexibility — meaning it allows me to work on projects of special interest, get out “in the field”, or do office work. Plus our office is right on Town Lake, which allows me to get outside and enjoy the hike and bike trail every day I can.

### **What is a typical work day like for you?**

Every day is busy and each day goes by quickly because of the high volume of work I have to complete and the sheer number of airports I have assigned to me. I work best and am most efficient when I make and use a task list. A large part of the work involves reading and interpreting the FAA's various advisory circulars and orders. We're trying to turn a sponsor's letter of interest into an implementable construction project at the airport. Airport planning takes technical skills, but it also takes a great deal of personal communication skills. I enjoy talking with stakeholders about their projects and their airports.

### **Tell us about your personal life**

I married my high school sweetheart and we have been married more than 30 years. We have a young teenage son named Ira, who is just the best kid a dad could ask for. Over the years I played alto and tenor sax in a number of bands and played professional gigs at Antone's, the Continental Club, Threadgill's, The Saxon Pub and Gruene Hall. These are places most musicians only dream of playing, and I played them all in one year. It was the proverbial 10 minutes of fame to be certain, but a lifetime of memories.

My motto is all work and no play is no fun at all. I stay active mountain biking, trail running, and playing competitive Ultimate, which is a game played with a frisbee on a football field. ■



# GRANTS RECEIVED

## Stinson Municipal Airport

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**\$5,214,512\***

Construct replacement air traffic control tower.

## Gillespie County Airport

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**\$1,660,574**

Construct new hangar access taxiway with drainage improvement; construct 8 foot game fence with two cattle guards; rehabilitate drainage flume; construct cattle guard at entrance; and construct Northside apron.

## Sugar Land Regional Airport

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**\$13,359,325**

Construct relocated south section of Taxiway F and construct bridge and cross taxiway for relocated south section of Taxiway F.

## Center Municipal Airport

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**\$1,196,940**

Reconstruct partial main apron; replace VASI's with precision approach path indicator 2's Runway 17-35; replace medium intensity runway lights Runway 17-35; replace beacon and tower; and install drainage improvements.

## Chambers County Airport

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**\$1,322,470**

rehabilitate and mark Runway 12-30; reconstruct hangar access taxiways and apron; reconstruct parallel taxiway A and cross taxiways; demolish obsolete pavement; and install wildlife fencing.

## Coulter Field

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**\$855,000**

Reconstruct section of taxiway B include new drainage culvert; pave taxiway shoulder at taxiway B to improve drainage; reconstruct hangar access taxiway with PCC valley gutter; regrade shoulders and ditches along parallel taxiway B; install wildlife fencing; upgrade existing chain-link fencing to game fence; and pave three grass islands to improve drainage.

## Liberty Municipal Airport

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**\$729,550**

Improve westside drainage.

## Jim Hogg County Airport

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**\$2,154,806**

Rehabilitate and mark Runway 13-31; rehabilitate apron and stub taxiways; expand apron; replace medium intensity runway lights; install precision approach path indicator-2's Runway 31 and install taxiway OFA reflectors on southern caprock wall; install new electrical vault/switch gear; install lighted windcone and segmented circle; FAA flight check precision approach path indicators; remove old hangar and construct new hangar; and rehabilitate auto parking.

\* The federal grant award is \$1,579,642 and local funds will be \$3,634,870.





**Texas Department of Transportation**

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**AVIATION DIVISION**

# WINGTIPS

*WINGTIPS* is an official publication of the Texas Department of Transportation Aviation Division. The intent of *WINGTIPS* is to keep the aviation community and others informed of local developments in aviation.

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[wingtips@tamu.edu](mailto:wingtips@tamu.edu)



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