

WINGTIPS

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

SUGAR LAND
PROJECT
ROLLING ON
p. 6



WINTER 2019



DAVE'S HANGAR

FAA Supplemental Grant Program Update

On March 23, 2018, President Trump signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 that funded the federal government for the remainder of FY 2018. The bill provides an additional \$1B for FAA's Airport Improvement Grant Program to remain available through September 30, 2020. No local match is required for these grants.

The FAA will distribute funds as discretionary grants to airports and

must give priority consideration to projects at rural General Aviation Airports and Small or Non-Hub Commercial Service Airports. For Texas, 56 of our general aviation airports and 18 commercial service airports are eligible for the supplemental funding program.

For round one of the program, FAA accepted requests for FY 2018 funding from priority airports with projects that would be under construction within six months. TxDOT Aviation submitted 11 grant requests totaling \$16.5M, projects that met the FY 2018 criteria. FAA awarded a total of \$205M in grants in round one. The only Texas project that was selected in round one was an \$8M grant for improvements to the Brownsville/South Padre Island International Airport terminal building. The second and final round for selection of projects is now underway. TxDOT Aviation submitted requests for 155 projects; \$189.9M in funding, \$43.8M for priority airports and \$145.1M for non-priority airports. Our planning staff did a great job

in assisting in the development of these requests in a very short period of time. The total request from the State of Texas was \$357M which includes requests submitted by air carrier airports that deal directly with the FAA.

All we can do now is wait and see what projects FAA selects. Hopefully, we will do much better in Round Two than we did in Round One.

FAA Reauthorization

On October 5, 2018, President Trump signed into law a new five-year FAA reauthorization bill – the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (H.R.302). The bill did not include an increase in the annual authorization, \$3.35B, for the national Airport Improvement Grant Program. However, it did include a new supplemental funding authorization of approximately \$1 billion per year targeted towards small and rural airports. This additional funding has the potential to bring much needed improvements to our nation's small airports. In addition to the sorely needed increase in funding, the new legislation will also provide predictability and stability in programing our State Block Grant funding over the next five years. ▣



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EASTERWOOD AIRPORT'S NEW FBO IS OPEN

By Bill Oliver
WTAW Radio

The first significant investment in general and corporate aviation at Easterwood Airport in 72 years is now open.

The Texas A&M system and its airport operator, Astin Aviation, recently held a grand opening at its new fixed based operations (FBO) terminal.

Astin CEO John Clanton says the 8,000 square foot FBO terminal and a new 40,000 square foot hangar serves everyone who doesn't fly commercial.

That includes general, corporate, and military aircraft pilots and passengers.

Last year, The Texas A&M University System, along with its aviation partner Astin Aviation, broke ground on a new general aviation terminal and hangar project at Easterwood Airport as part of a greater \$15 million airport renovation project.

The new Fixed Base Operations terminal, or FBO, now has 8,000 square feet of passenger, pilot, flight planning and conference space capable of supporting the ever increasing volume of aviation activity.

The new hangar has 40,000 square feet of aircraft storage space capable of accommodating the largest corporate aircraft. The two facilities represent the first significant investment in general/corporate aviation improvements to the airport since 1946.

In the long tradition of supporting our armed services, the renovation project also includes a rapid refueling station for military helicopters and a crew briefing facility for military flight training.

Together, these new facilities position Easterwood Airport and The Texas A&M University System at the forefront of general, corporate and military aviation support.

The Texas A&M University System owns Easterwood Airport, which is named in honor of Lt. Jesse Easterwood, a former A&M student and a U.S. Naval aviator during World War I.

Astin Aviation, a local company, has operated the FBO since 2014, and it is committed a minimum of \$7 million in improvements and upgrades to the airport.

This story originally appeared on the WTAW website on August 21, 2018. ■



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The reconstructed taxiway at Hereford Municipal Airport.

FAMILY TRADITION

Hereford Municipal Airport Manager Shawn Frye Carries on Her Family's Aviation Legacy

By Chris Sasser

Texas A&M Transportation Institute

Prior to becoming manager of Hereford Municipal Airport (KHRX) in 2012, Shawn Frye worked as manager of the Hereford Aquatic Center for 18 years. If you think the leap from teaching swimming to running an airport is a bit farfetched, you are not familiar with the Frye family legacy that runs through three generations.

Frye's grandfather, C.G. Frye, was a flight instructor who also established a crop dusting business in Oklahoma in the 1940s. Her father, Ray Frye, brought his dad's company (American Dusting Company) to Hereford in 1951. They worked at the same airport his daughter now supervises.

"My dad had his crop dusting business on this field for over 40 years," said Frye. "When he arrived here in the early 50s there was nothing out here but dirt. He was an icon here and I loved coming out to the airport as a kid."

The airport recently underwent several projects that initially began in 2015. The projects included a complete reconstruction of taxiways, apron, aircraft parking areas, and improvements to the airport entrance road and drainage.

According to Frye, the work was done so the airport could accommodate larger aircraft.



Hereford Municipal Airport Manager Shawn Frye alongside the sign she designed.

"The project was necessary for the larger aircraft that fly in," said Frye. "We have a lot of corporate travel here. We have two ethanol plants, lots of turbine wind farms and two meat packing plants. We basically transitioned from asphalt to concrete. The durability of the concrete will be better and last much longer."

Frye also gave the airport her personal touch by designing the airport entrance sign. She and her assistant, Cayden Finch, share all the duties that include fueling planes to welcoming pilots and passengers who may be visiting her home town for the first time.

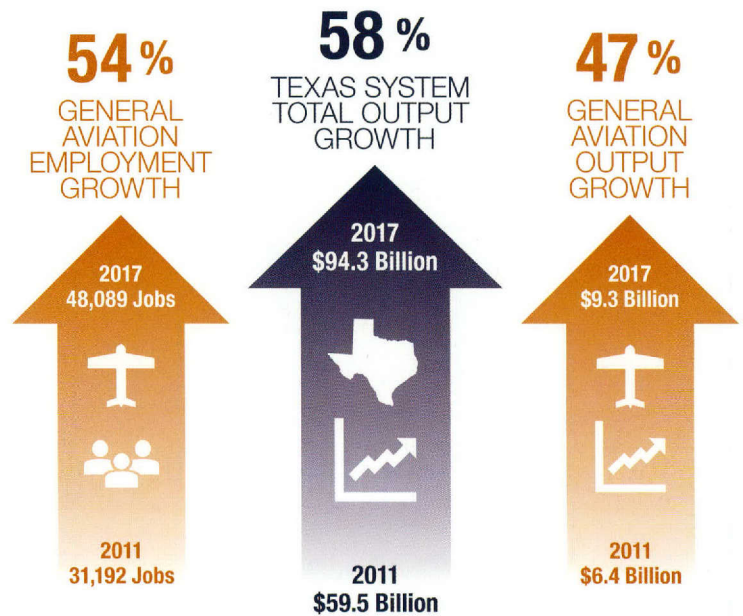
"Meeting people and hearing their stories is the best part of my job," said Frye. "I love working out here...it feels like home." ■

TEXAS AVIATION ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY – 2018

Texas Airports Show Robust Economic Growth

Texas is served by a robust, 289-airport system, a key element of the state's transportation network that attracts business, facilitates the travel of residents and visitors, and supports countless services such as military, law enforcement, and agriculture. Connections made through the airport system lead to the continued growth of Texas's metropolitan areas while providing invaluable access to the state's more rural communities. The Texas Department of Transportation's Aviation Division has commissioned the Texas Aviation Economic Impact Study to examine the value these connections bring to local communities across the state.

The results of the 2017 study clearly show that Texas' 25 commercial service airports and 264 general aviation airports continue to be major catalysts for well-paying, quality jobs. When results from the 2017 are compared to the last statewide economic impact (2011), employment and output have shown a significant increase.



THE CONCLUSION – AIRPORT BENEFITS CONTINUE TO SOAR

Results from the Texas Aviation Economic Impact Study indicate the tremendous strength of Texas's overall system.

The 264 general aviation airports contribute more than 48,000 jobs with a payroll of nearly \$2.6 billion. As presented above, these numbers represent a significant increase since the system was last evaluated in 2011. The total output attributable to general aviation airports surpasses \$9.3 billion. This report provides a comprehensive analysis of Texas airports and the results of the study, identifying the socioeconomic make-up of the study area, the details of the study approach and impacts by category, and the importance of business aviation. The following findings demonstrate the stature and importance of the Texas aviation system.

- Nearly 17,150 direct jobs (those jobs associated with where the initial point of economic activity occurs) are found on general aviation airports, with an associated payroll of \$1.4 billion and output of \$4.5 billion.

- General aviation visitors support 5,621 direct jobs, nearly \$134.8 million in annual payroll, and \$325.8 million in annual output.
- Commercial service airports support approximately 112,500 direct on-airport jobs that generate \$7.3 billion in payroll and \$23.9 billion in output.
- Commercial service airport visitors are responsible for 345,508 direct jobs, \$8.3 billion in annual payroll, and nearly \$19.0 billion in annual expenditures.
- On average, Texas system airports and their businesses invest \$1.5 billion annually in capital projects. These projects result in more than 9,600 direct jobs with pay and benefits of \$347.1 million.

The 2018 Texas Aviation Impact Study is available online at <https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/aviation/eco-impact-aviation.html>.

SUGAR LAND PROJECT ROLLING ON

Massive multi-year taxiway relocation project will take airport to next level

By Chris Sasser

Texas A&M Transportation Institute

Sugar Land Regional Airport (KGSR) is no stranger to growth. The award-winning airport located in west Houston has long been regarded as the go-to reliever airport for corporate aviation serving the energy corridor among other high profile clientele.

In 2011, the airport began an expansive multi-year taxiway relocation project that was necessary to meet the Federal Aviation Administration design standards for maintaining proper

separation between the runway and taxiway. If one thought this project would be as simple as pouring concrete on the ground and calling it good, one would have been sorely mistaken.

“Basically this project occurred because the aircraft were increasing in size at the airport,” explained Sugar Land Regional Airport Director of Aviation Phil Savko. “We were moving up to Global Express and Gulfstream 650 size jets with larger wingspans that required more separation.”



The airport received a \$12 million dollar grant from TxDOT to fund a portion of the Taxiway F relocation project. The project kicked off in 2011 when the airport acquired 80 acres of land from the adjacent prison facility. Then a lengthy environmental assessment followed.

The multi-phase project has involved constructing the taxiway in sections using bridges with 45-foot piers to level the ground.

“One section is 3,500 feet of pavement with three bridges,” said Savko. “It’s quite an engineering challenge. During this time we also had to detour through all the drainage because we were having issues with water coming back out onto the airfield. We were able to put about a mile of underground pipe in to resolve a lot of those issues.”

Complicating the project was the arrival of Hurricane Harvey in the summer of 2017, which dumped over 40 inches of rain on the airport, bringing construction to a halt.

“Certainly this project has been an exercise in patience and learning to overcome adversity,” said Savko. “But we’re moving forward. Current progress on the project has allowed the airport to open over 5,000 feet of new pavement to aircraft traffic. This includes new LED lights, signs and markings. This also involves renaming our entire taxiway system. The next steps will be to construct new connectors from the taxiway to the runway.”

The multi-phase project is a little over halfway complete as of the summer of 2018. Though there is still much work to be done, the airport continues to focus on service for their clients as much of the construction is done at night to minimize aircraft movement disruption.

“We’ve really stepped it up on this project so that we’ve taken our airport to the next level,” said Savko. “TxDOT Aviation has been a great partner to work with on this project.”

For more information about Sugar Land Regional Airport, please visit their website at <https://www.sugarlandtx.gov/1073/Airport>. ■



PIONEER FLIGHT MUSEUM

A Rare Gem Built By Passion and Determination

Not everyone gets the chance to fulfill their destiny, but Roger Freeman certainly did. His story, which is far from over, is filled with events that inevitably landed him in sleepy Kingsbury, Texas, a long way from his hometown of Torrance, California — about an hour away from the bright lights of Hollywood.

The owner of the Pioneer Flight Museum in Kingsbury, Freeman fell in love with the area surrounding Guadalupe County when he was a recent high school graduate working on the 1975 Robert Redford movie *The Great Waldo Pepper*, which was partially filmed in this part of Texas. Freeman, who soloed at age 16, was hired to help with the movie by legendary Hollywood stunt pilot, Frank Tallman, who was a friend of his father's.

"I grew up around vintage aircraft my Dad restored as a hobby," Freeman explains, which began his love affair with the history of flight. He began to fly at an early age and became a career airline pilot. The entire time, Freeman had the desire to collect and restore old planes. During a furlough from his pilot

job, he accepted a contract offer to restore a pre-World War II plane for a museum, and that was the beginning of his new career.

"Instead of going back to the airlines, I bought a 75-acre farm which we call the Old Kingsbury Aerodrome, which houses the Pioneer Flight Museum and my business, Vintage Aviation Services. I already had some of my dad's old planes and parts, and over the years, I've added a lot to that collection. In the meantime, I've hired several employees to work on restoration projects for other museums, and we stay busy," he says.

Freeman's Vintage Aviation Services restores old planes, which are housed across the country at other museums, including military flight museums.

"When people think about old airplanes, they think about World War II-era aircraft. But the real history of flight began a lot earlier than that. And that's the story I want to tell, that's my passion," he said.

Pioneer Flight Museum owner Roger Freeman and his partner alongside a classic airplane.



Freeman's "passion" is scattered throughout three hangars on the airport grounds — not only are there numerous vintage aircraft, but also World War I military trucks, cars, and motorcycles. From ground to ceiling in all the hangars are huge shelves filled with thousands of old parts and countless memorabilia dating back to the early 1900's. Each piece has its own story, and Freeman can talk for hours as he guides you through each hangar.

With the help from his partner Charlotte Parker, the two have spent days and weeks organizing all the hangars. He even has an extensive personal library of photographs and books about vintage aircraft and World War I era documents. He is so consumed with the time period, he named the road to the Aerodrome 'Pershing Lane,' named after General John J. Pershing, the commander of the American Expeditionary Force on the Western Front in World War I.

The Pioneer Flight Museum hosts two Fly-in's a year, attracting hundreds of pilots and history buffs.

To make the Pioneer Flight Museum better, Freeman acquired the frame of a historic World War I hangar — which was originally part of Dodd Army Airfield, which pre-dates Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. The 66 x 120-foot hangar will become the centerpiece of the museum, allowing for more formalized exhibits of all of Freeman's collections. (The steel frame has already been erected, and Freeman is accepting donations to finish the construction project.)

"There has been a fair share of obstacles along the way as I have built up my business and collected all these things for the museum, but when you have a passion for something as strong as mine, things seem to always fall in place," Freeman says with a smile.

For more information on the Pioneer Flight Museum, visit their website at <http://www.pioneerflightmuseum.org/>. 🗨

MCKINNEY NATIONAL AIRPORT BREAKS GROUND ON NEW EXECUTIVE TERMINAL

Mckinney National Airport (TKI) hosted an event on Friday, April 20, to celebrate the groundbreaking of its new state-of-the-art 17,000 square foot fixed base operator (FBO) and executive terminal. The event was held at the main entrance of the airport, centrally located next to the current terminal. Honored guests and speakers included Mayor George Fuller, City of McKinney, Paul Grimes, McKinney City Manager, and Brad Henderson, President of Western LLC, the developer and design-builder for this project.

The new transient hangar, which broke ground in March, and executive terminal are designed for the McKinney Air Center which is the FBO providing fuel and world-class services to the aviation community at McKinney National Airport. The new facilities will enable the Airport and McKinney Air Center to continue to provide an award-winning level of service to the growing aviation community.

The City of McKinney joined with Western LLC in a public-private partnership on the new aviation development. The new executive terminal includes two conference rooms, flight

planning room, training room, media room, pilot lounge, refreshment center, outdoor lounge, and package storage. There is build-to-suit office space available for lease, curbside luggage service, a porte-cochere entry, and on-site car rental fleet and services.

"We are privileged to work with the City of McKinney and the McKinney National Airport teams on this project," said Heather Astuto, Client Executive with Western LLC and a McKinney resident of 10 years. "I am honored to work as an advocate alongside the City and the Airport to ensure that we at Western meet all of their needs."

According to Heather, Western LLC's design team came to visit McKinney in early March and was able to tour not only the Airport, but also the City to get a feel for the community. Construction of the 39,900 SF transient hangar is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year and the executive terminal's completion date is June 2019. 🗨

LIFESTAR AIR MEDICAL TRANSPORT CELEBRATES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY

By Kim Stevens

State Aviation Journal

Med-Trans Corporation and Northwest Texas Healthcare Systems are commemorating the 25th anniversary of LIFESTAR air medical transport service in the Texas Panhandle and surrounding states. After beginning in one location with one helicopter, LIFESTAR now operates two helicopters and a fixed-wing aircraft from three locations.

“We are proud of the growth and service we’ve been able to provide in bringing world class patient care to the people of the Texas Panhandle and nearby states,” said Med-Trans President Rob Hamilton. “To mark this historic 25th anniversary, we’ll be hosting a gala celebration at the new Downtown Embassy Suites on August 18 to share our celebration with the community.”

Stewart Jackson RN, BSN, CMTE and Director of LIFESTAR, said he expects the event to include community leaders and prominent citizens. “We want to show off how proud we are to have the privilege of serving this excellent community,” Jackson said.

He noted that the company began flight operations in Amarillo in 1993 under the name Medevac 1. At that time the flight operation was run by a company called Southwest

Helicopters, operating a single Eurocopter AS350 helicopter based at the Northwest Texas Healthcare Systems hospital in Amarillo. At the time, it was the only flight operation serving the medical airlift requirements of the Texas Panhandle.

Med-Trans Corporation became affiliated with Northwest Texas Healthcare’s air transport operation in 2008, providing flight crews ever since. Med-Trans also owns the operation’s aircraft.

Today LIFESTAR has grown into an operation with three aircraft operating from three bases and employing close to 100 people including administrators, nurses, mechanics, and flight dispatchers. One base is located at Northwest Texas Healthcare Systems hospital, while another is at the Rick Husband International Airport, which serves Amarillo. The third base is located in Pampa, Texas, approximately 55 miles northeast of Amarillo. LIFESTAR bases and hangs its Eurocopter EC-135 helicopter at its hospital location.

With relationships in 26 states and operations from more than 90 base locations, more than 1,200 Med-Trans team members make a difference in the lives and communities they serve. For more info go to www.med-trans.net. ■

AROUND THE OFFICE

Grants Section

Sheri Quinlan returned to the Aviation Division in July, after retiring in September 2016. Sheri was born and raised in Texas, and started her career working for the Texas Department of Health. She continued her career at TxDOT and retired with 28 years of state service. This year she had the great opportunity to come back to a place she loves, TxDOT’s Aviation Division.

“Sheri has always been a valued team member,” said Director of Grants Kari Campbell. “She has a great work ethic, positive attitude, dedication to both the AVN team as well as all

external partners and customers. Having her back is like a breath of fresh air! We are very pleased to have her rejoin the team!”

Anna Ramirez, also started in July, and brings 23 years of state service, including 12 with TxDOT. She has contracting experience that consists of:

- Toll Operations, Engineering, Construction, & Traffic Safety contracts (All TxDOT)
- Facilities contracts (General Service Commission)
- Technology contracts (Office of Attorney General)

Anna is CTCM certified and is a native of Austin with three children.

“Anna brings a wealth of state contracts experience which will be very beneficial for the Aviation Division and all of our vendors,” said Campbell. “We were fortunate to hire someone with impressive governmental contracting experience who is dedicated to providing outstanding customer service!”

Engineering Section

Robert Johnson also recently joined the Engineering Section as a project manager.

Robert graduated from the University of Houston in 2004 with a Civil Engineering Degree. He started his career with PBS&J as an Engineer in Training working on waste water treatment plants. He joined TxDOT in 2007 as a Transportation Engineer at the Central Houston Area Office working on roadway design and drainage projects. In 2014, he accepted a position with the Aviation Division overseeing design and construction for Airport Capital Improvement Projects. He then joined the Austin District Central Design Office in May of 2018 for a brief period handling roadway design projects before returning to the TxDOT Aviation Division. 🗨

GRANTS RECEIVED

Hamilton Municipal Airport

\$245,540

Rehabilitate and mark terminal apron and rotomill and overlay airport entrance road.

Wilbarger County Airport/Vernon

\$2,754,630

Rotomill, overlay and mark Runway 2-20.

Gladewater Municipal Airport

\$932,960

Chip seal, overlay and mark Runway 14-32; and rehabilitate taxiway to Runway 14-32.

Fort Worth Meacham International Airport

\$8,611,290

Construct new midfield redevelopment taxiways.

Terry County Airport

\$580,550

Install medium intensity runway lights and sign on Runway 2-20; demolish obsolete taxiway pavement; install reflective directional signs and install lighted wind cone.

Fort Worth Spinks Airport

\$5,678,480

Construct taxiway D, E, F, G, H & J; reconstruct/widen taxiway C and medium intensity taxiway lights for C, E, F, G and H.

Clarksville/ J.D. Trissell Field

\$145,120

Rehabilitate and mark Runway 17-35; rehabilitate apron, north hangar access taxiway, and south hangar access taxiway; and clean and crack seal taxiways, apron and runway.



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