

VOLUME 54 / ISSUE 01

SPRING 2025

The

AEROSTAR LOG



QUEEN OF THE FLEET

GARY EVANS

N702PG

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Bruce Witkop

President of the Aerostar Owners Association



Chapter 5

Butterfly to Caterpillar

The caterpillar-to-butterfly project has proven to be long and arduous. Currently, we are at 815 days in this transition, with many challenges and roadblocks along the way. All of us who own Aerostars know the scarcity of talent and parts that complicate maintaining this challenging yet wonderful aircraft. We are currently in the final phase of the metamorphosis with aircraft on jacks, swinging the gear, replacing timed-out parts, etc., and hope to be free to fly very soon. More news to follow.

I wish to share with you a conversation I had with a colleague of mine at Penn Valley Airport and his observations about why we fly.

Flying isn't just about mastering a set of skills. It is a calling. It is the pull that's been in your heart from the very beginning. The reason you dared to dream.

Each time you take to the skies, it reminds you of why you started this journey. It's not just about the destination. It's about freedom, the challenge, and the passion that comes with every flight.

Flying keeps you grounded in your purpose, reminding you that the dream was always meant to be. It's a calling that will guide you every day to reach higher and never stop believing. So true!

We are so privileged to enjoy our passion that so few people ever get to experience in their lives.

Blue skies,

Bruce Witkop

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N21T-Expertly reconditioned/maintained by Alan Speakmaster @ Master Aviation, Danbury, CT. (AOA member)



Circa 2012
Panel expertly customized by Mustang Aviation, Lexington, Kentucky



Circa 1997
Almost 1000 hours of my 2800 TT is in this 700 Aerostar. Imagine going from 80 hours TT to the "fastest piston twin", not many people have that opportunity, nor do many people have the opportunity to learn to fly from their father. (Especially one that has over 5000 hours in Aerostars) What a wonderful experience.



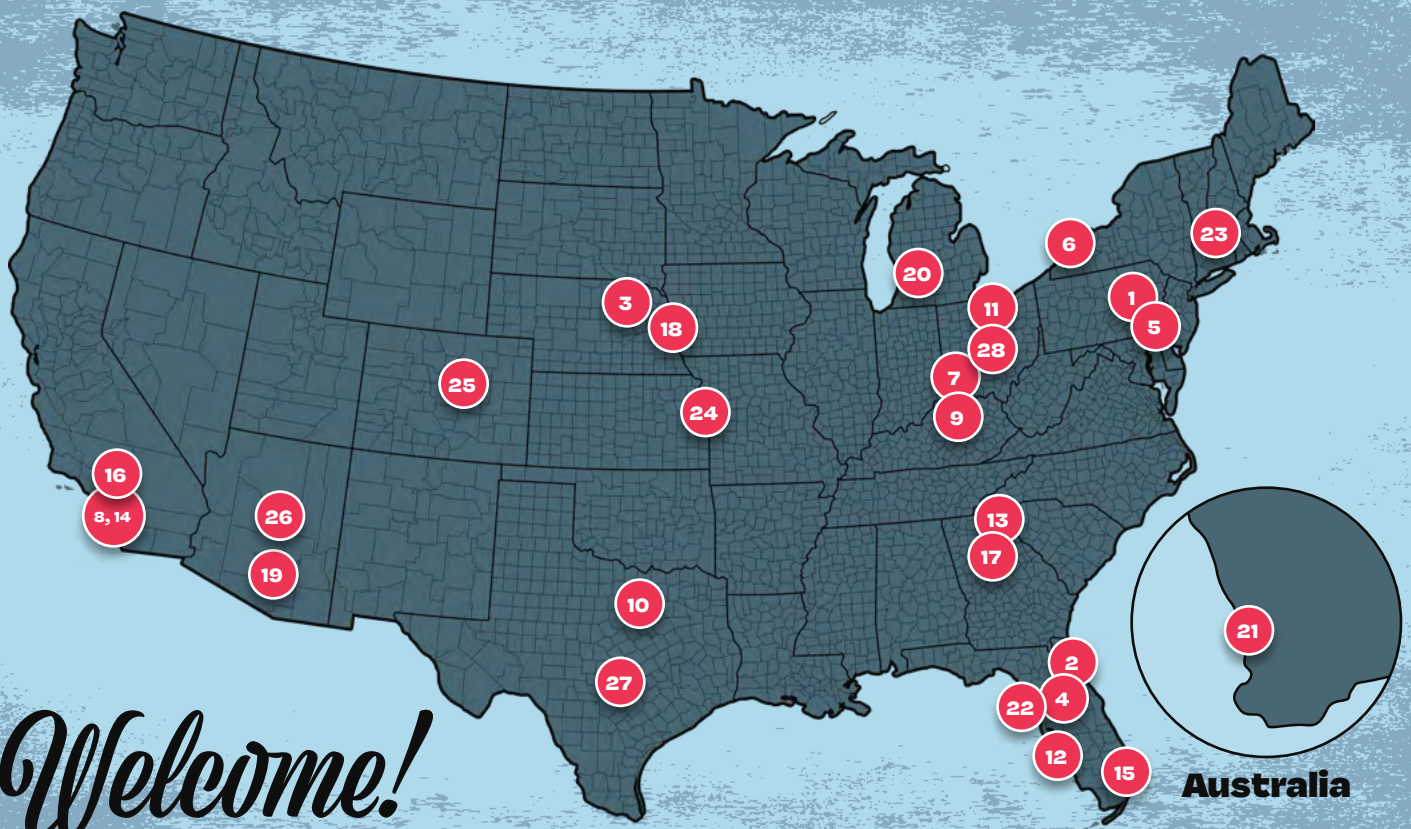
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Welcome!

New Members!

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1. Brad & Bernie Aurand
Sellinsgrove, PA
N2943Q-Saratoga</p> <p>2. Andrew & Michelle Binks
St. Johns, FL
N10AB</p> <p>3. Brad Cummings
Orchard, NE
N7503S</p> <p>4. Jeff Dennis
Montverde, FL
-</p> <p>5. Kelley Elmore
Oley, PA
-</p> <p>6. Eran & Irina Epstein
Clarence Center, NY
N6073A</p> <p>7. Michael & Amanda Frank
Centerville, OH
-</p> <p>8. Adam Frisch
Los Angeles, CA
N261KT</p> <p>9. James & Martina Glasgow
Stamping Ground, KY
-</p> <p>10. Richard Gonzalez
Haltom, TX
N19RR</p> | <p>11. Timothy Hanline
Shelby, OH
-</p> <p>12. Robert & Tina Herig Jr
Parrish, FL
N1111K</p> <p>13. David & Tamara Herman
Toccoa, GA
N3WR</p> <p>14. Kurt Iswarienko
Los Angeles, CA
-</p> <p>15. Richard Italia
Wellington, FL
N8188X</p> <p>16. Martin Johnson
Agua Dulce, CA
N601SH</p> <p>17. Chuck Kellar
Gainesville, GA
-</p> <p>18. Richard & Leann Kinkade
Omaha, NE
N35LL</p> <p>19. Seth & Roberta Koppenhaver
Oro Valley, AZ
-</p> <p>20. Eric & Bunny Lindsley
Delton, MI
N44XX</p> | <p>21. John Riley
Perth, Australia
-</p> <p>22. Andy & Yanda Schechter
Summerfield, FL
N117F</p> <p>23. Cole Skinner
Westfield, MA
-</p> <p>24. Phil Tearney
Louisburg, KS
-</p> <p>25. Robert & Karen Venohr
Aurora, CO
N29LL</p> <p>26. Thomas West
Payson, AZ
N48TN</p> <p>27. Michael & Judy Whitfield
Leander, TX
N231LT - Mooney</p> <p>28. Thomas Willson
Westerville, OH
-</p> |
|--|--|--|

Sustaining MEMBERS

PLATINUM *Founding AOA Supporters*

Ken Bacon	Broken Arrow, OK	<i>N35LL</i>	Jim Hudgin	Wellington, FL	<i>N222KD</i>
Thomas Bienz	Laramie, WY	<i>N50AF-MU-2, N12TQ-Husky</i>	Karl Hutter	Reno, NV	<i>N90500</i>
Robert Bliss	New York, NY	<i>N700BZ</i>	George Sampas	New York, NY	<i>N121IA</i>
Joel Champlin	Kerens, TX	<i>N88CX</i>	Anonymous	-	-
Gary Evans	New Waverly, TX	<i>N702PG</i>			

SILVER *AOA supporters for 2+ years*

David Barnett	Colleyville, TX	<i>N737DB</i>	Gerhard E. Maale	Plano, TX	<i>N70KC</i>
Larry Baum	Ithaca, NY	<i>N60LM</i>	Scott Maley	McLean, VA	-
Robert Becker	Grand Rapids, MI	<i>N66GC</i>	Paul Maritz	Mercer Island, WA	<i>N824MZ</i>
Nico Bieber	Dudelange, Luxembourg	<i>N15566</i>	Lloyd Martin	Jamesville, NY	<i>N6077T</i>
Mike Bollenbacher	Toledo, OH	<i>N338N</i>	Justin McClure	Camp Hill, PA	<i>N791JM</i>
Charlie Browning	Pell City, AL	<i>N78MS</i>	Scott Mol	Zeeland, MI	<i>N700BV</i>
Jack Burnside	Rockwall, TX	<i>N728RT</i>	Mario Morales	Lincoln, NB, Canada	<i>C-6MGZ, C-GRIK, C-GOSX</i>
Scott Burton	Henderson, NV	<i>N20SS</i>	Douglas Moskowitz	Kansas City, MO	<i>N804LG</i>
Ronald Cannoles	Las Vegas, NV	<i>N222AY</i>	Kurt Mungenast	Saint Louis, MO	<i>N701NJ</i>
Shawn Claggett	Nicholasville, KY	<i>N21T</i>	Ryan Nelson	Willmar, MN	<i>N36460</i>
Larry Clawson Jr	Tyngsboro, MA	<i>N77XC</i>	D'El Neukomm	New Castle, DE	<i>N6904T</i>
Brennin Colegrove	California, MD	<i>N78NJ</i>	Doug Parrish	Monument, CO	<i>N3646K</i>
John Cook	The Woodlands, TX	-	Eric Reese	Woodinville, WA	-
Thomas Cooke	Cleveland, OH	<i>N60GW</i>	Ian Roberts	Saint Augustine, FL	<i>N65DT</i>
Ron Cox	Vero Beach, FL	-	James Runnels	Baton Rouge, LA	<i>N250S</i>
Fred Eisert	Yellow Springs, OH	<i>N680FP</i>	Richard Schmidt	Fort Myers, FL	<i>N601P</i>
Joshua Fletcher	Stewart, FL	<i>N235KK</i>	Tom Shaffer	Somerset, PA	<i>N55RR</i>
Richard Frick	Nekoma, KS	<i>N526SC</i>	Grant Skomorowski	Saskatoon, SK, Canada	<i>C-GBQP</i>
Dirk Frobese	Hannover, Germany	-	Howard Slugocki	Myrtle Beach, SC	<i>N9510Q</i>
Michael Grossmann	North Canton, OH	<i>N79MG</i>	Eddie Smith	White House, TN	<i>N89AT</i>
Don Henderson	Lagrange, GA	<i>N700GP</i>	Charles Southall	Naples, FL	<i>N826D</i>
Norman Howell	Port Orange, FL	<i>N425CA</i>	Buddy Stallings	New Bern, NC	<i>N600CC</i>
Don Johnson	Amarillo, TX	<i>N555PX</i>	Joel Stout	Elizabethtown, PA	<i>N60GW</i>
Walter Kahn	Naples, FL	<i>N3634Y</i>	David Strain	Longwood, FL	<i>N3643T</i>
Danny Kamal	Fayetteville, GA	<i>N830DH</i>	David Sweigart	Elizabethtown, PA	<i>N86AT</i>
Richard Kaskel	Evansville, IN	<i>N20BZ</i>	Sandy Thomson	Burlington, ON, Canada	<i>C-GUTY</i>
Safdar Khwaja	Murrysville, PA	<i>N888KT</i>	Bill Ulrich	Spokane, WA	<i>N62DG</i>
Edouard Kohler	St. George, TX	-	Lance VanWormer	Franklin, TN	-
Clyde Kornegay	Harlingen, Switzerland	<i>N601B</i>	Cliff Waide	Hagerman, NM	<i>N555BW</i>
Julie N. Lionetti	Bellevue, WA	-	William Yarborough	Ladson, SC	-
Eric Lopez	Palm Harbor, FL	<i>N700WG</i>			

BRONZE *AOA supporters for 1 year*

Luther Anderson	Greer, SC	<i>N600NJ</i>	Greg Longie	Phoenix, AZ	-
Frank Bullard	Ormond Beach, FL	<i>N60INT & N60ING</i>	Charles McGee	Yorktown, VA	<i>N6907A</i>
Peter Conner	Plymouth, MA	<i>N601PC</i>	Gary Palmer	San Juan, TX	-
Mark Henshall	El Cajon, CA	<i>N8981Y</i>	Vincent Schmidt	Greer, SC	<i>N16HM</i>
Jerry Holzswieg	Dallas, TX	<i>N3641S</i>	Phil Tearney	Louisburg, KS	-
Gabriele Jasper	Brick, NJ	<i>N12 - Jetexec (Rotorway)</i>			

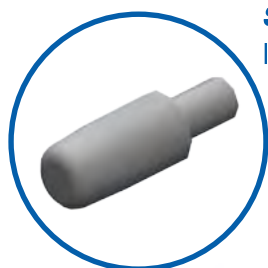
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LOG INSIDER

KURT MUNGENAST

My name is Kurt Mungenast.

I live in St. Louis, Missouri and I am the proud owner of N70INJ, a 1980 Aerostar. I started flying at Naval Aviation Station Corpus Christi, Texas in the T-34C and flew for the U.S Marine Corps as a CH-46E Sea Knight Pilot with HMM-265 and 31st MEU in Okinawa, Japan. After leaving active duty, I returned to our family businesses and joined the Missouri Army National Guard, where I was qualified in the AH-64A Apache helicopter. I left service in 2004 to further my civilian career and buy in as a partner.

In 2008, I purchased a Cessna 206 and started flying to many of my business meetings in D.C., Chicago, Miami, and a few longer trips to LA and Las Vegas. A Cessna TTX replaced my 206(s), and I also augmented my hangar with Maule 235(s) and a Robinson R-22.

A mid-life crisis in 2016 and my obligation to a promise made to my military friends caused me to rejoin the military at age 47 as a Chief Warrant Officer 2, where I learned to fly the UH-60A/L Blackhawks. I bought a 1977 Beech Baron with a Colemill Conversion (180kts) and used to fly that to my weekly Blackhawk flight training periods. I was reinstated as a Major and volunteered to lead 35 Soldiers and 4 Blackhawks to the US Virgin Islands for Hurricanes Maria and Irma relief in 2017. In 2018, I took a leave of absence from my civilian job and deployed to Iraq to manage the airfield north of Baghdad and fly Blackhawk missions with A Company 2/211th. I returned in 2019, accepted a promotion and Battalion Command in 2021 and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 2022.



When I returned from Iraq, I sold the Baron and replaced it with my Aerostar, which proved less than reliable. It broke down in Dothan, Alabama, and that's when I met Don Smith from Aerostar World! He drove over, and, long story short, I opened my wallet and bought two new engines. I have enjoyed speed and reliability ever since, flying to DC, Phoenix, Chicago, and Dayton. Ken Bacon took great care of me during my last annual trip, and it was definitely worth the flight to Tulsa!

I own Alton Toyota, St. Louis Acura (kurtmungenast.com) and Katie and I have six children and one grandchild and 170 employees.





LOG INSIDER

ERAN & IRINA EPSTEIN

What is your name?

My name is Eran Epstein.

Where do you live?

I live in Buffalo, NY.

What model Aerostar do you fly?

I fly a 601P.

How long have you been flying, and how many hours do you have?

I've been flying for 30 years and have logged approximately 1,500 hours.

How long have you been flying an Aerostar?

I'm new to the Aerostar—just 10 hours so far.

Who usually flies with you on your Aerostar trips?

Most of my trips consist of me and one passenger.

What is the scariest thing that has happened to you in an Aerostar?

So far... nothing!

What is the best flying lesson you have learned?

In an emergency, fly the plane.

What is something about flying that you had to learn the hard way?

It's better to be on the ground wishing you were flying than flying and wishing you were on the ground.

Have you ever had an engine-out while flying the Aerostar? If so, what happened?

No, I have not.

What has been your most memorable flight and why?

Having an engine failure in a single-engine plane—it really motivated me to get my multi-engine rating and plane.

What is the next upgrade, instrumentation, or modification you plan to get for your Aerostar?

There are so many! Auxiliary fuel tank, JPI engine monitor, replacing all hoses—the list is too long!

Why do you attend AOA conventions?

I haven't attended one yet, but I'm looking forward to meeting like-minded folks.

When you're not flying your Aerostar, what are your other interests?

My family and kids.



LOG INSIDER

DOUG & ROBIN PARRISH

Where do you live?

I live just north of Colorado Springs in a town whose industry used to be harvesting ice but is now a bedroom community.

What model Aerostar do you fly?

I fly a 1981 601P SS700 FIKI.

How long have you been flying, and how many hours do you have?

I've been flying for 30 years and have logged 1,600 hours.

How long have you been flying an Aerostar?

I've been flying an Aerostar for six years and have accumulated 350 hours in it.

Do you use your Aerostar for business or pleasure?

I use my Aerostar for both business and pleasure.

Who usually flies with you on your Aerostar trips?

Most of my trips consist of me and one passenger—my wife Robin, who is also the co-owner.

What is the scariest thing that has happened to you in an Aerostar?

The fire warning activated for the right engine, so I caged the engine. Then, the fire warning activated for the left engine!

Perhaps I'll expand on this for a future article. I even "won" a call from the FSDO for this.

What is the best flying lesson you have learned?

While it's easier said than done, keeping—or regaining—a cool head during an emergency can save your life.

What is something about flying that you had to learn the hard way?

Use supplemental oxygen at night, especially during the landing phase. While I was doing the requisite three full-stop landings for night currency, the last landing was flat (3-point landings are for taildraggers). Upon returning to the hangar, I found the nose landing gear strut leaking hydraulic fluid. Even though it was a relatively minor thing, it's the only time I have ever hurt an airplane.

Have you ever had an engine-out while flying the Aerostar? If so, what happened?

In addition to the fire warning incident above, I absentmindedly turned OFF a fuel selector as I was cross-feeding for balance. Most control mistakes while flying are immediately apparent, but this one took long enough to manifest itself that my mind had completely changed context, so I was at a complete loss. Fortunately, it took little time to diagnose and correct

the problem. My wife was with me at the time and was none too pleased.

What has been your most memorable flight and why?

Many, if not most, of my flights are memorable. The reasons vary—technical or flight-critical situations, weather phenomena, scenery, and occasion. So, deciding on the most memorable one is difficult, but I'll pick one from the "human condition" category.

This particular flight was in the Piper Seminole I owned before my Aerostar, with my future wife Robin in the right seat. We were en route from Billings (KBIL) to Yakima (KYKM) after an early morning departure from Pierre (KPIR). We fueled, snacked, and had coffee at Edwards FBO, then took off again. About 30 minutes into the flight, Robin admitted she should have stopped at the restroom before takeoff but insisted she was fine.

We flew through some benign IMC while crossing the Bitterroots at 12,000 feet. The Seminole was true-ing out at 160 knots but had a mild and variable headwind. Over Idaho's panhandle, Robin noted that the Garmin 530W kept switching between an ETA of 0:59 hours and 1:05 hours. It turns out she had been watching the ETA for two hours with the "gotta go, gotta go, gotta go" jingle in her head. The fluctuating ETA, due to the changing winds, only added to her frustration.

At this point, she regretted not turning back when we were 30 minutes out from Billings. To help speed up our arrival, I kept the throttles up during descent, putting us into the yellow arc—a rare thing for a Seminole. Upon landing, I told her to skip post-flight duties and make a beeline

for the FBO. Fortunately, a Seminole's door is on the right side, so I just killed the engines, and she was out.

That flight convinced me that, while the Seminole is a great training airplane, it was not a suitable cross-country aircraft for us. Enter the Aerostar!

What is the next upgrade, instrumentation, or modification you plan to get for your Aerostar?

A graphic engine monitor. I have mostly settled on Graphic Insight's G4, but one avionics shop (a Garmin fan) said the G4 is problematic, i.e., buggy. However, an Aerostar owner told me his G4 was not buggy but that the form factor was too small for his liking. I prefer the smaller form factor because I have a full panel and want the

engine data on the pilot's side of the radio stack, not on the co-pilot side where it would be mostly out of view.

Why do you attend AOA conventions?

I always learn a lot from chatting with my fellow Aerostar owner-pilots, as well as from the seminar sessions. Also, it's a treat to see a bunch of Aerostars on the ramp.

The Aerostar is a rare aircraft. Occasionally, I'll hear another Aerostar on the radio, and even less frequently, I'll see one. Once, while visiting SoCal's John Wayne Airport (KSNA), I was taxiing for takeoff when I spotted another Aerostar at a tie-down (must've been a local). The owner was there, and he must have recognized the sound of the engines because

he looked up and waved. That was cool!

There's nothing like the feeling of being connected to a community of folks who share the same passion.

When you're not flying your Aerostar, what are your other interests?

I'm involved with Civil Air Patrol and computer programming (which is my vocation, but I also write my own programs to solve problems). Right now, I'm considering how I can use RAG AI to create a chatbot for Aerostar owners.

I also enjoy reading—mostly history and biography. I just started a recent translation of Herodotus' Histories. Maybe I'll learn how to properly write an article!





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Trivia

with **Thomas E. Zumbrunn**

- 1** What are the tolerances (PPU/EASA) for:
 - A. Height during normal multi-engine flight?
 - B. Heading or tracking (ME); with simulated engine failure?
 - C. Speed, takeoff, and approach?

- 2** What is the most vital action after an engine failure in your Aerostar?

- 3** What is the option to fly below the minimum control speed air (VMCA) with one engine inoperative (OEI)?

- 4** How do you clearly identify the "dead engine" in IMC-conditions?

- 5** How can you feel the good/bad engine on your pedals?

- 6** What happens when you lose an engine?

- 7** Following failure of the critical engine, what performance should you be able to maintain at minimum control speed air (VMCA)?

- 8** What influences the strength of the yawing moment after an engine failure (ME)?

- 9** What criterion determines which engine is the critical engine of a twin-engine aircraft?

- 10** Does the flap position on your Aerostar influence the VMCA?

- 11** What is the effect of the undercarriage (gear down) on the VMCA?

- 12** What is the effect of altitude and temperature on the VMCA?

- 13** What is the "worst case" CG-position during an engine failure?

This round of trivia is provided courtesy of **Thomas E. Zumbrunn**, CPL with ATP theory, CRISE/ME (SET/MEP), LPC Assessor for English level 4

Ringgenberg,
Switzerland

- 1.** The tolerances are:
A. +/- 150 ft; with simulated engine failure (ME) +/- 200 ft
B. +/- 15 deg
C. Speed, take off and approach? +/- 5 knots; all other flight regimes +/- 15 knots
- 2.** Stop the yaw with the rudder
- 3.** Reducing the power on the "good engine"
- 4.** On your turn coordinator - action: "kick the ball"
- 5.** Good foot = good engine; bad foot (no reaction) = bad engine
- 6.** A. airspeed decays
B. the nose drops
C. most significantly: there will be an immediate yawing moment towards the failed (dead) engine.
- 7.** Heading
- 8.** A. Thrust from the operating engine (throttle setting and density altitude)
B. The distance between the thrust line and the CG (thrust arm)
C. How much drag is being produced by the failed engine
- 9.** The one with the center of thrust closest to the centerline of the fuselage
- 10.** It increases the VMCA
- 11.** It slightly increases VMCA
- 12.** It decreases VMCA with altitude and/or temperature
- 13.** With the CG at the after limit

Answers



AEROSTAR ENGINE TREND MONITORING: PART 1 OF 3

Oil Analysis

How reading your oil tells the story of what's happening inside your AeroStar's engines.

Mark Henshall

Would it surprise you to know that the airline I fly for does not own the engines that power the fleet of Embraer 175 aircraft we fly?

They do own the airframes. But they RENT the engines. I bet there have been times you wished the engines on your Aerostar were rented. Got a blown cylinder? Good news. Repairing it is someone else's problem. It's always nice to dream.

Since the expensive engines on your Aerostar are certainly wholly owned by you, it pays to track their condition closely, not only for safety reasons but also so you can catch problems early and correct them before major surgery is required or a catastrophic breakdown occurs. Trend monitoring of engines has been practiced for decades by the airlines and military. These days, with readily available and affordable technology, owners of piston aircraft can also practice aggressive trend monitoring. The best part is you don't have to be an A&P mechanic to do it. In fact, most A&Ps don't even know HOW to practice the various components of trend monitoring, other than cutting open an oil filter because the regs mandate it. Most mechanics don't have much motivation to go beyond what the FAA requires in this regard. It's not their wallet on the line. But as the person paying the bills, you, as an owner, can empower yourself.

Imagine this: As a result of effective trend monitoring, you may even be in a position to tell your mechanic early in the game that the exhaust valve on cylinder number 5 on the left engine needs to have the valve guide reamed, something he would have no way of knowing at this early stage. This can be done without cylinder removal if caught early and will correct a valve that is starting to stick before mechanical damage occurs. Or you may be in a position to tell him that, NO, cylinder number 2 on the right engine does NOT need to be pulled, despite his assertion that the cylinder is bad because even though the compression reading was below 60/80, borescope images reveal no internal cylinder issues. And you have solid proof. Compression tests are notoriously inaccurate and inconsistent, but having photographic evidence of a healthy cylinder in your hands is compelling. Wondering if you need to overhaul as you approach TBO? The airlines do not

TREND MONITORING PUTS YOU, THE OWNER, ONE STEP AHEAD OF EXPENSIVE PROBLEMS.

Fig. 6
Metal in filter



Fig. 1
Cutting open an oil filter



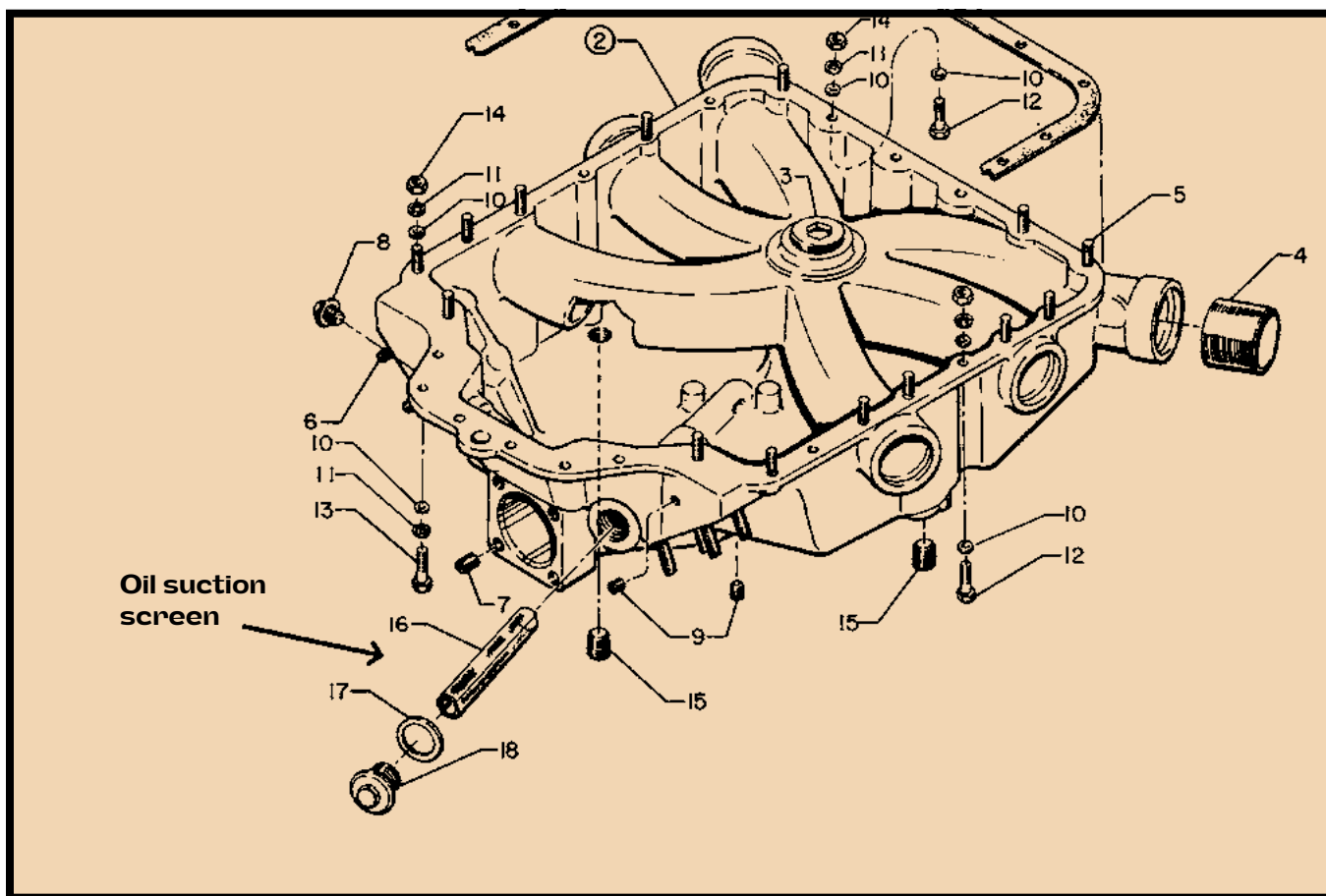


Fig. 2
Oil suction screen



Fig. 4
Identifying metal



Fig. 5
How much metal
is too much?

overhaul engines when they reach a certain hour mark. The decision to overhaul is based on condition. You may save yourself from needlessly euthanizing an engine that is in perfectly acceptable condition because you have had your finger on the pulse of the engine's health all along. It's not at all unheard of for even turbocharged engines to far exceed TBO, provided they aren't abused or exposed to corrosion and effective trend monitoring is practiced. Like what you're hearing? Read on.

This article is part one of a three-part series that describes how to perform all the various components of engine trend monitoring. This part covers oil

analysis and inspecting the oil filter and oil pump suction screen for contaminants. Parts two and three will cover electronic engine data analysis and borescope analysis of engine internals in order to get high-resolution pictures of engine conditions. Again, everything I'm about to teach you can be performed by you as an owner under your preventive maintenance authority granted to you by FAR part 43 appendix A. You do not need to be supervised by an A&P for any of these steps.

Every single time the oil is changed in your engines, the oil filters should be cut open and examined for metal and other contaminants. Outlets

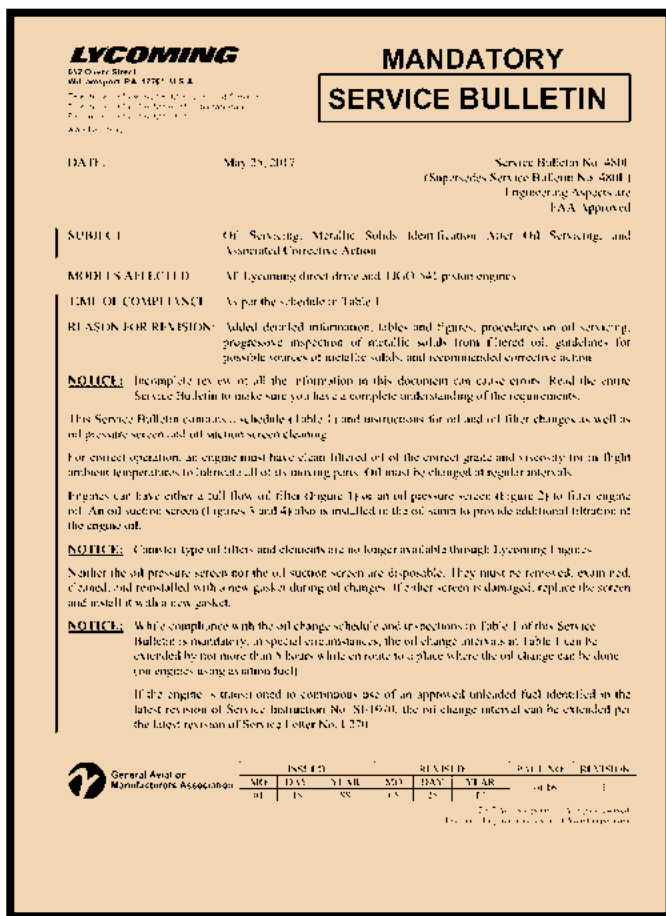


Fig. 3
Lycoming Service Bulletin 480F

such as Aircraft Spruce sell tools for cutting open filters. There are YouTube videos that demonstrate how to unfold the pleats of the filter element for inspection [See Fig. 1]. This is required by regulation at each annual but not mandated for routine oil changes. If you skip this step, though, you are throwing away vital data. You should also take an oil sample at each oil change for analysis by a qualified lab. But did you also know that on the sump at the bottom of your AeroStar's engine, there is an oil suction screen for the oil pump's inlet? This gets missed a lot, but it should also be removed at each oil change and inspected [See Fig. 2].

Why do we need to do all three inspections? What can we learn from one that we can't learn from the other two? The oil pump suction screen on the sump catches larger particles that might damage the oil pump. After the oil pump, the oil goes under pressure to the oil filter, which traps smaller particles that wouldn't be trapped by the oil suction screen. Sending an oil sample to the lab for analysis will catch microscopic particles too small to be seen by the naked eye, which would not be trapped by the oil filter. Doing all three of these steps means you have a much more comprehensive picture of internal health, giving you the best chance of catching problems early because

**EVERY OIL
CHANGE IS A
DIAGNOSTIC
OPPORTUNITY
YOU CAN'T
AFFORD TO
WASTE.**

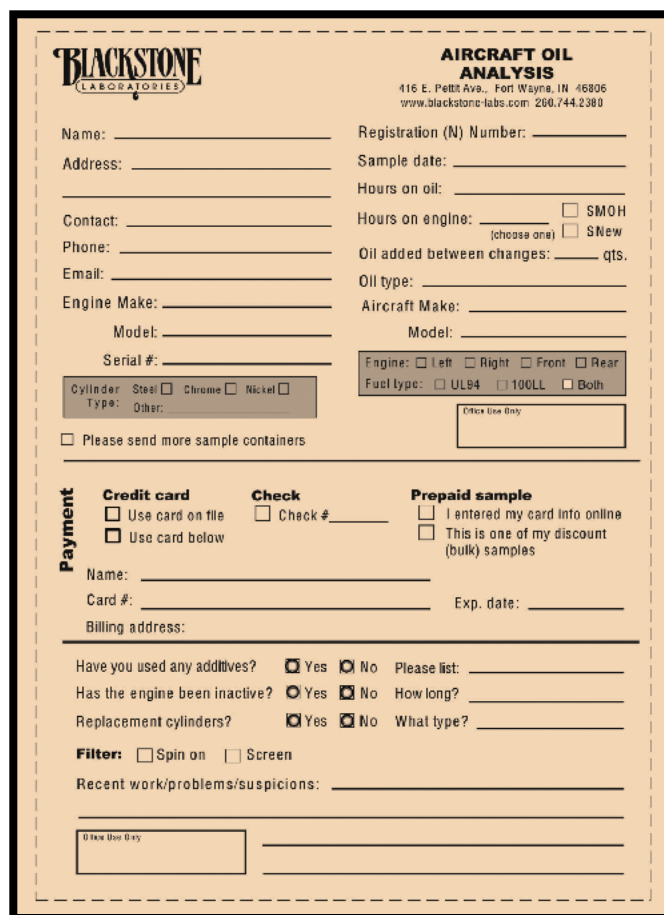


Fig. 7A
Left engine
analysis report



Fig. 7B
Right engine
analysis report

WHAT'S HIDING IN YOUR OIL FILTER COULD SAVE YOU THOUSANDS — OR COST YOU AN ENGINE.



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Name: _____ Registration (N) Number: _____
Address: _____ Sample date: _____
Hours on oil: _____
Contact: _____ Hours on engine: _____ ☐ SMOH
(choose one) ☐ S New
Phone: _____ Oil added between changes: _____ qts.
Email: _____ Oil type: _____
Engine Make: _____ Aircraft Make: _____
Model: _____ Model: _____
Serial #: _____
Cylinder: Steel ☐ Chrome ☐ Nickel ☐
Type: Other: _____
Engine: ☐ Left ☐ Right ☐ Front ☐ Rear
Fuel type: ☐ UL94 ☐ 100LL ☐ Both
Office Use Only: _____
☐ Please send more sample containers

Payment

Credit card ☐ Use card on file ☐ Use card below
Check ☐ Check # _____
Prepaid sample ☐ I entered my card info online
☐ This is one of my discount (bulk) samples
Name: _____
Card #: _____ Exp. date: _____
Billing address: _____

Have you used any additives? ☒ Yes ☐ No Please list: _____
Has the engine been inactive? ☒ Yes ☐ No How long? _____
Replacement cylinders? ☒ Yes ☐ No What type? _____
Filter: ☐ Spin on ☐ Screen
Recent work/problems/suspicions: _____
Office Use Only: _____

Fig. 8
Blackstone Oil Analysis Form

each inspection can catch a problem missed by the other two. Skip any one of the three, and you could miss something significant that you would want to know about. So what are we looking for? We are primarily looking for damaged parts and wear metals.

What if you find metal in the oil filter? Does that automatically mean an overhaul is required? Not necessarily. Same thing for metal in the oil suction screen or the oil analysis report. What it means is that you need to investigate further. Lycoming publishes Service Bulletin 480F, available courtesy of Google, which outlines what steps you should take based on the amount of metal you find and the type of metal [See Fig. 3]. A magnet will tell you if the metal is ferrous or non-ferrous. You can also send the metal itself to a lab to identify which metal it is so that the source

of the metal can be narrowed down. That service bulletin has a table that tells you, based on what metal was found, what the likely source is [See Fig. 4]. As an example, did you find bronze? The source could be bearing material, rocker bushings, intake valve guide wear, or piston pin plugs. Chrome, on the other hand, might send you looking for issues with the piston rings if you have steel cylinders. Chrome cylinders, on the other hand, do not use chrome rings. They use steel or cast iron. Aluminum would send us looking in yet a completely different direction.

The service bulletin has a table entitled “Guidelines For Particle Quantity And Size on Oil Filter, or Oil Suction Screen [See Fig. 5].” Based on how big the particles are and how much material you find, recommended corrective action might be to change the

oil and filter, fly for 25 more hours, and recheck the filter again for metal, or in some cases don’t fly but run it on the ground for a specified period and recheck, or it might be to disassemble specific parts of the engine to identify the source of the metal prior to further flight.

Usually, you will not tear an engine down based solely on a single oil analysis by a lab or a single instance of metal in the filter. When we bought the Aerostar that I used to fly corporately, the right engine had a scary amount of metal in the oil filter, even though it only had 14 hours since the major overhaul [See Fig. 6]! We pulled a cylinder and several accessories and couldn’t find any smoking gun. We then sent the engine back to the overhaul shop for a teardown inspection, and they found no problems whatsoever. We later de-

terminated that the original mechanic had previously installed the newly overhauled engine without changing the oil cooler, which had been harboring wear metals from before the overhaul. We changed the cooler and subsequently put hundreds of hours on the engine before we sold it with no further issues. We probably could have gotten away without a teardown by just changing the oil cooler and then shortening the oil change interval for a few oil changes to monitor and verify it wasn't making any new metal.

If you do find metal in the oil filter, how can you determine if any of it got past the filter and into the bearings? Have your mechanic pull the prop governor. It receives oil downstream of the filter. The gasket between the governor and its mounting pad contains an integral fine mesh oil screen. If that screen is clear, you can be pretty confident that metal most likely did not get past the oil filter and into

the bearings. If, on the other hand, the governor screen DOES have metal, you may have a more serious issue that would require a teardown.

As for oil analysis reports, save them. You are looking to establish baseline norms for each metal reported on. After several samples, you can then spot trends if something is starting to develop inside the engine [See Fig. 7A for the left engine and Fig. 7B for the right engine].

Oil changes are a messy job. But what a golden opportunity to personally administer one essential component of a health checkup on your engine! If you always hire out your oil changes, be sure to insist that the mechanic not only cuts open the filter for inspection but also checks the oil suction screen and collects an oil sample for analysis by a lab. I highly recommend Blackstone Labs because their reports are the most comprehensive I have seen. Make sure you or your mechanic fills out the oil analysis form

completely and accurately. The accuracy of the lab report greatly depends on having complete contextual information such as how many hours on the oil, what additives you are using, what kind of cylinders are installed, and so forth. [See Fig. 8]

If your mechanic finds metal, direct him to follow the corrective steps in Lycoming Service Bulletin 480F. Most mechanics are spring-loaded to want to do unnecessary surgery on an engine at the first sign of metal. Don't allow him to do that unless the condition truly warrants it. To learn more about this topic, google "Help! My Engine Is Making Metal" on Savvy Aviation's YouTube channel.

In the next article, we'll explore electronic engine data and what we can learn about your engine's health from it.

Mark Henshall
A&P IA, ATP, CFII MEI

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THE CALL THAT LIFTED ME

A Story of Mentorship and Redemption

Joel Stout

Everyone has moments in their life that change every moment thereafter, whether for good or bad. And we remember those moments for the rest of our lives. One of those moments for me was the first time I talked to Ken Bacon. It was a monumental turning point in my life.

As some of you may know, and some may not, a while back, around 2010-2014, I went through the fight of my life. I had four young kids and a mortgage. My wife was laid off from work, and I worked for my father, who one day told me that he had shut down my grandfather's business after not paying me for a few months. Brewing behind the scenes was an even bigger problem, my grandfather's company, specifically my father and I, was being investigated by the DOT for something that was brought on by my father. I do not want to get into those specifics at this time, it's a long story, but it was a very dark time in my life. In 2014, I started my life over professionally. I had a wonderful family of four kids and a wife who

stuck by me through years of stress and hardships. We had no money, I drove a Chevy Cavalier I bought for \$100 and a case of beer, and my wife stretched every last dollar going to yard sales for the kids' clothing. It was a very humbling experience, and in hindsight, it was a wonderful experience, though it didn't seem that way at the time. I just went through a huge battle against the DOT and attorney general, and for all intents, won the battle, but it wore me down. At this point, I'm thinking everyone is against me and things will never get better.

Just a month or so after the trial, in the spring of 2014, I had a customer who owned an Aerostar 600, take his plane out to Ken for its annual. Due to everything that was happening, and the fact that I did not have a hanger, it only made sense that he did so. I knew the plane was with Ken when it happened... My phone rang, and the caller ID displayed, in bold writing, "KEN BACON" across the screen. My heart sank. Great! I

thought, another storm was coming my way. He has one of my customers' planes and he found something bad or wants to attack me in some fashion regarding the plane. I just did not have it in me to answer the phone, so I let it go to voicemail, and of course, his message was very vague. "Joel, this is Ken Bacon, please call me as soon as you can". So, after a few more phone calls over the next week or so, I finally looked at my wife and said time to face the music. I will never forget her look of sheer panic on her face as I walked into the garage, this phone conversation was definitely going to require a cigarette, possibly a pack.

I called Ken, told him who I was and that I was sorry I could not "get" to the phone. I was super busy worrying about why he was calling for the last week. He started to explain that he had the plane, what he found, and why he was calling. Again, my heart sank when I heard him say "I just wanted to talk to the person who maintained this plane, it is one

of the best maintained planes I've ever seen." Wait, did I just hear that right? What is happening, a compliment, from a competitor? I didn't know how to respond. We talked for a few more minutes, then hung up. I walked inside and told my wife about the conversation in disbelief. What Ken did not know at that point is how he changed the course of my life for the better in one simple conversation.

At that point, I realized that not everyone was against me. It helped give me a drive and determination to the best I could, because there were people who appreciated what I could do and what I could become. I was told by my father for years that I would never amount to much and that I would always rely on him, so to hear this from a person whom my father had taught me was not a friend, saying it lightly, was a huge surprise and quite frankly, a confidence booster. Over the course of the next few months, I continued to talk to Ken, telling him about what was happening, where I was currently, and where I wanted to end up some day. Then, he hit me with it. "Joel" Ken said, "you should come out to San Antonio to the Aerostar Owners Convention." Are you kidding me, I'll be crucified out there, there was a dark cloud over me, and it won't be good. I had visions of a mob with pitchforks coming after me when I walked through the door of the suite. But, after some convincing from Ken, and me convincing one of my customers to come with me, I reluctantly went to San Antonio.

Well, let's just say I was shocked by the members. Of course there were a couple who judged, but for the most part, the members were amazingly kind and understanding and welcomed me with open arms. Ken took me under his wing and helped me through the first day. I knew there were going to be some tough questions that I had to answer, but what I did not expect was the help and support that I received. It was almost surreal. While at the convention, I gained a few customers, some previous customers from my father's era, and some new customers. In of

What I did not expect was the help and support that I received.

It was almost surreal.



Opposite

Joel Stout with Ken Bacon at the 2024 AOA Convention, in Tucson, AZ

This page

Joel giving a maintenance presentation at convention in his hometown of Elizabethtown, PA



Joel, Jared, Justin,
and Jill Stout

Photo by Larry Baum

itself, that would have been more than enough, but it didn't stop there. I also gained friendships, more than I could imagine. As the next year went by, I became busier and busier, building my company from the ground up. I started working with a little plastic toolbox I would carry to work every day, which I still have, to buying new jacks, toolboxes, and equipment. As a quick sidebar, I want to thank Tom Cooke for personally helping me purchase much of the equipment I needed. He has also been a great friend and customer, and I can't express enough how great a person he is.

Well, by this time, the next convention was about to roll around. This time, I figured it was necessary to "force" my wife to go. Now keep in mind, we have four young kids and little money, so vacations were not really on the list of things to do. I was lucky enough for us to be able to hitch a ride with two of my "new" customers to Nashville, Charlie and Bob. I remember my wife being so nervous the night before we left, asking what clothes to wear, laying everything out on the bed, asking if it looked good enough for the Aerostar group, etc. What do I know, I am just a mechanic.

Again, we went out to Nashville, Jill met Burd and Ken, along with some others, and was shocked that almost immediately, she was welcomed into the family. She considers some of the people she met through the years her best friends, as do I. Unfortunately for me, I think at this point, my wife allows me to go with her to the conventions...

Over the next few years, my wife and I continued to go to conventions, meet new members, and become "regulars" with the AOA group. We have been able to see and go to places we never thought we would ever be able to. My business has continued to grow, eventually my wife started working for me, we bought a new house, and even attained some new "toys". A few years ago, Ken outdid himself again by having the convention in my hometown, which may not seem like a lot, but to me, it was one of the greatest compliments anyone has ever given me. As icing on the cake, my twin sons were starting to work with me, and it was their first convention they attended. They felt like movie stars because of all the support they were getting, for some reason (lol), they latched onto Alan Speak-

master, which I think he enjoyed as much as they did. Again, without Ken knowing, it helped pave the way for two young men to decide that they wanted to be part of this great organization by pursuing a career in general aviation and have been working by my side since.

As I sit here and reflect on the past few years, I am still amazed at how wonderful the customers and members of the Aerostar Owners Association have been. I could sit here and individually name everyone, but I'm afraid I would miss someone because everyone has impacted my life, and I, along with my family, appreciate everything. The next time you have the chance to reach out with a simple 5-minute phone call, and may not think it's worth it, just remember my story. You may be changing someone's life without knowing, like Ken did for me.

Thank you, Ken and Burd.

Joel Stout

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A RETURN TO THE FLIGHT LEVELS THE FINAL CHAPTER

GARY EVANS

PREVIOUS ARTICLES WRITTEN ABOUT OUR 700P AEROSTAR N702PG INCLUDED “COURTESY OF TED SMITH” AS PART OF THE TITLE, A TRIBUTE TO THE INCOMPARABLE DESIGNER OF THE AEROSTAR, THE AERO COMMANDER, THE JET COMMANDER, THE A-26, AND MANY OTHER STRIKING AND EXCELLENT AIRCRAFT OVER THE YEARS.

After operating our Aero Commander Shrike between 2002 and 2006, the Aerostar facilitated our return to the flight levels above FL180, which I last experienced conducting Citation flight operations during 1999 and 2000. The longer version of this final chapter of our aviation story is: “How Our Love & Affection for the Aerostar and the Association Inadvertently Produced the Only 3-Time AOA Queen of the Fleet”. Although this article stands on its own, so to speak, you might find it helpful to have Jim Croce’s ballad “Time in a Bottle” playing in the background, leaving the reader to determine who and what people and aircraft that great story applies to. Perhaps it’s all of the planes and people discussed herein. Unfortunately, Croce died in a Beech E18 that crashed on September 20, 1973, while departing Natchitoches, Louisiana, following a concert. He was only 30 years old at the time.

Our soirée through refurbishment of historically significant aircraft began in 2002, the same year my lovely wife Penny and I were married in Whistler, British Columbia. I had operated primarily turbojet aircraft until I ran out of turbo-jet currency in 2000; my last flights included bringing a Citation III from Zürich, Switzerland, to Texas via Billund, Denmark, Aberdeen, Scotland, Sondre Stromfjord, Greenland, and Goose Bay and Toronto, Canada, and some single-pilot flight operations involving a Citation 501. I flew the same Citation III just a few months later from Zürich to Cannes, France, dropping it off in Oxford, England. In addition to developing our brand spanking new law firm between 1999 and 2002, busy times indeed, I even resorted to flying gliders as a means of preventing my perishable

aeronautical skills from perishing even further, given the developing absence of aircraft to operate. Our wedding took place during a Lawyer Pilots Bar Association meeting, as we watched the “spot landing event” take place north of Whistler, although we owned no aircraft to participate with at the time.

Our first foray into Ted Smith-designed aircraft commenced in 2002 when I found myself walking past quite possibly the most homely-looking Aero Commander 500S ever, sitting in Tyler, Texas, awaiting purchase by a new owner after its then-current owner had unfortunately passed away. “Homely” gives what was then N4816E way too much credit, and I still have her wingtips and rudder cap to remind me what we started with, as well as other parts we replaced, including the instrument panel. One of the photos included in this article shows its original “eyebrow panel,” which contained, of all things, the proverbial “coffee grinder” ADF. Miraculously, some of the original remote radios and heads continued to operate during 2002 until we upgraded her with additional avionics during the process of the complete restoration, and her original instrument panel and an interim eyebrow panel continue to make superb decorations meaningfully reminding us of years past.

When I re-acquired piston-twin currency performing three landings with Ron Farish occupying the right seat of the Aero Commander during July 2002, it had been over 25 years since I had last flown a piston, twin-engine aircraft. What eventually became N799CE was completely restored over a period of several years, carrying the reference for our law firm that was formed during July 1999, Coats & Ev-

THIS AIRPLANE HAS ALWAYS BEEN MORE THAN ALUMINUM AND HORSEPOWER—IT'S A FAMILY LEGACY WITH WINGS.

ans, P.C. She served us flawlessly for 13 years when she was sold to an aviation attorney in Tennessee, who I had always described as “the happiest purchaser of an aircraft in the history of aviation,” because the Shrike was truly one of the finest examples of the Aero Commander 500S when we were finished with that restoration, which included complete paint and strip by Aerosmith Aviation, interior replacement, complete instrument panel restoration, engine overhauls, and propeller overhauls, as well as incorporating every single STC Gary Gadberry’s Aircenter had available for the Shrike, including winglets, stinger tail, rudder cap, frameless vent windows, flap gap seals (the only true and actual aeronautical enhancement, by the way), eyebrow windows, high output alternators, and most importantly, air conditioning. I found some interesting videos on YouTube featuring the Shrike, and the new, very young owner seems to have a significant level of appreciation for all the work that went into her, including the inspection panel signed by Bob Hoover when Penny and I were fortunate enough to have dinner with him during the 2009 Reno Air Races. However, the new owner is probably not fully aware of, nor could he expect to be, all of the tremendous consideration, effort, and expertise that went into making the Shrike one of the best the industry has ever seen.

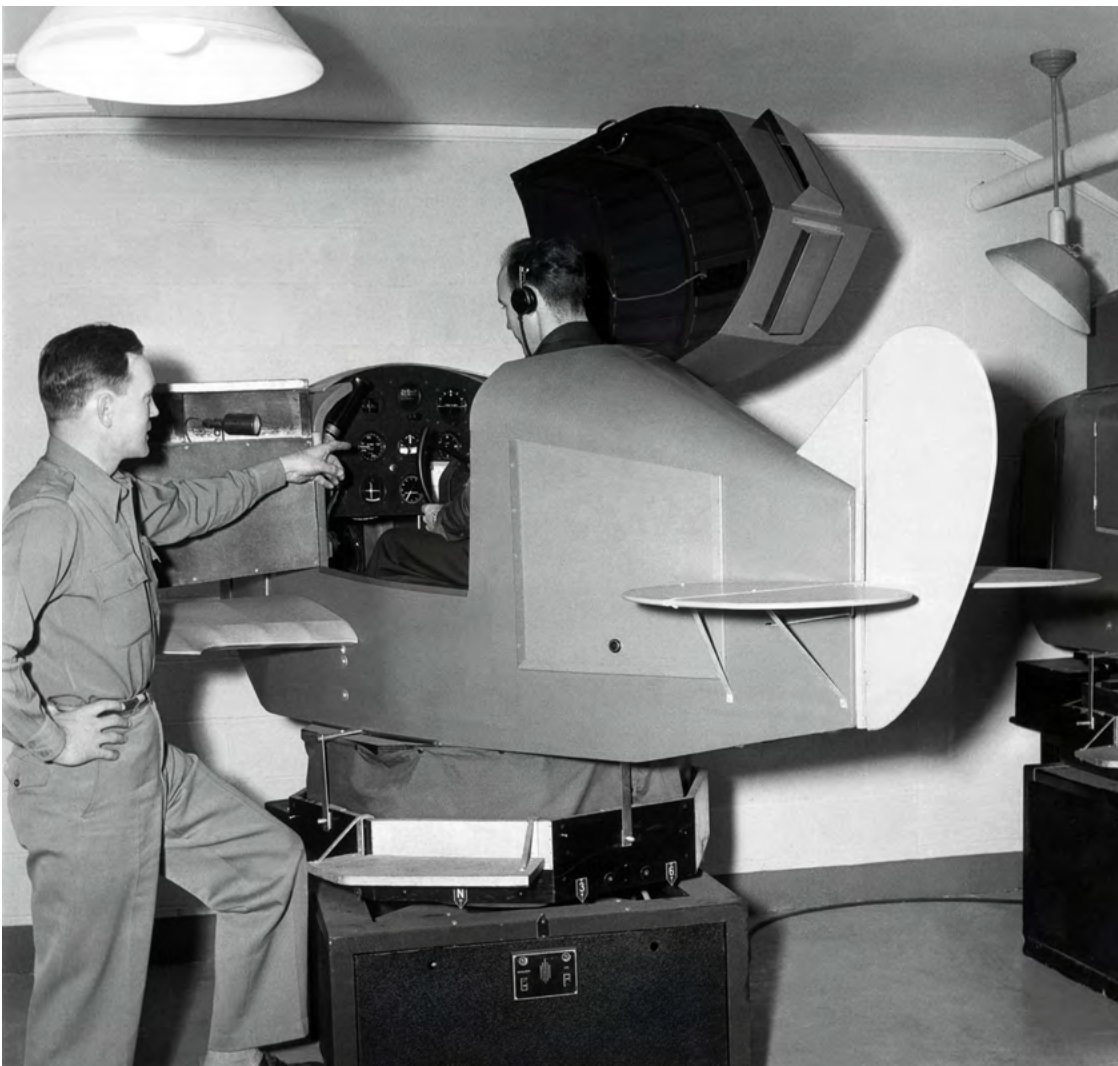
Aerosmith Aviation, in Longview, Texas, who performed the exterior paint and interior restoration during 2003, did a simply magnificent job, and N799CE today still looks like she just emerged from that lengthy restoration process. The process was largely concluded when we finally added “compact series” propellers from Hartzell, replacing the original

AD-plagued propellers. Some of the parts of the original props still had value, however, and South Coast Propeller Service in Bessemer, Alabama, purchased them, also being kind enough to refinish two of the unairworthy blades, sending them back to me and now forming additional great memories of that beautiful aircraft. Joe Washburn and his great crew at Texas Turbine & Prop, including Shannon, Luis, and Michael, provided the best support imaginable for the Shrike over the years, performing required repairs and upgrades and keeping her in pristine condition. Many pilots either love or hate the somewhat unusual nose gear steering arrangement used on the Shrike, under which initial brake application steers the nose in one direction or the other, with further pressure resulting in the application of the brake. I thought it was one of the best systems ever developed, and I truly wish Ted Smith had migrated it over to the Aerostar. Unfortunately he did not. Joe had a real touch with that system, fine-tuning it to the point where the steering on N799CE was an absolute pleasure to use in all respects, resulting in quite possibly the best steering of any light twin aircraft ever manufactured. Unfortunately, Joe passed at the very early age of 59 on March 11, 2019, and TT&P’s new owner quickly drove off all of Joe’s formerly loyal customers. The old instrument panels, the propeller blades, and various items from both aircraft, including one of the original spinners off of the Shrike, all combine to create an incredible aura of aviation history encompassing over 22 years as time veritably streaks by, accelerating on a seemingly daily basis.

Notably, early Shrikes never suffered from the infamous wing spar airworthiness directives, likely be-

cause those aircraft were built by Aero Commander, not Rockwell. It wasn’t until the later years that the wing spar problems started developing, and after every spar inspection, N799CE was proud to receive logbook entries of “NSC,” meaning no significant corrosion. Years ago, John Towner, one of the most prolific Aero Commander operators in history, showed me the significant differences between the way Aero Commander built its aircraft versus the way they were built by Rockwell, including the spar caps and those differences indeed explain quite a bit about the spar issues that developed over the years. Coincidentally, I also had the privilege of departing Wiley Post Airport on July 30, 2008, the very same date N799CE received her type certificate from Aero Commander Aircraft Company in 1968, heading southbound and overflying the Aero Commander factory in which she was built 40 years earlier. The entire story of the Shrike, as well as previous articles about our Aerostar, are on [TexasAviationLaw.com](https://www.texasaviationlaw.com). Aircenter’s owner Gary Gadberry flew with me in early 2003 when we retrieved the Shrike following the installation of all of the STCs, which also allowed us to re-acquire my Multi-Engine Flight Instructor’s Rating, which sat dormant and unused for several decades, keeping it current ever since. We started participating in the LPBA “spot landing event” once the Shrike came out of her initial refurbishing in 2003, gathering the SLE crown at the Marana Airport near Tucson during 2004, following up with a repeat crown during the meeting at Sun River, Oregon later that same year.

The Shrike also served as a tribute to my father, a career pilot who first taught himself to fly an American Eagle in 1930, later becoming an OX-5



Top to bottom
Seated Right
to Left: John B.
Evans-Chief Pilot-
State of Ohio, Mrs.
Olive Ann Beech

Dads Training
Photo OSU Airport
late 40s

**Next spread, top
to bottom**
Aerostar Table with
Compass Rose &
opened

Burlwood Veneer
table finishes by
previous owner



Aviation Pioneer. Dad would later teach flying for The Ohio State University, where my mother formerly worked as well. Dad later served as Chief Pilot for the State of Ohio Department of Transportation for over 30 years, performing most of the aerial photography needed by the state and the last aircraft he flew was the King Air C-90. Some of the photos include a note from Olive Ann Beech to Dad in 1973 when he flew to Wichita for training on the new King Air the State had just purchased. Dad also flew an Aero Commander 680S, hence the tie-in to our Shrike. Although you would never hear it from my father, modesty being a frequently seen attribute of his generation, over the years, I heard many pilots he flew with describe him as simply the best pilot they had ever seen. Given the nature of the equipment he operated over the years, beginning with the American Eagle, the Stearman, Twin Beeches of every ilk, and many tail draggers, including thousands of hours involved in training other pilots, Dad never put a scratch on an aircraft, although he not surprisingly experienced a few mechanical failures from time to time. During one of the last flights I flew with Dad, possessing at the time just over 120 hours of total flight experience from the Ohio State aeronautical curriculum at the time, and twin time flying with Dad as well, he let me loose to perform a few unassisted landings on the way back to OSU in the State's Twin Beech. Truly a memorable experience. Like many members of that generation, positive feedback was not only unlikely but never expected, although after that last session in N850H, a Twin Beech C45H model and a real handful as well, I could almost detect a gleam in his eye, knowing that his pilot son was going to turn out as he would have liked. One of the few aviation regrets I have was not having the aeronautical experience or expertise when I flew with my father at that stage of my career to fully understand and appreciate his tremendous expertise, as related to me by those he worked with for decades and many thousands of

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IT WASN'T JUST A RESTORATION; IT WAS A RETURN TO PURPOSE, PASSION, AND THE POWER OF FLIGHT.

flight hours. Suffice it to say he was always “one with the aircraft,” and the elegant and seemingly effortless interplay between Dad and machine was nothing less than iconic, mesmerizing, and enduring. Mother received her private pilot’s certificate at Ohio State in the late 40s and was also a 99, truly rare accomplishments for that day and age. She worked for the director of the OSU flight training program before shifting to the College of Medicine, where she worked in the Dean’s office for many decades. We always get a kick out of looking at one photograph in Foster Lane’s book “Logbook,” which shows my mother, Helen, dead center in a wide array of flight students she managed throughout their OSU flight training experience. When the flight students collectively threatened to walk off the job due to Mom’s admittedly disciplinarian/authoritarian approach, the Director immediately informed them they were free to leave, but Helen was going nowhere. Not a surprising result. Mom served bravely as my first passenger in one of the OSU Beech Musketeers after receiving my private pilot certificate in 1972. With this family background, we really had no choice but to get involved in owning and operating our own aircraft as our newly founded aviation law firm flourished. We lost Dad in 2003 at the age of 93 and Mom in 2020 at the grand old age of 101. We buried Mom right next to Dad at York Center, Ohio, Dad’s hometown, on January 6, 2021, the same date the United States government staged an obvious coup, using it to cover up its equally obvious theft of the 2020 presidential election. The Shrike and the Aerostar, no matter who owns them, will always honor these great aviation pioneers.

While N799CE served us well for

years, certain parts of the country remained off-limits, and going into 2006, we started looking at pressurization and other aircraft with high-altitude performance capabilities. N702PG’s story began in 1984 when Steve McNeil served as her first owner. Originally registered as N6897Q, 700P serial number 84-23009 was first written about in December 1986, appearing in an AOPA Pilot magazine article featuring Aerostars. Steve updated her registration to N41MV, and we have long suspected “41” may be the year Steve was born, although we know for sure that “MV” stood for “McNeil Veneers.” In the AOPA article, one of the photos shows the then-stylish deep button-tufted leather cabin seats, along with the open tray table that included the original off-white factory finish. In an obvious tribute to his trade, Steve saw to it that N41MV’s tray table was converted to one of the most stunning burlwood veneers ever applied to an Aerostar tray table, including a stunning compass rose continuously gracing her refurbished interior. This beautiful table was last used during our flight to Fredericksburg, Texas, to experience the maximum totality of the Great Eclipse on April 8, 2024, with our great Marine son Greg and our 8-year-old granddaughter, who goes by the name of “Piper,” a historically significant aviation name. It was a great trip, as we had also flown N702PG to Nashville for the first part of the two great eclipses during the 2000s, on August 21, 2017, where we experienced the first of the two eclipses with our wonderful daughter Erin and husband Mitch on the ground at Lebanon, Tennessee, located very near max totality.

Under Steve’s careful stewardship, N41MV had previously received as high as a second-place QOTF finish

shortly after emerging from one of her previous refurbishments performed by Oxford Aviation. Through Steve’s diligence, we inherited an Aerostar that had an amazing array of existing upgrades already accomplished, providing us with a very long list of included improvements, including important safety items such as the door ajar kit, fire detection kit, speed brake STC, improved nose gear drag and main gear torque link and side brace assemblies, and Inconel bolted flange tailpipes and front exhaust assemblies.

When we bought what was then N41MV, we needed to retrieve her from the Business Air Center at Danbury, CT. Danbury is a challenging airport for any Aerostar operation, and I was very fortunate to have Lester Kyle’s excellent instructional skills accompany me when we flew the Aerostar together for the first time. Lester has always been a mainstay in the training industry and had previously headed up Piper’s training facility in Vero Beach, Florida. Even though the Aerostar’s insurer only required one hour of dual instruction in order for me to be covered with this new aircraft, I was very pleased to spend several days and many flight hours with Lester getting up to speed on Aerostar flight operations. Even before we picked the Aerostar up following its purchase, we had arranged to have the propellers removed, overhauled, and reinstalled, as it had been nine years since it was last done, and one of the blades had lost a battle with a small pebble. New England Propeller restored them to like-new condition, with new anti-ice boots to boot. During a subsequent visit to Connecticut, we returned the aircraft for precision dynamic balancing of the propellers, and the results were nothing short of amazing. We



also asked Alan Speakmaster at Master Aviation to install a brand-new set of fireproof engine hoses aft of the firewall, which seemed to be a prudent investment. I feel very fortunate to have done annual insurance recurrency training with Lester from 2006 to 2024, in both the Shrike and the Aerostar, and he always made me a better pilot as part of the recurrency experience.

This article would not be complete without a discussion of what John Stewart accomplished when he converted N41MV into N702PG during the last part of 2006 and most of 2007. Since I

had not previously owned or flown an Aerostar, I wanted to fly her for a few months just to get used to her. I also wanted to get used to the configuration Steve McNeil had put her into using avionics with which I was not previously familiar. Having accomplished that goal, I arranged the planned complete strip and paint with John, who we only met after we put the Shrike into service, even though John was based at David Wayne Hooks, our home airport in Houston, Texas. Penny and I designed the now-iconic N702PG paint scheme many times over lunch at the KDWH Airport Restaurant, discussing

Clockwise from top left

- Commander Eyebrow Panel Original
- Aerostar finished panel
- Aerostar night photo while turning

SHE'S NOT JUST FLYING AGAIN—SHE'S THRIVING AT FLIGHT LEVELS WHERE ONLY THE BEST BELONG.

the fine-tuning with John on a regular basis. The results, although time-consuming, were nothing less than incomparable in all respects. I do not believe N702PG would have won a single QOTF without John's enormous talent in that area, for which we will be forever grateful. The looks she has received over the years from all sorts of members of the aviation community commenced when we returned her to service in early 2008 and have not stopped since. We continued the process of great care and feeding of N702PG as long as we have owned her, including installing six-puck brakes (to prevent the normal Aerostar acceleration after touchdown, a relatively famous attribute of the aircraft with the original wimpy brakes), improved parking brake actuator, fireproof engine hoses, reinforcement of the cowlings and nose bowls when the refinishing was performed, new paint and interior, completely restored instrument panel and avionics primarily through the efforts of Mike Bice, who not only manufactured both the Aero Commander and Aerostar instrument panels, but their robust and unparalleled power lever knobs as well, upgrade of all panel toggle switches, all flexible fuel and oil lines behind the panel replaced during that process, electroluminescent ring lights and strips installed on the instruments and below the glareshield and circuit breaker panel, Whelen PowerFlash strobe system, PulseLight landing gear pulsating light system, cam locks replaced with Phillips head stainless steel cam locks, Plastech overhead interior, ADS-B Out and Garmin 347 transponder upgraded, and Aerostar bleed heat option installed.

It is truly difficult to comprehend the enormous swath of aviation history those two Ted Smith aircraft rep-

resented as they proudly posed next to one another in front of our hangar at David Wayne Hooks Airport in 2008.

We have been following the development and availability of the MT propellers for the Aerostar for some time. These are direct, bolt-on replacements for the original Hartzell propellers, although they have four primarily wooden blades instead of three aluminum blades. Everything suggested to us was that the installation of the MT propellers resulted in a significant reduction in the vibration experienced by the aircraft. There were also supposed to be advantages related to climb and cruise speeds as well. Finally taking the plunge in 2010, we scheduled the exchange of the propellers with the folks at the MT facility in Deland, Florida. Although the faux chrome finish on the spinners turned out to be too fragile for MT to continue offering that as an option, the current silver finish on the spinners quite closely matches the Aerostar's metallic silver and the black propeller blades with the red tips continue to provide N702PG with a great overall appearance as well.

Penny and I looked forward with great anticipation to the 2008 AOA meeting in Kissimmee, Florida. It was our first AOA meeting, and we had a great time getting to know many others who share our enthusiasm for all things Aerostar. Queen of the Fleet is often awarded to those who have made the most recent investment in refurbishing their Aerostar, which is what I did in 2008, for which we, and she, remain thoroughly appreciative. Although Ken Bacon had already been immensely helpful with the myriad questions we asked him as we embarked upon our Aerostar ownership experience, we didn't have a chance to meet in person for the first

time until the Kissimmee meeting in 2008. Burd and Ken Bacon have always been the best stewards of both the Aerostar and the AOA, and we can never ask for any better Association experience, for which we will always be exceedingly grateful.

We continued the investment process in N702PG when Ken and his colleagues, the Dietlins, performed a badly needed double-top overhaul of the robust IO/TIO 540 U2A engines in 2010. The results were engines that looked like Swiss watches when the process was completed, and they continue to match up like identical twins even today. We knew what to expect, as Ken and the Dietlins had also been instrumental when one of the replacement engines we installed on the Shrike years previously refused to behave itself, leaking oil and generally acting quite differently from its mate. Turns out the cases had received some maltreatment from the overhaul facility that sold us the engines. Once Ken finished the case replacement, both of the Shrike engines matched up and operated beautifully for years thereafter.

At the end of 2012, we looked forward to the final approval of the STC for the newly developed Aerostar winglets. AAC had been systematically tantalizing Aerostar owners with progress reports and graphics describing what the winglets were expected to look like once approved. The AOA forum was riddled with inquiries on when they were going to be available, and we were very pleased to be the first Aerostar owners to put the required deposit in place. Aerostar finally received its STC for the winglets in late 2012, and we scheduled the required trip to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, for the installation in February 2013. Again, the very first flights with the newly installed winglets



demonstrated what a fantastic addition they were. They bore a striking resemblance to the fully blended winglets one might find from Aviation Methods on a Hawker type of jet aircraft, although costing far less. The winglets resulted in an immediate and substantial improvement in virtually every way N702PG flew. From the initial rotation, where the winglets facilitate an initial groundbreaking “unstuck” that is significantly different than a non-winglet equipped Aerostar, to significantly increased climb rates and cruise speeds, they also improved the overall manner in which the Aerostar handles by providing significant additional lateral stability. The return flight from Coeur d’Alene to Houston, with a fuel stop in Amarillo, demonstrated how far we had come from the original, stock 700P Aerostar we started with seven years before. Beginning with an average climb rate of approximately 1000 ft./min. In cruise climbing to altitude, in ISA conditions, N702PG achieves a cruise speed of 250 knots. TAS at 65% power at FL250. Because of an immense north-to-south wind on the return flight, the FlightAware statistics were nothing less than awe-inspiring, with an average of 330 knots. Ground speed all the way back to Houston. This compares with a predicted flight manual speed of 235 knots. TAS

under the same conditions, therefore, the combination of the MT propellers and the winglets added a solid 15 kt. increase in cruise speed, along with a substantial increase in climb performance, all the while making an already superb handling aircraft even better.

Penny and I have been heavily involved in the Lawyer Pilots Bar Association over the years, becoming engaged during the 2001 meeting in Minnesota and being married during the 2002 meeting in Whistler, BC. The offspring, first the Shrike and later the Aerostar, came along almost immediately thereafter. The LPBA routinely featured the “spot landing event,” where pilots endeavor to land as close to a lime line on the runway without landing before it. Competing against all sorts of single-engine aircraft, including a Stemme glider one year, I was very fortunate to prevail in the spot-landing event on many occasions, a true testament to how gracefully and accurately N702PG was capable of being flown with all of the various handling improvements.

Throughout our Aerostar ownership experience, Jim Christy, John Jurkovich, and the entire crew at Aerostar Aircraft in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, have always been wonderfully supportive. We always looked forward to every trip

Aerostar with Aero
Commander



“home” with our great aircraft and will always appreciate the tremendous technical expertise they have kindly provided to us and her over the years.

As our history with both the Ted Smith Shrike and the Aerostar progressed, we ultimately viewed the significant investment we were making in restoring and maintaining these aircraft as not only a means of providing us with transportation required for a law practice having a substantial emphasis on aviation matters generally but also as a tribute to a superbly talented aircraft designer and engineer, as well as those who continue to operate these aircraft in an ever-diminishing fleet from years past. Our previous articles about N702PG were published in the AOA Log, detailing the love and affection invested in her over the years. Like many QOTF recipients, our previous articles described many of the technical aspects of maintaining, repairing, and enhancing these aircraft so that they could continue being contributing members of our aviation society. One of the early choices we made was to respect and honor the classic “steam gauge” instrument panel, updating it in the process but making it look strikingly like it was when first delivered as N6897Q, although relocating a number of

items which had the effect of making the aircraft more user-friendly. In case you might be wondering about her registration number, we were lucky to find N702PG available on the FAA website during 2006, a reminder of our marriage during the LPBA meeting in Whistler, with the side benefit of acknowledging the aircraft’s heritage as one of the last factory 700P aircraft built in 1984.

Going into 2015, N702PG continued to style, now equipped with MT four-bladed propellers featuring faux chrome spinners and the gorgeous and equally beneficial Aerostar winglets, resulting in her second QOTF during the AOA meeting in Nashville 2015. A total of 21 Aerostars competed for QOTF on the ramp at Nashville. Many of our AOA colleagues stopped by and commented on how N702PG continued to appear, gleaming in her metallic Silver, Inferno Red, and Graphite Gray despite the gray, overcast, and drizzling conditions. During the final evening farewell dinner, Penny and I were very pleased, and once again quite fortunate enough, to receive the Aerostar Owners Association “Queen of the Fleet” award for Nashville – 2015!

Over the years, as additional flight hours ultimately took their toll on N702PG, including the

N702PG on the ramp

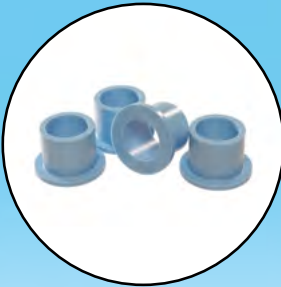
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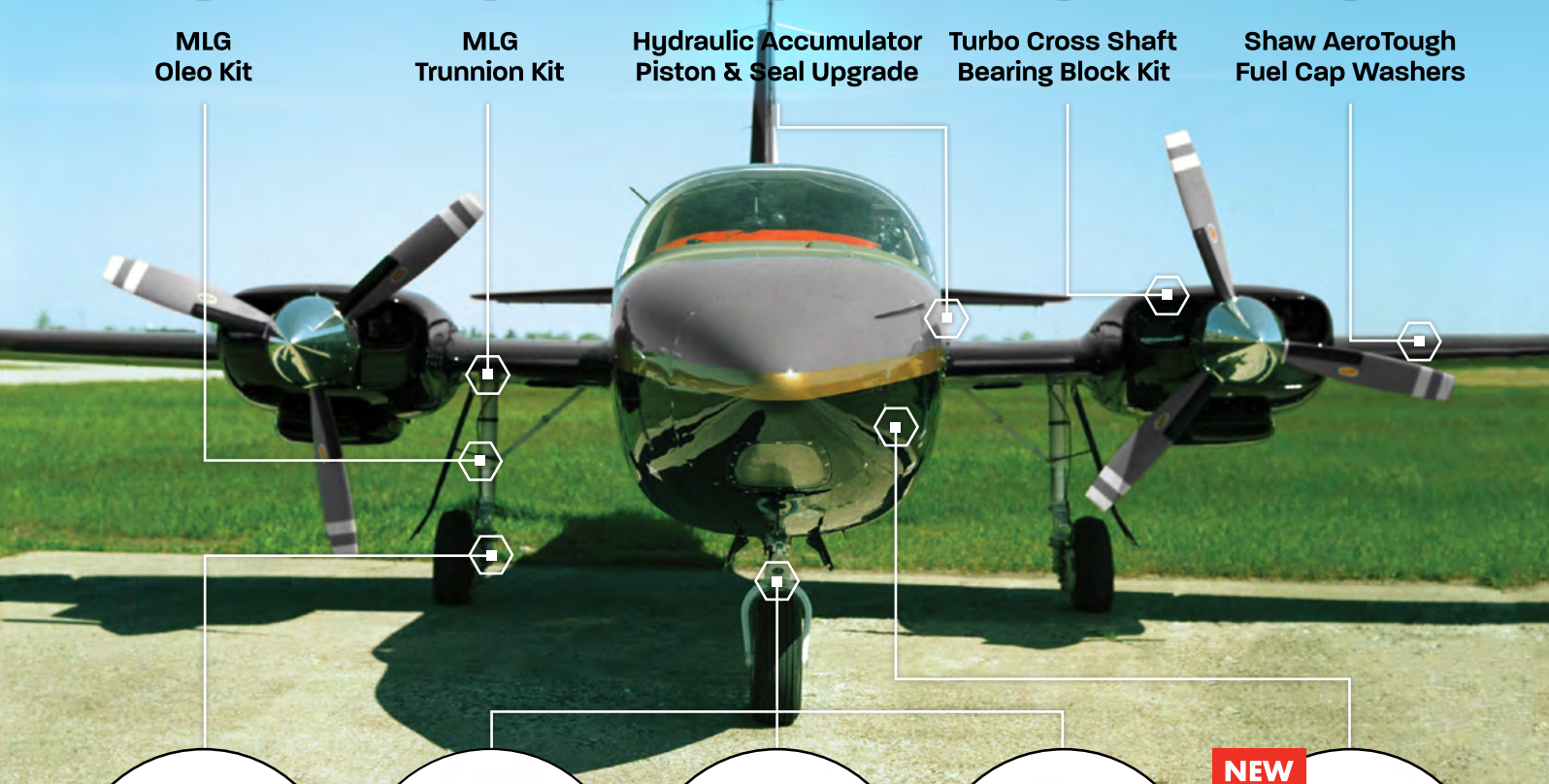


NEW

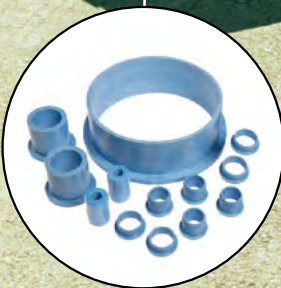
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**Wiebel NLG Torque Link
Bushing Kit**



**Wiebel NLG
Oleo Kit**



NEW

**Brake Master Cylinder
Upgrade Kit**

Marsh Brothers Aviation, a Thomson-Gordon Group company with over 100 years of history, is a family-owned business that develops and manufactures high performance specialty bearings, seals and engineered mechanical components for the global aviation industry.



gear doors and some needed repairs to leaking rivets on the top side of the right wing, we had always hoped we could return her to John Stewart, asking him to apply his substantial talents once again. However, after heroically battling medical problems for several years, John unfortunately passed in April 2022; God rest his beautiful soul. We will always miss the many years of superb friendship and camaraderie, beautiful workmanship, and consummate professionalism John brought into our aviation experience. N702PG continues to proudly display John's work and unequalled attention to detail, and will for years to come, including the "silver bullet" paint scheme making her look like she was shot out of a cannon, with Inferno Red at the tail, transitioning to metallic silver in the front, divided and yet embraced by the Graphite Gray "swoop" John so beautifully designed for her.

We found ourselves removing, inspecting, and having the propellers refinished once again in 2021 at the MT facility in Deland, Florida. MT was no longer offering the "hi-glo" finish for the spinners, and we elected to match the silver on the aircraft as closely as possible, also with a base-coat clear-coat type of finish. We asked Aerosmith Aviation in Longview to perform the additional refinishing, as they had done such a magnificent job with the Shrike so many years ago, and the Aerosmith crew once again did a simply beautiful job, returning her to the spectacular appearance she had when she originally rolled out of John's paint booth in 2007. Most of the metallic silver was reapplied, and other areas were touched up as needed, including re-sealing the left winglet after the flux gate for the compass system was removed

and replaced. We retrieved N702PG just a few weeks before the Fall AOA meeting in Hershey, Pennsylvania, and she once again provided us with exceedingly smooth and elegant transport to and from the meeting.

Being eligible for QOTF every five years, and in the situation where most aircraft owners typically own aircraft for only a few years, becoming a 3-time QOTF would necessarily require that an owner own their Aerostar for over 10 years, assuming the aircraft made it to every meeting, and winning is simply never assured based upon the competition. Unfortunately, we missed some years due to maintenance and other years due to scheduling issues. Penny and I looked forward to a great meeting in Tucson during 2024, where once again N702PG was up for QOTF, becoming the first and only 3-time Queen of the Fleet in Aerostar Owners Association history, securing her third QOTF sixteen years after she received that honor for the first time in 2008. As AOA President Bruce Witkop noted during our farewell dinner, N702PG once again garnered QOTF by a relatively wide margin, benefiting from John Stewart's efforts of many years ago, MT Props that completely enhance any Aerostar's appearance, Aerostar winglets which enhance performance just as much as they do the appearance of the aircraft, Ken Bacon's excellent support in keeping her mechanically perfect over many years, Mike Bice's beautiful instrument panel work, and Aerosmith Aviation's recent efforts in preserving and updating N702PG's cosmetic appearance. Even in 2024, the fantastic work John performed in painting N720PG in 2007 continued to be on great display, with the Inferno Red, essentially untouched for 17 years, still visually

Left to right

Three Time Winner
Queen of the Fleet

Aerostar & Aero
Commander
panels and props
on display in the
garage

reverberating in the glaring Arizona desert sun as if she had just emerged from the paint booth.

Andrew Broadfoot, an enormously talented aircraft and aviation photographer, kindly provided his superb assistance on several occasions over the years, producing stunning photographs of both the Shrike and the Aerostar. We first flew together in 2010, when Andrew took an array of night photos in the Shrike. We then worked together with N702PG in flight, the first taking place in 2010, when she was equipped with MT props but not yet the winglets, and then again in 2015, when she had been fully updated. Some of the best photos were taken with Andrew unceremoniously positioned backward in the front seat of a J3 Cub as N702PF performed repeated fly-bys due to the speed differential. Andrew's efforts have provided us and many others with a timeless and gorgeous history of both of these superb Ted Smith-designed aircraft. Dave Duntz included several of Andrew's photographs, and others shot over the years, of both the Shrike and the Aerostar in his simply outstanding work "Stars and Commanders," and we greatly appreciate Dave allowing our Shrike and Aerostar to appear in his excellent, historically significant reference book.

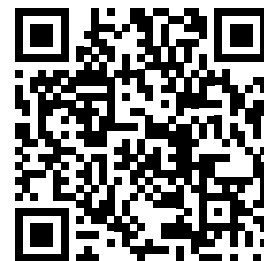
As I mentioned during our farewell dinner in Tucson, every single dollar we ever spent on N702PG was the result of the love and affection we have, not only for the Aerostar but also for the AOA and its many members. Many aircraft owners and operators bemoan the cost and expense of operating and maintaining aircraft. From a regulatory perspective, one can generally keep an aircraft in the airworthy condition required by the Federal Aviation Regulations without going to the relatively extreme time, expense, and attention to cosmetic detail we have gone to with both the Aero Commander and now our only remaining aeronautical child, N702PG. The opportunity to travel with our Aerostar and receive the highly complementary feedback we receive regarding her ongoing appearance and condition is itself a privilege and an honor. Our intent has always been to use N702PG in honor of Ted Smith and other aviation pioneers, including my mother and father, without whom none of us would be the beneficiaries of the privilege and experience,

not to mention utility, of operating these extraordinary and largely unequaled aircraft, honoring and recognizing aircraft and a fleet of enormous importance to the history of general aviation. Like the work that went into the restoration of N799CE, the labor of love that became Aerostar N702PG was truly no labor at all but rather an unparalleled journey of aviation and aircraft renewal.

Although my original flying career encompassed 25 years plus flying all sorts of turbojet equipment for companies like Kaiser and Amoco, which formed the substantial basis for my second career practicing aviation law, we simply could never have asked for a more superb aircraft ownership and operation experience that started in 2002 with the Shrike, continuing with the Aerostar in 2006.

Alas, like most good things, all things eventually come to an end. After over 52 years in aviation, including receiving the FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award in 2022, accumulating no accidents, no incidents, no failed check rides, and no regulatory violations throughout my career, I became more concerned about continued single-pilot flight operations in the highly demanding Aerostar, a workload arguably higher than the single-pilot Citation operations I conducted many years ago. Hence, we have made the decision to allow a new owner to assume N702PG's care and feeding moving forward. Like the transition Steve McNeil made when he graciously permitted us to assume responsibility over his gorgeous Aerostar for the last 18 years, we hope the new owner has the same experience with N702PG in the future. It is time for someone else to assume the stewardship of the only 3-time AOA Queen of the Fleet, the incomparable N702PG. Penny and I will greatly and forever miss her.

It has been the greatest privilege and honor of a lifetime owning and operating these great Ted Smith-designed aircraft, and it has been an equally great privilege and honor sharing our and their stories with you over the years.



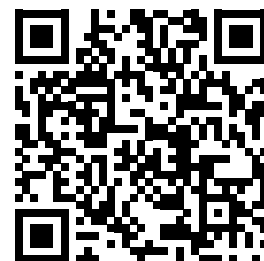
A great video by Aircenter when N799CE was being marketed a few years ago.



A video from the new owner.



Photos of various LPBA SLE events.



The most recent SLE crown at the Devine Airport in Texas flying N702PG.



SWAG MEETING

David Lunt



**Clockwise from
top left**

Robert Lepper's
N60671

Josh Klenski, Earl
Scofield, Rodger
Parker

Josh Klenski

Rodger & Lori
Parker

Roger Oeland &
Robert Lepper

The first Southern California Aerostar Group (SCAG) Fly-In was held on Saturday, 8 February 2025, at William J Fox Field in Southern California. The weather was pleasant, and VFR conditions prevailed. Attendees came from as far as Arizona.



Those present were operators, owners, engineers, and maintenance technicians who share the love of our unique twin-engine aircraft. The meeting provided a great opportunity to exchange ideas, make acquaintances, and build comradery.

William J Fox Field (KWJF) was chosen as the first meeting place due to the fact it was the testing-ground airport for the Aerostar in the late 1960s. The first Aerostar factory was located at Van Nuys Airport (KVNy), about 35 miles south of Fox Field.

The agenda consisted of arrivals during the morning hours with everyone getting acquainted late in the morning during the 11 o'clock hour. A group lunch was held at noon at the Foxy's Landing and Restaurant, located in the terminal building on the field. Afterwards, the group migrated to the ramp area where we all had an opportunity to admire everyone's magnificent Ted Smith creations. It appears the most dominant model present that day was the venerable model 600. There were some beautiful examples on display.

The concept of the meeting can be credited to Roger Oeland who worked in Research & Development Department at Ted Smith & Associates in designing and building the Aerostar in the San Fernando Valley. After working for Ted Smith, Roger operated Aero Specialties, a maintenance facility at Van Nuys Airport, for decades that serviced Aerostars. He is an encyclopedia of knowledge regarding the Aerostar.

David Lunt, a retired dentist from the San Fernando Valley, helped organize the fly-in, and made arrangements with the Fox Field airport and restaurant. He has owned a model 601 and 602P/700 over the last 30 years and has had opportunities to fly all the other models.

Special thanks to all who made the effort to come to our first event.

The Southern California Aerostar Group (SCAG) is planning to meet on a quarterly basis at a different Southern California airport, so stay tuned for future announcements.



Clockwise from top left

Earl Scoffield, Josh Klenski, David Lunt, Rodger Parker, Lori Parker, Robert Lepper, Roger Oeland, and William Blair

Lunch Time

Rodger & Lori Parker's N128MB

Robert Lepper

David Lunt's N700LD in front

Roger Oeland & William Blair

2024 FALL CONVENTION

Tucson, Arizona



Clockwise from top

Brennin & Elizabeth
Colegrove's N78NJ

Scott Burton &
Susan Taormina

Bruce Witkop,
Howard Slugocki,
Rob Becker

Walter & Suan
Kahn's N3634Y





Clockwise from top

Sharon Johnson,
Jill Stout, Laurie
Bliss, Kelly
Champlin, Susan
Kahn, Theo Becker,
Burdella Bacon,
Avril Forster, Peggy
Schmidt at Sonora
Desert Museum

Vincent & Meredith
Schmidt's N16HM,
QOF Runner Up

Gary Palmer,
Seth & Roberta
Koppenhaver

Mario Morales &
Heather Dube



**Clockwise
from top**

Maintenance
Seminar

Jimmy Mullen,
Sherry & Jack
Burnside

Renee Reese, Theo
Becker, Burdella
Bacon enjoying
Tucson with a
morning walk

AOA President
Bruce Witkop



Presentation of Queen of Fleet Awards

Queen of the Fleet

Penny & Gary Evans
N702PG

President

Bruce Witkop

Queen of Fleet Runner Up

Vincent & Meredith Schmidt
N16HM

Queen of Fleet Runner Up

Doug Moskowitz (not pictured)
N804LG



Above

Gary & Penny
Evan's N702PG
QOF

Left

John Jurkovich &
Jim Christy from
Aerotar Aircraft

Blended Winglets: Improved Aerodynamic Efficiency



Aerostar's new Blended Winglet design improves efficiency with an optimized continuous aerodynamic profile creating a reduced tip vortex.

Installing AAC winglets on your Aerostar will reduce drag due to lift (induced drag) so you can climb faster to altitudes where the Aerostar flies most efficiently. In addition, single engine climb performance is improved, enhancing safety.*

Aerostar Owner Comments:

Henry Davenport IV said, "Winglets: Wow, what a transformation. The climb performance is incredible. The "behind the power curve" feeling at lower speeds is gone. And they look absolutely terrific!!! Steve Speer really hit it out of the park with the design!"

Gary Evans said, "Jim, I have compared our pre and post winglet performance in verifying "significant" increases in ROC and cruise speed... Qualitatively the winglets also significantly enhance the way the aircraft handles during un-stick and landing operations, and enhance directional stability as well...We continue to be very appreciative of the efforts you have made to bring this wonderful technological enhancement to us on such an affordable basis. Thanks again!"

*Performance improvements vary depending on aircraft condition, atmospheric conditions, power settings, indicated airspeed, angle of attack, operating weight, and operator technique. Only the aircraft's flight manual performance section should be relied upon for expected aircraft performance.

AT YOUR SERVICE

We are here to listen and to provide value to our AOA members. My personal goal is to save you, at a minimum, the annual membership fee by helping you in all aspects of your Aerostar experience. Contact me, Ken Bacon, directly for your Aerostar needs.

- Locating Parts
- Aviation Insurance
- Finding Aerostar Trainers
- Discounting On Parts
- Maintenance Assistance
- Buying / Selling An Aerostar

If you need help with the AOA website or have membership questions, please contact Burdella in the AOA office by emailing aoa2007@cox.net.

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UPCOMING AOA EVENTS

EVENT	LOCATION	DATE
Fall Convention 2025	Dayton, Ohio	October 15-19, 2025
Spring Meeting	TBD	TBD

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