

# PIREPS

## PIREPS

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**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

## 1910 – A Very Good Aviation Year!

By Penny Rafferty Hamilton, Ph.D.

Hamilton is an aviation historian and author. She is a graduate of the University of Nebraska, earning Master's and Doctoral degrees.



**Glenn Curtiss is known as the Father of Naval Aviation. In 1910, he and his team performed in Omaha at the Midwest Aviation Meet and set aviation records. (Library of Congress archive)**

America of 1910 was slowly growing with automobiles giving people more mobility, along with inventions of the parachute, the toaster, and sonar. The average wage was 22 cents an hour. The average annual income was \$200 to \$400.

Then, in the summer of that year, the Omaha Aero Club enticed the famed aviation pioneer, Glenn Curtiss, and several of his pilots, J.C. Mars, John McCurdy, and Eugene B. Ely to star in the Midwest Aviation Meet July 23-27 at Omaha.

According to History Nebraska, the \$10,000 payment to perform (that is like \$281,109 in today's dollars!) brought the intrepid flyers west. The Omaha-area business leaders were happy to land this important aviation attraction several months ahead of the scheduled Wright Flyers at the Nebraska State Fair in Lincoln.

Huge prizes and trophies brought large crowds. In addition to the Curtiss aerial show, the United States Army out of Fort Omaha held War Balloon demonstrations. On the last day, despite high temperatures and some strong winds, over 4,000 celebrated the aviation records set. According to the World-Herald, "Omaha was on the map, aviatically speaking."



**The Wright Brothers Aerial Exhibition Team flew in Lincoln for the five days of the 1910 State Fair. (Photo Nebraska State Historical Society.)**

## Pireps has Gone Electronic

**Beginning With The August – September 2020 Issue Of Pireps, The Publication Will No Longer Be Available In Print Form.**

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Not to be outdone, Lincoln and the 1910 Nebraska State Fair officials hosted the Wright Brothers Aeroplane team for the five days of the State Fair at the fairgrounds. Again, the payment offered was the incredible amount of \$10,000. However, part of their contract required four flights a day or \$500 would be deducted from each missed flight.

The Wright Brothers had personally trained their pilots in their exhibition team. Their first appearance was June 13, 1910 at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. So, just

reaching Nebraska to perform was amazing considering the fragility of those early “aeroplanes.” Wright pilots earned a huge \$20 each week and \$50 for the days they flew. That daily flight pay would be the equivalent to \$405 in 2021.

In 1929, the famed Wright Brothers and Curtiss companies merged becoming Curtiss-Wright Corporation, which is a global force today. Nebraska has always been aviation-minded. That was proven 111 years ago. ■

## Posthumous Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony Held for Lt. Norma Adams on Memorial Day Weekend

By Sheila Day



**The 1943 gravesite of Lt. Norma Adams, a member of the Nebraska Civil Air Patrol (CAP) who served during WWII and was killed in a plane crash in 1943.**

The Nebraska Civil Air Patrol (CAP) presented the Congressional Gold Medal to the family of Lt. Norma Adams on May 29, 2021 at the Highland Cemetery in Adams. In 2014, Congress awarded the nation’s highest civilian honor to known members of CAP who served during WWII, but Norma Adams was not included at that time.

was conducted by the Civil Air Patrol with 25 uniformed officials and cadets. Norma was buried in her CAP uniform. A large wreath with the CAP insignia was placed at her grave. During burial, a lone plane circled overhead and dipped its wings in a final tribute.

At the time of her death, Lt. Adams had earned her commercial pilot license. She had flown approximately 300 solo hours, around 37 hours in the type of airplane that crashed.

The family has decided to donate the Congressional Gold Medal to the Gage County Historical Society and Museum in Beatrice. The Museum will be creating a display for Lt. Norma Adams that will be completed by August. ■

The Medal was presented by Robert “Otto” Wachholtz, Retired Air Force and Civil Air Patrol Lt. Colonel.

Attending the ceremony were Norma’s nieces Wilma Hesser and Lila Bottolfsen; and nephews Les Adams and Clarence Shoemaker, along with many family members, aviation historian Diane Bartels, Senator Myron Dorn and many people from the area. Nephew Clarence Shoemaker, 84, who drove in from Gregory, South Dakota, accepted the Medal for the family.

Lt. Norma Adams was born north of Adams on August 29, 1924. She was the daughter of Newell “Pat” and Jennie Adams, the youngest of five children. The family moved to the Auburn area in 1936. At the age of 15, Norma began flying lessons at the newly opened Auburn Airport. By the time of her graduation from Auburn High School in 1941, at the age of 17, Norma held her solo pilot license.

The family moved back to their farm north of Adams after Norma graduated. In August of 1942, Norma was employed at the Crete Airport. A CAP squadron started in Crete in March 1942, Squadron 762-3, and Norma joined. Norma was involved with CAP recruiting missions, mapping and observation flights.

On Oct. 7, 1943, Norma took a test flight with a mechanic on a plane he had been repairing. The plane crashed, and they were tragically killed. Norma’s funeral



**Attendees at the Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony for Lt. Norma Adams on May 29 at Highland Cemetery in Adams, Nebraska included, l to r: Robert “Otto” Wachholtz, Retired Air Force and Civil Air Patrol Lt. Colonel; nephews Clarence Shoemaker and Les Adams; and nieces Wilma Hesser and Lila Bottolfsen.**



# Relax With A Good Book



Whether you're enjoying a "staycation" this year or heading for a beach or mountain cabin somewhere, summertime is one of those times when we like to relax with a good book and forget about all the stresses of

daily life. In this vein, I wanted to share some of my favorite aviation authors. This isn't studying. These are authors that I enjoy because they articulately share the magic and realities of flying.

Ernest K. Gann is always a good go-to read! Gann was born in 1910 right here in Lincoln. His career as an author was long and prolific. Gann's first book about flying was 1944's *Island in the Sky*, an engaging story about a WWII Army Air Transport Command Corsair that made a forced landing in the Arctic due to heavy icing, and the survival and rescue efforts that followed. *The Black Watch: The Men who Fly America's Secret Spy Planes* was published 45 years later. In addition to being a prolific writer, Gann flew as an airline pilot and ran a commercial fishing operation. Gann published a total of 24 books, nine of which were made into movies. My favorite was his own autobiography, *A Hostage to Fortune*, published in 1978.

If you're not old enough to remember the #1 best seller of the early '70s, you really must pick up *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach. Bach was a military aviator and barnstormer who was a technical writer for Douglas Aircraft Company and a contributing editor of *Flying Magazine*. Though Bach's books, including *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, were mostly about philosophy, his views about the meaning of life are heavily influenced by his experiences navigating the airways. When he

describes, from a seagull's perspective, the joys of learning how slight changes in wing position can impact the efficiency, and joy, of his flying, you can viscerally feel what he's experiencing. It's a short read and should definitely be on your shelf!

I'm sure you know about Jimmy Buffett, the margarita-drinking singer. And you probably know that Buffett is also a sailor and a pilot. But did you know that he's also an outstanding author? Buffett has written three #1 best sellers that are generally stories about the laid-back, Florida Keys lifestyle that he sings about. I especially enjoyed *Where is Joe Merchant?* which is a fun story about the accidental adventures of a commercial sea-plane pilot.

My all-time favorite is Antoine de Saint-Exupery. Saint-Exupery is famous for his "children's" book, *The Little Prince*. But his novels drawing on his experiences as a military and commercial pilot in France during the early days of flight are absolutely captivating. *Wind, Sand and Stars* and *Night Flight* are two gripping stories about a lifetime spent in flight. His language is nothing short of beautiful. Saint-Exupery uses his experiences of flight to expose some of the truths about our existence, such as this quote about an airplane: "The machine does not isolate man from the great problems of nature but plunges him more deeply into them." Right? Saint-Exupery was born in Lyon, France. My bucket list includes visiting LYS, the Lyon – Saint-Exupery Airport. ■

## OUR VISION

A dynamic aviation system which enhances quality of life through infrastructure and services that meet the diverse and evolving needs of all Nebraskans.

# Too Hot to Lift

By Jesse Schulz, NDOT Meteorologist

Last month it felt like summer had already arrived across the U.S., although it was still a few weeks away. Temperatures reached the 90s and dew points reached the 70s, making it feel more like early August than early June. With the ever-increasing temperatures, the possibility of planes being grounded because of the heat becomes more real. With the upper level wind pattern stuck in an Omega Block, don't expect conditions to change anytime soon.

The Omega Block is one of the more common types of summertime weather patterns of the U.S. The Omega Block is typically defined as a low-pressure system over the East Coast with a ridge of high pressure over the Central Plains and back to low pressure over the West Coast.

Under these low-pressure centers is where you typically find cooler weather and persistent rain showers leading to flooding concerns. We saw that last month in Arkansas and Mississippi with flash flood warnings over several days. Under the high pressure over the center part of the U.S. is where you find hot and dry conditions. Due to the size of these Omega Blocks, they are notorious for being very persistent and not wanting to move through. This leaves us with the same weather pattern for several days, if not weeks.

Under this current weather pattern, temperatures across the area soared into the 90s, which is some 15 degrees above normal for June. This could lead to trouble for aircraft. As air gets warmer, it becomes thinner as air molecules spread out more. With the thinner air the ability for planes to produce enough lift to keep them in the air becomes a bigger issue. When the air temperature reaches above 104 degrees, there is a greater cause for concern with airplanes and their ability to fly.

Although we are not expecting temperatures to reach that high, we are stuck in the pattern of high temperatures that doesn't appear to let up anytime soon. Until it does, the ACs will be humming and swimming pools will be filled with those who are seeking respite from the heat. Happy summer! ■

# Seward Municipal Airport To Host NEAAA 2021 Fly In: 40th Edition

By Shawn McInay

Again this year, Seward Municipal Airport will be the host site of the Nebraska Chapter of the Antique Airplane Association (NEAAA) annual fly-in breakfast. The event takes off on Friday, August 27th, with a noon lunch and an evening cookout for registered guests, followed by the President's Reception. Saturday's checklist includes a Continental breakfast, grilled burgers at noon, and the always popular evening steak feed featuring Nebraska beef. The judges will be looking over the assembled aircraft and announcing their favorites. Sunday morning is a perfect time for fun flying before the event wraps up at noon.

Don't have an antique airplane? No plane at all? No problem! Clear your schedule and fly or drive to join us for a nostalgic weekend with some cool young and old planes. Whether you can stay for a few hours or a few days, we hope to see you in Seward, Nebraska this August! For more information, call Todd @ 308-380-5079 ■

# Airventure 2021 NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) Now Available.

By David Morris

The Experimental Aircraft Association's (EAA) AirVenture 2021 68th fly-in convention, scheduled for July 26 – August 1 at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh, WI, now has the NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) available by clicking on [https://www.eaa.org/apps/airventure/notam/notam\\_request.aspx](https://www.eaa.org/apps/airventure/notam/notam_request.aspx) to download the NOTAM or order the printed booklet. The NOTAM is in effect from noon CDT on Thursday, July 22, until 8:00 p.m. CDT on Sunday, August 1

The free 32-page booklet is an absolute must if you're flying an aircraft to the AirVenture 2021 event in Oshkosh. While many of the procedures are similar to previous years, there are updates in many areas of the World's Greatest Aviation Celebration. The NOTAM should be part of every pilot's pre-flight preparation when planning a flight to this event. ■

## Great Plains Wing of the Commemorative Air Force Annual Flight Breakfast and Open House

**Saturday, August 7, 2021**  
**Council Bluffs Municipal Airport (KCBF)**  
**Breakfast by The Pancake Man 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM (Free Will Donation)**  
**Food Truck Vendors after 11:00 AM (Vendor prices)**  
**Military Museum Open**  
**Discovery Flights available**  
**Military and Civilian Aircraft on display**  
**Contact:**  
**Jeff Hutcheson 402-981-4633**  
**jeffhutcheson3@gmail.com**



# Nebraska State Fly In Draws Enthusiastic Crowd

By Ronnie Mitchell, Retired Dept. of Aeronautics Director



Rides on the "DOC" B29 were available on Saturday and Sunday, including interior walk throughs of this historic aircraft.

On Father's Day weekend, June 19-20, the Nebraska State Fly In took place at the Hastings Municipal Airport with a fantastic lineup of aircraft, aerobatic performers, a fabulous car show and only one of two flyable WWII B29s ("DOC"). Rides on the B29 were available on Saturday and Sunday, including interior walk throughs of this historic aircraft. It was all orchestrated by the Hastings Airport Association, in partnership with the Hastings Airport and EAA Chapter 544. Approximately 4,500-5,000 people attended, with over 1,000 having breakfast provided by the Hastings Kiwanis Club.

Numerous static aircraft displays were available to the public with over 60 aircraft on the field. Members

of the Nebraska women's pilot association, the 99s, were there in force. Most notable, 99s President Lisa McWilliams; aerobatic performer Debby Rihn-Harvey – retired Southwest Airlines Captain., US Unlimited Aerobatic Team member 16 times, 2006 Unlimited Champion at the US National Aerobatic Championship and graduate of Hastings College; Diane Bartels – author and 99 member; and Nebraska Aeronautics Commissioner Dick Trail – graduate of the Air Force Academy's first class and winner of the Strategic Air Command's McKay trophy. During the Vietnam conflict Dick was aircraft commander of a KC135 refueling aircraft, which simultaneously refueled a Navy tanker and a damaged Navy fighter jet, getting them back to a safe landing in friendly territory.



Notable members of the "99s," l to r: Lisa McWilliams, Debra Rihn-Harvey and Diane Bartels, along with Nebraska Aeronautics Commissioner Dick Trail



99s members, l to r: Diane Bartels, Susan Biba, Madison Parde, Patsy Meyer, Deb Gangwish, Sally Van Zandt, Lu Scarlett, Lisa McWilliams and Megan Musil



**Ronnie Mitchell and Ann Richart**

Other 99s were present and as a group had painted a beautiful blue and white compass rose on the Hastings Airport ramp. Retired Department of Aeronautics Director Ronnie Mitchell and present Director Ann Richart were also in attendance.

The airshow was a tribute to Nebraska aviator Harry Barr, who passed away July 1, 2020. Harry was a true friend of aviation who helped numerous individuals attain their pilot's license and make aviation a career. No one really knew how many aircraft Harry owned but at one time, while his P51 North American Mustang was being rebuilt after an engine failure accident, Harry bought a second P51 to keep current. He said the only thing better about owning one P51 was having two!

Air boss Dale Brykit did an outstanding job of keeping the airshow safe and performers on schedule, while Erin Hupp entertained the crowd with her fast-paced dialogue.

Long-time friend of Harry Barr, Larry Bartlett, opened the airshow with his trademark parachute drop with the US flag streaming behind his body while the National Anthem was sung. Jeff Shetterly then performed a North American T6 aerobatic routine, followed by a ping pong ball drop for over 500 boys and girls. Those with certain numbers on the ball received prizes, including \$2 bills. There were some happy boys and girls!



**Larry Bartlett's parachute drop**

Other long-time Harry Barr friends performing were Doug Roth flying an aerobatic routine in a Staudacher Aircraft, followed by Jesse Panzer in her Pitts aircraft. Eric Edgren performed a comedy routine in a clipped wing Taylorcraft, followed by Debby Rihn-Harvey, then Brian Correll with



**The Midwest's Smallest Airport**

a low-level thrilling routine in his Pitts. He flew about 15 feet above the runway upside down while cutting a ribbon held by volunteers, which included Hasting's Mayor Corey Stutte. RT Dickson performed his aerobatic routine in a beautifully restored P51 Mustang.

The last event was the Harry Barr Tribute Parade. Harry's yellow Piper J3 was on the front ramp along with the Midwest's Smallest Airport, a Chevrolet Suburban with a small landing ramp on its top, which Harry landed on over 100 times. Then Doug Roth took to the air with his Staudacher performing a brief routine, followed by RT



**Fly arounds by RT Dickson and Jessy Panzer**

Dickson in his P51 and Jessy Panzer in her Pitts performing formation fly arounds circling the south end of the airfield. The hymn "I'll Fly Away" was being sung while the

fly arounds were taking place. A fitting ending to the "Harry Barr Tribute."

This was an outstanding event, which was flawlessly coordinated and performed. Congratulations to the committees and sponsors who made this State Fly In a success. ■



**Brian Correll cuts the ribbon held by volunteers while flying upside down in his Pitts aircraft.**



# EAA80 Announces Grand Opening of ABLE ACE Facility

By Jim Beyer



EAA Chapter 80 members assist in moving plane to new ABLE ACE facility at Oak View Mall.

Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 80 in Omaha, Nebraska recently partnered with a very generous mall owner and leased over 4,500 square feet of space in the Oak View Mall, 144th and Center, in west Omaha. The goal is to finish work on a partially completed Zenith 750 with Corvair engine that was donated to the chapter as an IRS 501(c)3 charitable organization donation.

The move-in process began in June 2021 and building will commence in July in the unique comfort of a climate-controlled and well-lit facility with restaurants in close proximity. What a great facility!

While chapter members experienced in aircraft construction will lead the build, volunteers of all ages and skills are more than welcome to help and learn. While the phrase "it takes a village" normally applies to rearing children, it also applies to this education facility. Volunteers of all types will be required for the Zenith build aspect, but also for a broader effort with a variety of activities.

HQ EAA launched a build-and-fly program in 2020, which includes many aviation-related activities such as aluminum riveting, wing rib construction, radio-controlled aircraft building and more. The vision is for these activities and more to commence shortly after the Zenith 750 build is underway.

With the goal of becoming a hub of aviation education and activity,

EAA80 has coined the facility the ABLE ACE, which stands for Aircraft Building Laboratory and Aviation Center for Education. In addition to this effort, EAA80 was recently selected to grant a \$10,000 Ray Aviation Scholarship and selected Patrick Stolinski, a local high school student, who will use these funds for the purpose of earning a private pilot certificate (See story on page 8.)

The grand opening of the ABLE ACE is scheduled for Friday, August 6, 2021 at 5:30 pm at the Oak View Mall, 3001 S 144th St, Omaha, NE 68144. All are welcome to attend.

For more information, please contact Jim Beyer at 316-213-7093 or [jimbeyer34@gmail.com](mailto:jimbeyer34@gmail.com). ■



Taxiing through the Oakview Mall requires coordination.

# EAA 80 Ray Aviation Scholarship Awarded to Patrick Stolinski

By Jim Beyer



Patrick Stolinski, the EAA80 Ray Aviation Scholarship recipient.

EAA Chapter 80, based at the Millard Airport in Omaha, was recently selected to award a \$10,000 Ray Aviation Scholarship Fund scholarship to a young person aged 16-20 with the goal to complete their private pilot certificate training within a year. Chapter 80 solicited applications, then interviewed applicants and their parents, and awarded the 2021 scholarship to Patrick Stolinski from Millard North High School.

Throughout the year, Patrick will be mentored by chapter members while training with Oracle Aviation, as well as participating in chapter events such as Young Eagles' rallies. Stay tuned for a future scholarship application announcement, as the plan is to award a \$10K scholarship each year! ■

# Zero Tolerance

By David Morris

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) is reminding the traveling public that they are still required to wear a mask on planes, buses, trains and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within or out of the United States. Masks are also required in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has levied \$119,000 in civil penalties against passengers for alleged violations of federal regulations as part of its Zero Tolerance efforts against unruly behavior.

As part of the FAA's Zero Tolerance campaign, a web video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0dSF3diGlo> features children explaining how to behave on a plane and expressing their disgust about increased unruly passenger behavior.

Since Jan. 1, 2021, the FAA has received approximately 3,271 reports of unruly behavior by passengers, including about 2,475 reports of passengers refusing to comply with the federal face mask mandate. The FAA has identified potential violations in 540 cases and has initiated enforcement action in 83 cases. During the same time frame, the FAA has proposed more than \$682,000 in fines against unruly passengers.

As flights allow for more passengers, the FAA will continue to work with the TSA and Air Marshals to watch for unruly behavior that could threaten crew or passenger safety. ■

## Events Calendar

York Airport (KJYR),  
EAA Chapter 1055 Fly-in breakfast  
(free-will donation) on the  
1st Saturday of the month,  
8:00-10:00 a.m.

Crete Airport (KCEK),  
EAA Chapter 569 Fly-in breakfast  
(free-will donation) on the  
3rd Saturday of every month,  
8:00-10:00 a.m.

Red Cloud Lions Fly-in Breakfast  
Red Cloud Airport (7V7)  
Sunday, August 8, 2021,  
7:00-10:00 a.m.  
Fly-ins eat free.  
Contact Chuck Stokes: 402-746-3818

Seward Municipal Airport  
Nebraska Chapter of the Antique  
Airplane Association (NEAAA) Annual  
Fly-in Breakfast (See story on page 4.)  
Friday, August 27 – Sunday, August 29  
Contact Todd at 308-380-5079