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## Airport Director's Update

***Changing Horizons***—Jim Little, Airport Director

Our westerly view from the Airport Terminal will never be the same. What used to be flat terrain, covered with cotton fields, mesquite trees, and a few scattered pump-jacks, ranging as far as the eye could see-- now has two huge mounds of dirt, with a separation in between, dominating the horizon. The "mounds" are the north and south approaches to the future overpass that will provide vehicular access to the airport from the Reliever Route being constructed around the west side of the City. The space between the dirt mounds is where our access road will be located, going under the overpass. We will still have the beautiful sunsets we are famous for, but we will have to look a little higher on the horizon to appreciate them.

And, there are other "changing horizons" on the airport: For

## McMahon-Wrinkle Airport & Industrial Park



### Recent Airport Activity

***The Airport...Moving Forward***—Karen Reagan, Administrative Assistant

September flew by and October will be over by the time you read this. As time progresses, so has our airport.

Many of you will be glad to know that the new fuel farm is up and running and ready for your use! Current prices are 50 cents a gallon less than the fuel truck.

Things are beginning to take shape at a fairly rapid pace on the Truck Reliever Route. Looking out the window from the pilot's lounge you can see a mountain of dirt with vehicles and construction equipment moving about. At first it was difficult to imagine a separate grand entrance to our airport, where it would be and what it would look like. Soon city workers will be clearing off a section for

the new access to our terminal.



If you have been on the east side of our airport you would have noticed the new rail line running down Boeing Drive. This section should be finished fairly soon.

Finally, our apron is receiving a make over. Right now a machine is grading up the top layer of asphalt in some places. If you are flying in to land, you'll find your parking choices limited while construction is going on.



example, the expansion of rail, and the addition of more locomotives and rail cars; the possibility of new horizontal oil rigs and wells; new businesses; the rerouting of roads and vehicular traffic, as we know it today; the construction of new hangars; and the addition of new aircraft—one of our tenants recently purchased a beautiful Cessna Citation Sovereign, corporate type jet. Now that's something I'd love to have on my horizon, wouldn't you?

On a sad note, two of our Airport's strongest supporters recently lost family members; Orville Spradling's wife, Reta May, died October 20, 2014 and Phillip Welch, Airport Development Board Chairman, lost his mother, Mary Lynn Welch, on October 31. Please keep these individuals and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

Fly Safe, Jim L.

# Pilot's Briefing

**Survivor**— by Wayne Dawson

A recent flight to Ruidoso, NM reminded me of flying in the Alaskan bush. Although the tundra of western Alaska and the West Texas desert bear no resemblance in climate and topography both are expansive and sparsely populated. Surviving an emergency landing often depends upon your preflight preparation. My first engine failure happened December 4, 1974, flying solo, enroute to Bethel, AK from Fairbanks. A connecting rod bolt broke. I glided ten miles to the frozen Kuskokwim River. I was on a VFR flight plan. On the way down I was able to reach Flight Service on my hand held radio and communicate my problem and position. The temperature was 15 degrees below zero. My survival gear was my flight plan, radio, one ham sandwich, and the engine cover. Because my location was known and I was able to land on the river, I was picked up and home in time for dinner that same day. Later that winter a friend ran out of fuel enroute to Bethel from Anchorage. He landed on the snow covered tundra breaking both ankles. He was not found and picked up until late the next day. He survived because he had good survival gear and his passenger got him into an arctic sleeping bag saving him from shock and hypothermia. Preparation saved him, luck saved me.

# Airport Report

**Beware the Seat Belt** – by Karen Reagan, Administrative Assistant

Although things can get hectic at our airport, the atmosphere is generally smooth with very few hiccups. However, there was an incident that was out of the “ordinary”.

We had a pilot call on the radio asking for assistance. He planned on doing a low fly by and requested that we check his landing gear to see if it was extended. When his plane buzzed the airport it was obvious that his landing gear was not down. On the radio, he advised us that he would circle the airport to run through his checklist and if all else failed do an emergency landing at Midland International Airport with no landing gear.

Radioing the pilot, Jack Perry, the owner of Lone Star Aviation, recommended the pilot check the manual extension handle behind the co-pilot's seat. He cautioned that if not latched securely, the handle spins wrapping the seat belt around it causing the circuit breaker for the

On my flight from Ruidoso back to Big Spring I realized the desert is no less harsh than the arctic tundra. Be prepared! I've a few suggestions based on my experience flying in Alaska. Let someone know when you are going flying, even if it's local. Tell them when you expect to be back, and call them when you are. File a flight plan if you're going cross country, every time. If you are local shooting approaches advise ATC and ask for flight following. If you land out be prepared to take care of yourself and your passengers for at least a few hours. Your survival may depend upon your ELT, a hand held radio, first aid kit, shelter from the sun, outdoor clothing and shoes, and sufficient water. Unless you are certain you can make your way to safety, stay with the aircraft. A crashed airplane is much easier to find than a man wandering on foot in the desert.



Wayne Dawson holds a Commercial Pilot license with Single and Multiengine Land; Instrument Airplane; Glider ratings as well as Ground Instructor, Advanced Instrument license. He currently flies an RV7A which he completed building in 2007 and hangars here at Big Spring McMahan-Wrinkle Airport.

## ...Memory Ticker...

When can you test your ELT?

Read AIM 6-2-4

landing gear to overload.

The pilot checked behind the co-pilot's seat and sure enough the seat belt was wrapped around it. After un-tangling the seat belt he was able to correct the problem, lower the landing gear, and land the plane safely.



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE JUST DISCOVERED AN EXCEPTION TO THE RULE THAT WHAT GOES UP MUST COME DOWN: THE LANDING GEAR.

## Pilot's Perspective

### What is the Most Overlooked Part of the Pre-Flight?— by Robert D. Miller

I know that when you prepare to take off in your plane you check the oil, the aleron, the elevator, the fuel and all the other little check points as you walk around the plane. But what do you not check which is the most important aspect of the plane that should be checked religiously? That is the tires. Well, what is so important about aircraft tires. Have you ever tried moving an airplane with a flat tire? Just think what happens if you land and have a blow out on your rollout.

Let's talk about proper inflation. Too low and the tire gets hot as it rolls across the runway; the sidewall flexes too much and becomes damaged; and the tube can squirm around and possibly cause an abrasion. Too full and the tire could skid. Low pressure is more likely where the problem will occur. Most aircraft tires use an inner tube which is a soft flexible material, and they do not seal like a modern car tire. The rubber is fairly thin and permeable and in the summer time a tube tire can get to its minimum specification air pressure in weeks. Newer tubes with butyl compounds slow this phenomena but do not stop it.

Can you "see" indication of low tire pressure? Answer No. If you see the tire is low it will be very low. The signs of low tire pressure are:

1. Harder to roll the plane out of the hangar;
2. The nose wheel is more likely to shimmy;
3. Take off roll can be longer;
4. Landing roll can be shorter.

Unfortunately these things are not bell ringer items to get your attention. This is therefore the current problem in general aviation. Low tire pressure is the number one contributor to flats and is most unpleasant when this happens at a remote air field, not to mention the potential impact to safety.

To be on the safe side be sure to check your tire pressure weekly or at least biweekly whether you fly the plane or not. Also, ensure that the pressures are correct as the nose tire usually carries a 40 pound pressure as compared to the main tires which carry 62

pounds.

So get down on your hands and knees with a good tire gauge and keep that pressure up not only to protect the airplane but to ensure your safety on landing. Another caveat! When you pull the plane out, watch your rolling tires for adequate tread and not bald spots due to excessive breaking or cuts.

## Recent Airport Landings



## Pilot's Safety Meeting!

### **Mark your calendar, and plan to attend!!**

The next Pilot Safety Meeting is at 7:00 p.m., immediately following the 5:30 p.m. Airport Board Meeting on Thursday, **November 20th.**

**Our Guest Speaker will be John Boatright, a Program Manager for FAA Aviation Safety. The WINGS accredited program for the Pilot Safety Meeting entitled "Slow Down and Smell the Avgas" will be about carrying forth, loving life, and things that fly. Snacks will be served! Don't miss out!**

Please RSVP by calling Karen at 432-264-2362 or email: [kreagan@mybigspring.com](mailto:kreagan@mybigspring.com)

***Is there something specific you would like to read about in our newsletter, or perhaps you have an idea for an article? Send it to: [kreagan@mybigspring.com](mailto:kreagan@mybigspring.com)***

## **McMahon-Wrinkle Airport & Industrial Park**

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We're on the web!

[www.mybigspring.com/pages/airport](http://www.mybigspring.com/pages/airport)

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### **Pilot Safety Meeting: Thursday, November 20th – 7:00 pm**

**John Boatwright, a program manager for FAA Aviation Safety, will be giving a WINGS accredited program entitled “Slow Down and Smell the Avgas!” You won’t want to miss it!**

**For your information...Texas Governor Rick Perry has proclaimed November 2014 as Aviation Appreciation Month!**

#### **Terminal Hours of Operation**

Monday through Friday  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

#### ***Fixed Base Operator:***

*Lone Star Aviation*  
Phone: (432) 264-7124  
Fax: (432) 264-7406  
Call Out: (432) 935-1238  
-or- (432) 270-2729

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The Big Spring McMahon-Wrinkle Airport, owned and operated by the City of Big Spring, is a general aviation airport. The airport, which occupies approximately 2,200 acres of land, operates two runways: Runway 17/35, which measures 8,802 feet in length and 100 feet in width; and Runway 06/24, measuring 4,601 feet in length and 75 feet in width. Aviation activities that occur at the airport on a regular basis include agricultural spraying, corporate use, flight instruction, and recreational flying. The airport has hosted annual fly-ins and air shows, and maintains the Hangar 25 Air Museum. In 2007, the airport hosted the Hang Gliding World Championships. The Big Spring Air Terminal is over 4,000 sq. ft. with a conference room, passenger waiting area, courtesy car and airpark office. The Pilot's Lounge includes weather monitoring and flight planning capability, wireless internet connection and concessions.