

HIGH FLIGHT

LAKEWAY AIRPARK

JANUARY 2009



MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Happy new year! It is great to have such pleasant weather recently. That and the lower fuel prices has the airport fairly busy. Our fuel price is close to what we had 3 years ago. I treated myself to a new mountain bike yesterday. You will not see much of my '59 Schwinn any more. It is now on the rack awaiting restoration and I am peddling around on a shinny new aluminum Schwinn with 21 speeds – which is about 18 more than I need.



Jeff Klaas
Airpark President

All the insurance renewals are being concluded. We start the new year and the second half of our fiscal year is good financial shape. At some time over the next few months we will be replacing the fuel terminal – which is the computer and credit card reader in the box next to the pump. The pump and all the other fuel system hardware will continue to serve.

The noise abatement issue has been getting much discussion lately. We basically have three problem areas – loud planes on takeoff, abrupt maneuvering flight in the pattern, and low flying helicopters. There is also the consideration for the elementary school just southwest of the runway. I am asking those with loud propellers to back off the RPM a bit as safety permits. Please keep maneuvering flight in the pattern to a minimum. If there are traffic conflicts, exit the pattern and re-enter instead of tight circling. As to the helicopters, the rules state all aircraft shall fly a normal pattern. It has been a slow process of educating the repeat offenders, but they get it.

(Continued on Page #4)

JANUARY AIRPARK SOCIAL- THURSDAY—JAN 8TH—6:30 PM

The Airpark dinner is set for January 8th, 6:30 at the Steiner Ranch Steak House. A reduced price menu (\$19.95) was prepared (Menu on page #4), although we'll be getting separate checks so folks can order from the regular menu if they wish. The regular menu can be seen at:

www.steinersteakhouse.com

I'd like to have RSVP's so that the appropriate seating area can be prepared.
Terry—Tjpriestap@aol.com—608-9224

LEFTY GARDNER

Our own Aviation Legend passed away on Christmas Eve. Reprinted on pages 2 and 3 is a featured article on Lefty that appeared in the September 1996 issue of High Flight.

AIRPARK WORKDAY

Saturday—January 10th—8:30 AM

Board Meeting Will
Immediately Follow Workday

Please join us at Café Lago
for breakfast at 7:30
before the meeting if you would like.



Our thanks go to Jeff Klaas who completely refinished the Kent Chatagnier memorial park bench.

MEET LEFTY GARDNER—1921-2008

Editors Note:

This article written by Barbara Cauley appeared in the September 1996 issue of the Airpark newsletter, We are sorry to report that Lefty passed away on Christmas Eve 2008.



Born in Couch, Texas on September 10, 1921, he was the youngest boy, with two older brothers and four sisters. Lefty grew up on a small farm with cotton as the main source of income and he graduated from Pettus High School in 1939 with a football scholarship to SWTC in San Marcos, Texas. After the war, he continued his education at Texas A&M and graduated with a BS degree in 1953. He is married and has 3 daughters and 2 sons, along with 7 grandchildren. Both sons are following in Lefty's shadow as pilots.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Lefty enlisted in the Army Air Corps and was sent to Dodd Field where he was screened and sent to Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, Texas to mechanic school. While there, he applied for the USAAC Cadets, was accepted and graduated from Flight School as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1943.

From 1944 through 1945 he was 1st pilot in B-24's and B-17's. He flew 46 combat missions in the European Theater during WWII and was awarded the DFC and Air Medal w/5 Oak Leaf Clusters. He was honorably discharged with approximately 1500 hours. His career also consisted of flying secret missions into Sweden at night and under heavy cloud cover to supply the Norwegian underground network. He remained in the USAF Reserves until 1963 at Brooks Field as Captain and pilot of T-33's, T-28's and C-46's.

From 1945 through 1946 he did charter flying etc. and until 1948 was a pilot instructor for Louisiana Flyers, Inc. in Lake Charles, Louisiana. In 1948 he and his brother Henry formed Gardner Brothers and began a crop-dusting business. In 1956 he formed his own company and changed the name to Gardner Flyers, Inc. From 1963 to 1974 he operated a fixed base operation at Brownwood, Texas, having a Cessna Dealership, warbird restoration, as well as doing charter, instruction, major and minor maintenance and specializing in brush control in the West Texas ranching community. In 1974 he moved to Mercedes, Texas where he continued in the aviation business until his retirement in 1989 when he moved to Austin.

In 1961, Lefty had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Lloyd Nolen. Lloyd had been an instructor in the Army Air Corps during the war and like Lefty had this deep burning desire to be a fighter pilot. Since this did not happen during their Army Air Corps career, it was definitely the main topic of their discussions and they would eventually locate and purchase their first fighter aircraft. Through Lloyd and Lefty's strong desires to not only fly these aircraft and to help others to have the same pleasures, and to preserve the historic WWII aircraft as flying aircraft and a sense of pride in their country, they began to acquire other fighters and eventually, along with others organized the Confederate Air Force. This organization is now over 8,000 members strong scattered through the world with an inventory of over 140 WWII aircraft that were flown during WWII.

Lefty has been the Chief Check pilot for the Confederate Air Force since 1975 and has been on the General Staff (Board of Directors) of the CAF (except for one 3 year term) to the present. Lefty was instrumental in acquiring many of the aircraft and traveled to several countries, and all across the U.S., searching, assessing the flyability and restoration of many of the

(Continued on Page #3)

MEET LEFTY GARDNER—1921-2008
(Continued from Page #2)

aircraft in the CAF fleet today, flying them back to the CAF Headquarters in Harlingen, Texas. He is also called upon by the CAF to test fly the fighter aircraft after restoration. He has recently been asked to test the Greenland Expeditions' P-38 when it has completed restoration in 1997.



From 1970 until the present, he has missed only one National Championship Reno Air Race due to the death of his closest and dearest friend, Lloyd P. Nolen. Lefty has also raced in Mojave, California and most recently in the Phoenix 500 Races in Phoenix, Arizona as well as the Florida Races. Lefty won the Reno National Champion Air Race in 1976 in Thunderbird, his P-51 Mustang. With his P-38 "White Lightin'", he has also brought home silver and bronze medals. He also raced the P-63 King Cobra 5 years and the P-47 Thunderbolt. The P-38 is mainly flown around the race course for show and has not been modified for racing. Lefty perhaps is best known for his ability to perform aerobatic performance in "White Lighting" for 30 years at hundreds of locations around the U.S.

With the help and love of labor of the 'Thunder & Lightin Gang' (volunteer crew), Lefty has over 3,000 hours in his P-38 with a total of over 30,000 hours flying time, and has flight instructor, instrument, single and multi-engine ratings. He holds letters of authority in P-38, P-51, P-47, Me-109, F-8F and P-63 along with type ratings in the B-17, B-24, B-26, and the P-38. He presently holds a letter of Competency for Low Level Aerobatics and is an ICAS ace. He also holds an inspection authorization rating with the FAA which allows him to perform minor and major maintenance on aircraft and certify them for return to service as airworthy for flight.

Lefty is highly regarded in the aviation community as a top rated pilot and well liked and respected by not only his peers but all of those that he has entertained over the last 30 years. He and best friend Lloyd Nolen were honored in 1976 by the American Fighter Aces Association for their outstanding service and made Honorary Members by the association. Lefty received the Duane & Judy Cole Aviation Award in 1976 for outstanding contributions to Air Racing, Air Shows and to the preservation of our American Heritage through the CAF.

Lefty remains very active in the aviation world and is called upon many times for his knowledge and expertise in WWII aircraft and historical events. He lives on our airpark with his wife Sharon and is serving on our Board of Directors and is currently our Safety Officer. He will be racing his P-38 'White Lightin' in the Reno Air Races September 12-15. Go out and cheer him on to victory.

Barbara Cauley

**Message From Your President
Continued from Page #1**

Please avoid overflying the school during school time. Plan for a close tight base or extend a bit to the south.

I continue to get requests from folks needing to perform community service work. I am out of ideas for simple projects. If anyone has suggestions for community service tasks, please send them along. We could use some that require significant muscle power for the teenagers and some lightweight tasks.

The park bench restoration is complete. The bench has been returned to the prime Airpark plane watching position. The new wood is Mahogany with a clear water proofing sealer. This will be a good science project to see how well the wood holds up.

Thanks to Bill Molloy, Erik Mulloy, Terry Priestap, and Wayne Wagner for doing ramp checks last month. The sign up sheet is on the table in the terminal if you would like to help.

My calendar says the next workday/meeting is January 10th, starting at 8:30am. Dust off your bike and peddle over to Cafe Lago for an early breakfast.

Jeff

**LAKEWAY AIRPARK
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



President..... (512-261-5996)..... Jeff Klaas
 Vice President.... (512-801-9934) Jesse Beckett
 Secretary (512-608-9932)..... Clint Beacham
 Treasurer..... (512-771-1660)..... Keith Durio
 Member (512-970-1041)..... Joe Bain
 Member..... (512-266-3227)..... Bill Thompson
 Member..... (713-542-1875)..... Neil Olufsen
 Committees
 Social Functions.. (512-963-7187)..... Terry Priestep
 Web Page..... (512-261-5613)..... Joe Bain
 Newsletter..... Joann Anderson
 (261-3313, Fax 261-3933, Yakjim@aol.com)

**STEINER  RANCH
Steakhouse**

Welcomes:

**Lakeway Aviation
Thursday—January 8th—6:30**

**Salad
Sensation**

Chopped greens topped with sliced eggs, red peppers and olives, served with French Bleu Cheese vinaigrette.

**Choice of Entrée
Grilled Salmon**

Served with a caper dill crème fraiche cream sauce.

Airline Chicken Breast

12 oz. Double Breast with the drums on, grilled and finished with a Tarragon Cream sauce.

Baked Penne “Vegetarian”

Fresh Basil with mixed vegetables and cheeses topped with bread crumbs

*All Entrees, excluding pasta, are served with Texas style mashed potatoes and Steamed broccoli with béarnaise.

ENGINEER: I don't quite know what to say about your aircraft Sir. Let's just put it this way.... If it was a horse, you would have to shoot it.



March 3, 2008

Copyright 2008 Joel Morgan