Fleetcraft AI / First Look / 100 Airplanes

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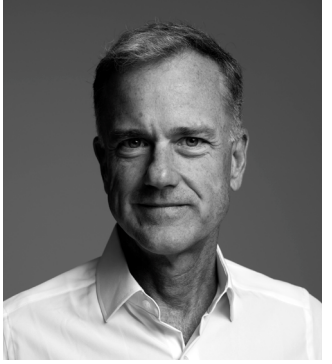
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**COVER PHOTO:**
*Photo courtesy of Nai Ko, Jr.*

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# NBAA-BACE: Navigating the Storms

Strong and consistent leadership at NBAA has been a constant for all of us. The organization that advocates for many of us and our use of the National Airspace System, provides regulatory advice to the FAA, and looks out for anything that could infringe upon our rights and privileges as pilots, will be without its stalwart leader for a little while, as he, Ed Bolen, is being treated for cancer. All of us wish Ed and his family well as he navigates this new challenge head-on.

In Ed's place for the interim will be Dan Hubbard. Hubbard has been with NBAA for 22 years and has served as its senior vice president for communications since 2008.

"We are wishing Ed a full recovery as he takes the time he needs to focus on his health," said John Witzig, chair of NBAA's Board of Directors. "Dan has a strong strategic view of NBAA's mission and all its initiatives. As NBAA's interim COO, he will oversee day-to-day operations during Ed's absence, including at NBAA-BACE, with support from a leadership team with decades of experience and a proven track record of serving the business aviation community with excellence."

In addition to driving communications and shaping NBAA's brand, Hubbard has been deeply involved with NBAA's external affairs, partnerships, and advocacy initiatives in the U.S. and globally, including NBAA conventions on four continents.

"NBAA is well-positioned to continue operating seamlessly and serving members strategically and effectively, and I am honored to step in and lead our dedicated team," Hubbard said. "I have every confidence in our ability to execute an outstanding NBAA-BACE next month, while continuing to advance the industry's policy agenda and supporting the operational and other needs of our members."

NBAA also announced that Heidi Williams will be elevated to senior vice president, operations, filling a role left by the retirement of Douglas Carr this past July.

Williams will lead the Operations team. She currently oversees the association's policies and coordination with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and other government and industry stakeholders as vice president, air traffic services and infrastructure.

We are looking forward to BACE and know that Dan, Heidi, and the whole team at NBAA will kick into overdrive to make it a world-class experience, as they always do. Many thanks from everyone here at Twin & Turbine for all you do for aviation every day. T&T



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Ed Bolen

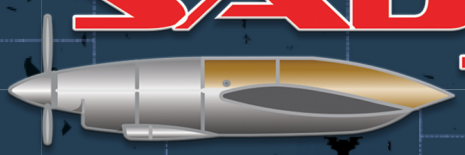


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# Fleetcraft AI Tool for MROs and Part-145 Shops

by **Tigre Pickett**




At this point in my flying, I had an Aircraft owners rarely enjoy watching prices climb, except at resale. Everywhere else in ownership, rising costs are just a tax on demand, labor shortages, and production constraints that show no sign of easing.

AI is starting to close some of those gaps. One place it's landing is maintenance, repair, and overhaul, the operations that keep the world's 5.2 billion annual passengers flying on airworthy aircraft.

A nascent leader in this space is Fleetcraft, a San Francisco-based, and now London-based, AI-driven MRO software company founded by two aerospace technicians, Finn Quinlan (CEO, satellite systems background) and Ammar Naseer (CTO, former QA at Manta Air). Fleetcraft's mission is to give MRO teams a faster, more accurate way to document work, check inventory, and generate repair quotes, all through voice input.

Drawing on their backgrounds in aerospace quality assurance and regulatory compliance, and working with an advisory team of technicians across the industry, Finn and Ammar built AI tools for the shop floor rather than the back office.

"From Boeing's 7,000 technician shortage to aircraft owners watching a $350,000 document check climb to $600,000," Finn said, "we saw one place where we could reduce cost and pull time out of the process: the slow, paper-heavy MRO workflow."

Using Fleetcraft's voice-to-log feature, a technician notes a discrepancy or squawk by phone, lapel mic, or smart glasses, and keeps working. Fleetcraft processes that voice data through its aviation-specific model and returns a squawk entry with a 98% first-pass acceptance rate, meaning technicians only need to correct or add to it about 2% of the time. The mechanic reviews the entry, adds anything the system flagged as missing, such as a part number, and passes it to a crew supervisor.

Fleetcraft can also match that shop floor entry against on-site or supplier inventory and generate a change order off the shop's flat rate records, or fold it into an existing quote.

Finn's team has worked across the US and Europe onboarding MROs and Part 145 repair stations, a process that runs roughly four weeks depending on the organization.

To guard against AI hallucination in a compliance-driven environment, Fleetcraft doesn't let the model produce final statements on its own. A human still reviews and signs off on every entry, but the review takes a

fraction of the time of the traditional process: stop work, walk to a kiosk or laptop, type it in, walk back.

On data handling, Fleetcraft maintains zero data retention with its LLM providers, and EU and US customers can request data residency in their own compute jurisdiction.

"Much of the software running MROs and Part 145 shops today is 15-plus years old," Finn said. "A lot of that legacy software also holds a facility's data hostage. The entry process, the inventory checks, all of it is slow, and it locks you into their system."

"What we're offering is a way to link existing repair data and systems with real-time inventory awareness, so quotes are accurate and fast," Finn added. "That's where the efficiency and cost reduction come from."

Asked whether Fleetcraft's goal is reducing headcount, Finn said the tool is built to streamline the identification and documentation work that eats up technicians' non-wrench time, not replace the technicians doing it. Paired with better inventory visibility, shops are also seeing fewer delays tied to late parts orders.

Whether the labor savings, inventory transparency, and quoting speed are enough to slow the climbing cost of keeping an aircraft airworthy is still an open question. The industry will find out as more shops adopt tools like this one, and may even determine where a customer goes if Fleetcraft means lower operating costs. T&T



**Tigre Pickett** *is a commercial single- and multi-engine pilot type rated in the Citation 525-series jets. With his father and Co-Captain, Rich Pickett, Tigre manages multiple CitationJets in southern California. Tigre has a passion for aviation and loves to fly various aircraft, exploring new destinations with his family in their Cessna Turbo 206. You can follow his exciting journey as a professional pilot alongside Captain Pickett on their YouTube channel and find more aviation content on* **PersonalWings.com.**





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# First Look

by **Lawrence S. Searcy Jr.**





The wedding planner ushered me to the bridal cabin and told me to stand on the deck overlooking the small pond below. I was to turn towards the water, wait for instructions, and not spin around until instructed. This "First Look," as wedding planners call it, allows the dad (in this case, me) to be the first male to see the bride in her wedding dress. When instructed, I looked at my daughter standing in front of me dressed in all white and prepared for her final moments as a single person. Cameras clicked, and the videographer moved around capturing the moment. This instant, photographed just moments before the big event, signaled the culmination of fourteen months of my wife's incredible planning. I shed a river of tears the preceding night giving my toast at the rehearsal dinner, so I didn't immediately break down. Instead, I just admired how beautiful she was on the eve of her wedding. After a few minutes, she handed me a little white box tied neatly with a white ribbon. Inside sat a folded handkerchief wrapped in tissue and embroidered with the words, "Dad, I can't wait to walk down the aisle with you." And that did it – more tears.

More than 400 days before, her fiancé pulled me aside at the Hilton hotel bar in Dallas and asked my permission. They dated in graduate school and into their professional careers, were very happy, and the time had come to make the next step, he explained. I happily welcomed him into the family and in no time at all, my wife and daughter began planning the big day. For the next year and a half, mother and daughter scrambled to find the perfect venue, the right dress, flowers, cake, and a wedding planner. I had no responsibility and no authority to make a single decision. I was not consulted, and my input was not considered. When I tried to speak up, I was shut down and told to stay in my lane. My lane was apparently the quiet one where not a word was to be spoken. I was riding the bench and told I was not expected to play in the big game except for walking my daughter down the aisle.




But then, unexpectedly, a few weeks before the wedding, I got called up. Coach (meaning my wife) told me I had a special talent not found among the other wedding attendees and told me to prepare for my shining moment. All my years of flying earned me a spot in the big game. My special assignment was to transport the dress from Louisiana to the North Carolina mountains where the wedding would take place. It seemed a simple assignment – load the dress in the plane and bring it to Asheville, then up the mountain to the hotel in Highlands, North Carolina, and secure it in the hotel room. I understood the importance of the dress, the idea that it symbolizes - the new beginning in the life of the couple and the commencement of a shared journey. This journey is one for the couple and both sets of parents letting their children go. What I did not understand was the weight of my responsibility to ensure the dress arrived unblemished.

A few days before the wedding, my daughter arrived at our house arms stretched above her head, carrying her wedding dress down the hall towards her old bedroom. She laid the dress neatly on her bed and commanded that it not be touched. I marveled that her petite frame could support this load as she walked down the aisle and danced at the reception. She assured me the months of wedding planning also included workouts and strength training for this exact task.

Her bedroom door would remain closed and off-limits until it was time to depart for the wedding, ensuring the dress remained safe from outside influences. My wife and I became custodians and promised its safe arrival, free from wrinkles and unblemished. My daughter and her fiancé would fly commercial to Atlanta and then drive to the mountains so they could catch a departing flight from Atlanta to their honeymoon in Mexico.

I took great pride in preparing the plane for my one assignment. On Sunday, squeezed between Golf's Open Championship at the Royal Birkdale Golf Club in Southport, England, and before the start of the World Cup finals match between Argentina and Spain, my son and I headed to the hangar to ready the plane. She had to be completely wiped down, degreased, vacuumed and pre-flighted in advance. The regular luggage and other sundries would be packed the night before, and only on trip-day would the dress finally arrive and be gingerly loaded on board.

On the day of departure, under the watchful eye of my wife, my son held the dress flat across his legs in the car on the way to the airport. Exiting the car, my wife had him carry it high over his head straight to the plane. The dress would be loaded last after the other luggage. We were fully packed with multiple hanging bags, duffels, random gift totes, and boxes carrying everything needed for a destination wedding. The wedding dress occupied two passenger seats across from each other, lying as flat as possible. No one was to move in the plane or come close to touching it until we landed in Asheville. It would then need to survive another hour in the car for the trip north into the Appalachian Mountains.

In my flying years, I've had several memorable flights with some very prominent passengers. My family, of course, is always at the top of the list of dignitaries. Then there are the business acquaintances, friends, parents, grieving family members headed to funerals, partygoers celebrating a special occasion, and others. No passenger ranks above





the other, and all are memorable in their own respects. But some are simply more memorable than others. We all have those vacations, business trips, dropping kids at camp, or kissing them goodbye for that first day of college, that rank above the other routine and mundane excursions. With all the hours in the cockpit and all the flights in my logbook, I never thought an inanimate passenger could stir so much emotion. I had been waiting for this flight since the engagement announcement. Now the day had arrived, and I was a bundle of nerves heading into the cockpit.

Yes, the passenger was just a dress (oh, and my family), but I knew it was more than that. I reminisced about when she first told us she had met someone. We met him for the first time at her graduate program's graduation. Then, in what seemed like no time at all, I was there when she shopped for wedding dresses and found the ONE. Of course, it did not look at all like the finished product because it would go through months of alterations to get it just right. But nothing prepared me for the "first look." Suddenly twenty-seven years of memories flooded my brain. I remembered when she was born and every gleeful moment, heartbreak, disappointment, success, and failure in between.

Even though my daughter and her husband live in the same city and even work for our company, the dress symbolized a monumental shift in the relationship. I remembered it from my own wedding 31 years earlier. After the priest announces their marriage, they are a fully unionized couple, officially out of our nest and into their own. They will start their own family, get their own dog, take their own vacations, and slowly slip into their own familial groove. Sure,







she may need help periodically, but I won't be the first one she thinks to ask. Her husband now fills that role. It's a natural progression, and one every father wants for his daughter – and doesn't. But wanting it and seeing it play out are two different truths. The first look was actually a first look into the new reality of both of our futures. Her as a wife and my wife and I as in-laws.

There are many monumental firsts in the life of a parent. When the child is born, of course. The first sleepover, a first multi-week camp experience, and dropping a child off in their first college dorm. But for all those experiences, the child returns home. And for me, many of those experiences involved them riding in the co-pilot seat, talking about camp or college. I knew that after our short walk down the church's center aisle, she would be off on her own path the same way my wife and I started our own life together. She is now his co-pilot navigating their adventures together.

So, a few hours after the first look, we stood in the doorway of the church waiting our turn to walk. She asked me to yank up on the shoulders of her dress because it tended to fall a little. She did not want it to look wrinkled in the middle. I grabbed a fistful of lace fabric from both shoulders and yanked upward as she instructed, not noticing the whole of the congregation looking at us. The parishioners started laughing, the processional music started, and we walked. I was trembling, and she was too – both of us trying not to burst into tears or laughter. Her fiancé waited with his groomsmen and her bridesmaids at the altar as we moved towards them. The audience turned and looked at us - me in my new Tuxedo and her in the beautiful white dress. The one that I escorted safely, still clean, pressed, and without fault, because that was my only job until now. I walked her to the end, shook hands, backed away, and sat down. I successfully completed the only tasks assigned to me. I watched as she smiled, said her vows, and left the church married.

My daughter and her husband left for their honeymoon on Delta from Atlanta, and we headed to Asheville for our trip home. The dress was with us once again, but this time it was stuffed into a hanging bag and thrown in the back of the plane. The bottom half-inch of the seam corroded with a combination of dirt and drink. No longer regaled as special, the dress, like me, knew it had served its purpose and completed the assignment.

My second daughter gets married next year, and since the ceremony is at home, I truly have zero tasks. According to her, I'm a lame-duck dad for this one. I won't get to fly the dress, but I will get a second look at a first look. I can't wait. T&T

**Lawrence S. Searcy Jr** *recounts stories from more than 20 years of aviation experience. A 1,600-hour private pilot with an instrument rating, he is also an entrepreneur, attorney, rancher, and outdoorsman who flies himself and his family across the country for both business and pleasure in their TBM 700A. His previous aircraft include a Mooney M20J and a Piper Malibu Mirage.*




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# One Hundred Airplanes

by **Ed Verville**




“After decades of telling myself “Right rudder, right rudder,” I now had to use “Left rudder” to correct for those propeller turning forces.

I have been privileged to fly more than one hundred various makes and models of airplanes from the Piper Cub to Boeing’s 747 jumbo jet. My most recent addition to this list was my friend Ken’s “made in China” warbird; the Nanchang CJ6A, built in 1973. This airplane appeared in the April issue of EAA Warbird Magazine. It resembles the popular Beechcraft T-34 Mentor with tandem seating for two (fore and aft) and a sliding canopy. The T-34 was a trainer used by the US Air Force for a short time and used by the US Navy for three decades. The Nanchang has good stall characteristics but no light or horn to indicate a stall warning, only an identifiable stall buffet followed by a clean break. The roll rate is similar to the T-34 Mentor with similar airspeed; not nearly as fast as the roll rate on the Extra 300 aerobatic airplane, but certainly smooth and fun. The wheel braking system is a pneumatic (air-driven) system operated by a handgrip attached to the flight control stick. If you squeeze the grip with no rudder application, or with symmetrical application to both

rudders, the brakes are applied evenly. But if you apply rudder pressure to one side and squeeze the brake, the wheel brake is only applied to the respective side. This takes some getting used to. The Nanchang also features a 9-cylinder 285 horsepower radial engine. And like the Czechoslovakian Yak 52, the propeller rotates in the opposite direction of US airplanes, counterclockwise. After decades of telling myself "Right rudder, right rudder," I now had to use "Left rudder" to correct for those propeller turning forces. This was also very strange, but I turned it into a challenge.

My interest in warbirds (ex-military aircraft) started back during my first visits to EAA Oshkosh, or what is now called Air Venture. I loved the lines of airplanes like the P-51 Mustang, T-28 Trojan, T-6 Texan, and the T-34 Mentor. My attraction grew after joining Civil Air Patrol and making many friends with similar interests. This led to being able to fly the above-mentioned warbirds and even become a part owner of a Beechcraft T-34, which was a dream come true. Thanks to my friend Tim, I was even fortunate to get a dozen hours in his Aero Vodochody L-39 jet, built in the Czech Republic (formerly Czechoslovakia). This ultimately led to flying a four-ship of L-39 military jet trainers into EAA Oshkosh.

By the way, this is the easiest way I have found to get into EAA Air Venture. The ATC tower controllers just advised all the other inbound airplanes to enter holding and invited us in. Then they asked us to perform a low approach with smoke on and circle around again to land. Wow!

To fly the North American P-51 Mustang, I had to sign up for lessons at Stallion 51 in Kissimmee, Florida. Stallion 51 provides warbird, tailwheel, and upset recovery training in the T-6, P-51, and L-39 aircraft. The P-51 was great to fly except for the poor visibility while taxiing a tailwheel airplane. With 1700 horsepower in the Merlin Engine, we were able to do some interesting maneuvers. We performed steep turns with 70 degrees of bank while pulling 3 Gs. During the first turns, we would just hold 70 degrees of bank and 3 Gs for the entire maneuver. During the second set of turns, the instructor directed me to ride the edge of the stall buffet through the entire maneuver. No other airplane I have flown has had the power to do that and maintain 3 Gs. For our final set of steep turns, I flew the edge of the stall buffet for most of the 360-degree turn and then pulled the stick full back, increasing the angle of attack until a full stall break occurred, followed by performing an upset recovery. The yaw and torque from the Merlin Engine were so powerful that it would flip us over 180 degrees.

Another interesting airplane was the Cessna 337 Skymaster. This is a twin-engine airplane, but the engines are configured in the front and back rather than on the wings. This certainly eliminates the normal yaw during an engine failure. A version of this airplane was designated the "O-2" and was used as forward operating controllers or FACs during the war in Vietnam. This airplane does not have a published minimum controllable airspeed with the critical engine inoperative (VMC). If you were to use this airplane for your multiengine rating, your pilot certificate would have a limitation that states "limited to center thrust."

The Piper PA-601 Aerostar is certainly an interesting design. This was my first, and perhaps the only airplane I have flown with a mid-fuselage wing. It also has a fuselage fuel tank in addition to two relatively narrow wing tanks, a clamshell door, and a hydraulic nose-wheel steering system that is operated by a toggle or rocker switch. This airplane was the star in the 2017 Tom Cruise movie "American Made." I recollect that the thin wing needed some airspeed to fly well on one engine. Unlike a twin-engine Beech Baron with excellent single-engine climb performance, the Aerostar needed more airspeed to provide sufficient lift for the wings; otherwise it felt like it was attempting to swim in glue. But once it accelerated with both engines running, it was one of the fastest light-piston twins.










A modern, unique airplane I flew for the first time last year was the Diamond DA-42, Next Gen. This twin-engine airplane has an interesting appearance with sleek composite lines, a German inline diesel engine, and a FADEC system. The electronic engine system reduces the usual six engine control levers to just two. Starting up and shutting down the engine is done with the push of a button. The same thing applies for the entire runup sequence. Just press and hold a button, and watch the entire runup scenario.

For aerobatic and upset recovery training, I have had exciting times in the Pitts S2B, French CAP 10, Super Decathlon, Extra 300, and Marchetti S211 trainer jet. The capabilities and performance of these airplanes are incredible. It is hard not to smile when upside down or pulling a few Gs in these magnificent machines. The knowledge and skill you can learn from the UPRT schools is also remarkable.

Some of the classics are also fun to fly. I flew a Boeing Stearman on my 40th birthday, a gift from my wife. Thank you. Some early models include the Piper PA16 Clipper (1949), PA-18 Super Cub, PA-22 Colt, Cessna O-1 Birddog, Aeronca Champ 7AC, Yakovlev YAK-52, and





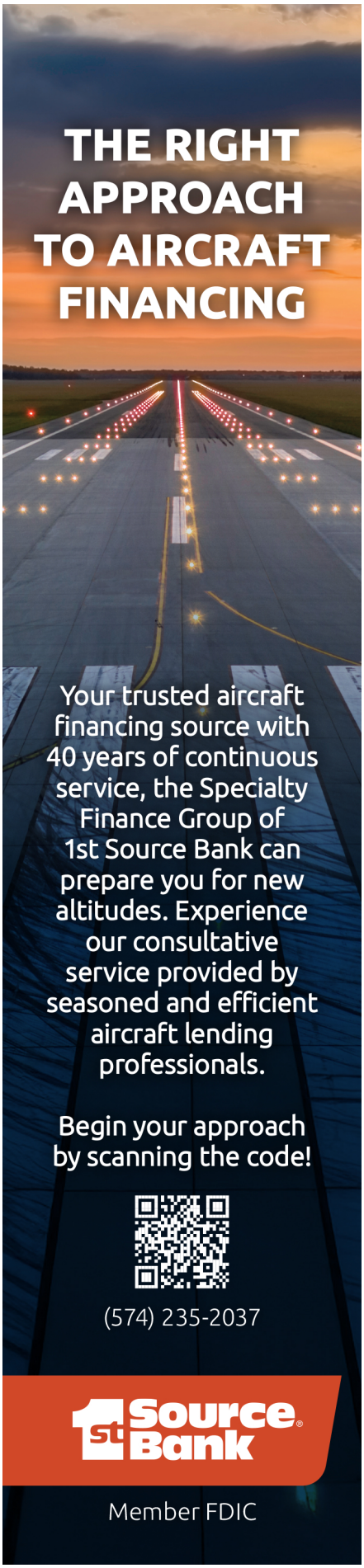





> The capabilities and performance of these airplanes are incredible. It is hard not to smile when upside down or pulling a few Gs in these magnificent machines.







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the North American L-17 Navion. And while I'm not seaplane-rated, my first seaplane flight was on beautiful Lake Como in Italy with scenic mountains and waterfalls. My second was in an amphibian PA-18 Super Cub, also a great experience. The next possibility to add to my list of light airplanes happened as I was commuting to work. While in KORD, I bumped into a colleague who offered to let me fly his Cessna 140.

The Boeing 747 was a dream to fly! After simulator training, my very first flight started in New York and ended in New York. Yes, it was a flight around the world. That training flight was followed by two checkrides: a company line check and an ocean crossing check, consisting of two ocean crossings to Europe and back to New York.

The 747 has a maximum takeoff weight of 865,000 pounds. It has four engines of 54,000 lbs. of thrust each. They are 8 feet in diameter and 24 feet long. Except for the high cockpit, flying the airplane was fairly easy. Even the fuel load was enormous at 365,000 pounds. That fuel load alone is more than two fully loaded B-737s.

I still enjoy flying new-to-me makes and models. My next target airplanes are the Cessna 140, Beechcraft Staggerwing, and the Helio Courier. I never set out to fly more than 100 different types. It has been through friends, Civil Air Patrol members, EAA Warbirds of America, and serving as a DPE that have enabled me to do this. Thank you to all of you! T&T



**Ed Verville** *is an experienced FAA instructor and examiner for business jet pilots and aircrew programs. He has 15,000 flight hours in more than 100 different makes and models and holds type ratings in the Bombardier CL-65, CL-30, CL-604, and Boeing 747. Ed has been instructing RNP-AR Approaches for the past three years.*

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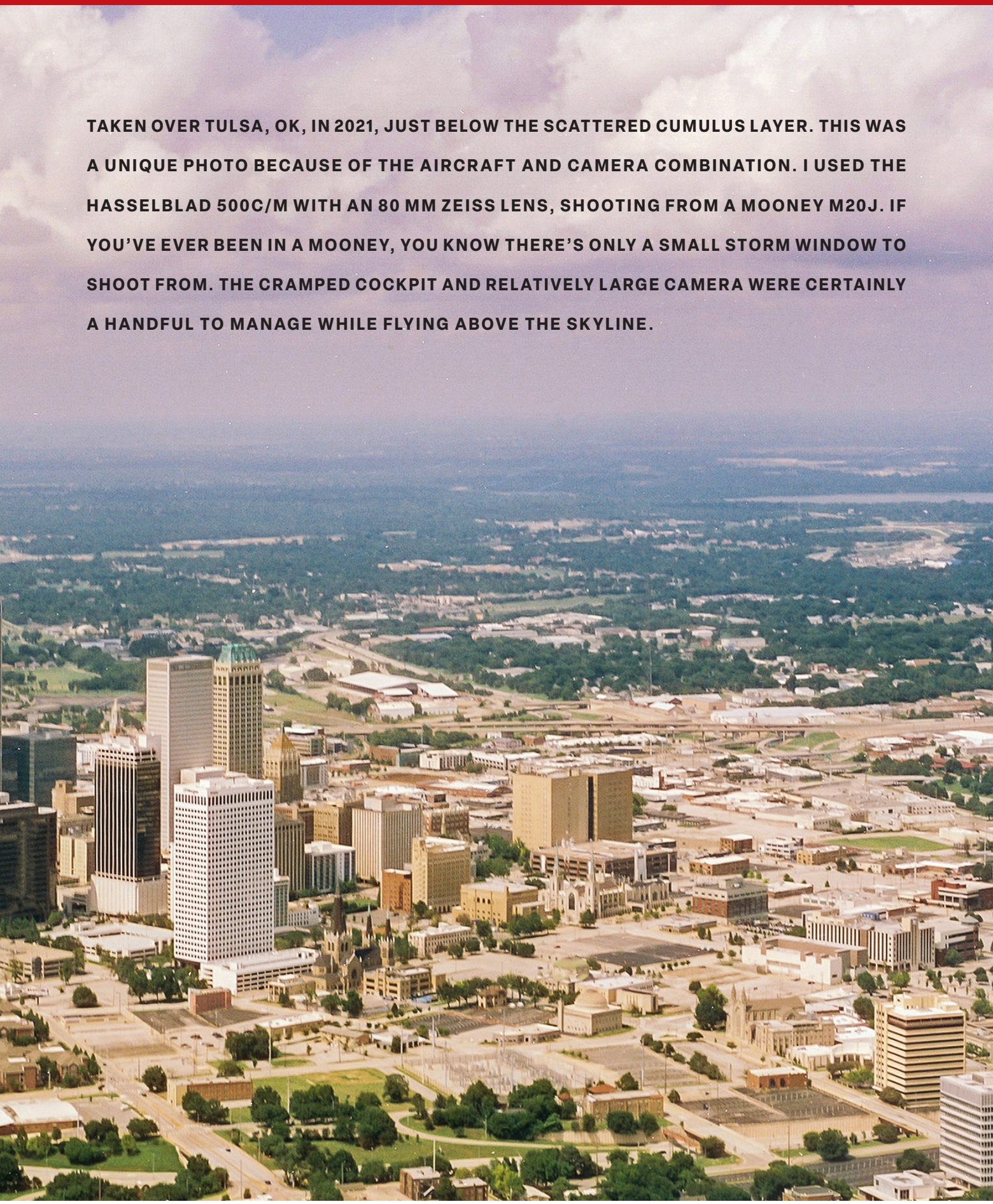
| 1 Number + 1 Letter | 2 Numbers + 1 Letter | | 1 Number + 2 Letters | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2R | 10D | 58R | 4AB New | 7JX | 5TG New |
| 4J | 10P | 58Z | 9AD | 9JX | 9TG |
| 4K | 11F | 59F | 4AE | 3JY | 5TJ |
| 4Y New | 11Q | 59G | 3AF | 7JY | 2TK |
| 4Z | 11T | 59J | 9AH | 9JY New | 3TK |
| 5C | 11Z | 59K | 4AJ | 8JZ | 5TK |
| 5T | 12C | 59R | 2AN New | 9JZ | 3TL |
| 5Y | 12E | 59S | 3AN | 5KA | 5TL |
| 6C | 12H | 59U | 4AN | 6KA | 2TN |
| 6E | 12L | 59W | 5AN New | 5KB | 4TN |
| 6H | 12U | 59X | 7AN | 7KB | 6TN |
| 6N | 13F | 60D | 8AN | 9KB | 3TP New |
| 6S | 13G | 60G | 9AN | 6KC | 1TQ |
| 7G | 13Q | 60M | 4AP | 9KC | 5TQ |
| 7L | 13R | 60N | 4AQ | 4KD New | 7TQ |
| 7Q | 13S | 60U | 5AQ | 7KD | 8TQ New |
| 7T | 13U | 60V | 7AQ | 3KF | 3TR |
| 7V | 13V | 61B | 2AR | 4KF | 4TR |
| 7Y | 13Y | 61C | 8AT | 6KF | 6TR |
| 7Z | 14D | 61D | 2AU | 7KF | 7TR |
| 8C | 14E | 61E | 3AU | 9KF | 1TU |
| 8E | 14F New | 61F | 6AU | 7KK | 2TU |
| 8G | 14N | 61H | 7AU | 6KL | 6TU |
| 8Q | 14S | 61J | 9AU | 5KN | 7TU |
| 8R | 14Y | 61K | 6AV | 6KN | 8TV |
| 8T | 15C | 61X | 9AV | 7KN | 7TW |
| 9C | 15G | 61Z New | 9AW | 8KN | 9TW New |
| 9D | 15Q | 62L | 4AX | 9KN | 5TY |
| 9M | 15W New | 62N | 6AX | 2KQ | 9TY |
| 9T | 16D | 62P | 7AX | 6KQ | 5TZ |
| 9W | 16H | 62Z New | 9AX | 8KQ | 2UA |
| 9Z | 16K | 63C | 3AY | 9KQ | 7UA |
| | 16T | 63H | 4AY | 2KR | 8UA |
| | 16V | 63N | 5AY | 3KR | 9UA |
| | 16Y | 63Q | 7AY | 5KS New | 1UB |
| | 16Z | 63U | 8AY | 6KS | 4UB |
| | 17D | 63Z | 6AZ | 5KT | 9UB |
| | 17K | 64A | 9BA | 2KU | 2UC |
| | 17Q | 64B | 8BD | 3KU | 8UC |
| | 17V | 64R | 7BE New | 4KU | 2UD |
| | 17X | 64T | 7BF | 5KU | 5UD |
| | 17Z | 64U | 4BG | 6KU | 6UD |
| | 18K | 64V | 7BG | 4KV | 8UD |
| | 18Q | 64X | 8BG | 6KV | 9UD |
| | 18R | 64Y | 4BJ | 7KV | 2UE |
| | 18C | 65C | 6BJ | 2KW | 3UE |
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# Editor's Pics

Photo & Story
by Lance Phillips





**TAKEN OVER TULSA, OK, IN 2021, JUST BELOW THE SCATTERED CUMULUS LAYER. THIS WAS A UNIQUE PHOTO BECAUSE OF THE AIRCRAFT AND CAMERA COMBINATION. I USED THE HASSELBLAD 500C/M WITH AN 80 MM ZEISS LENS, SHOOTING FROM A MOONEY M20J. IF YOU'VE EVER BEEN IN A MOONEY, YOU KNOW THERE'S ONLY A SMALL STORM WINDOW TO SHOOT FROM. THE CRAMPED COCKPIT AND RELATIVELY LARGE CAMERA WERE CERTAINLY A HANDFUL TO MANAGE WHILE FLYING ABOVE THE SKYLINE.**

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“The goal of becoming a pilot was realized in his mid-twenties, after graduating from Columbia University’s School of Engineering and Applied Science.




Owner's Corner

# Nai Ko, Jr.

by **Grant Boyd**

Nai Ko, Jr. knew from a young age that he was going to fly and had drawn a self-portrait as a pilot when his elementary school art teacher asked about his career aspirations. His Taiwanese immigrant parents forbade him from pursuing flight training while in school, though. The goal of becoming a pilot was realized in his mid-twenties, after graduating from Columbia University's School of Engineering and Applied Science.

The pursuit of fulfilling this lifelong aspiration ultimately led to Ko owning a HondaJet Elite II and a Cirrus SR22 today, as well as two helicopters – a Bell 407GXi and a Robinson R44 Raven II. The first aircraft he owned was a Cirrus SR20 he got in 2013, which was replaced by an SR22 two years later. And when the Vision Jet debuted a few years later, he bought one of those.

"The Vision Jet is exciting, but the challenge that I had was how unreliable it was. I love Cirrus, but the plane was always breaking – fuel control units, radomes, temperature control valve motors, and pitot heat failures. And with full fuel on board, you're limited to about 400 or 500 pounds of passenger and luggage payload, which means it's a two-person aircraft at that point," Ko explained, adding that he started considering other options after three months of single-engine jet ownership.

The timing of beginning to look for another option coincided with AirVenture in July of 2021, where he spent time speaking with representatives at the OEMs' booths. One manufacturer bounced him from salesperson to salesperson, and a real discussion about their products never came to fruition.

"I then went to the HondaJet display, where I met Grant Kennedy and Mike Murphy, who immediately showed me the aircraft and answered all of my questions. It was clear to me that they could provide the ownership experience that I wanted, and that's what sold the airplane. It was a very good first experience."

He contended that the HondaJet also comes out on top when running a performance comparison amongst other similar-sized light jets.

"Manufacturers are always highlighting range, fuel economy, and payload. The Honda beats all of them in those categories and is exactly as advertised. I have about 700 hours on my Honda, and I have had a 100% dispatch reliability record. The thing is never broken."

Ko works in the automotive industry, and the aircraft is used in support of professional endeavors, as well as for personal trips. He has flown the aircraft coast to coast and as far south as the Caribbean.

"The aircraft is quiet and powerful. The [pylon-mounted, GE Honda HF120] turbofan engines exhibit very little lag, so they respond quickly when you apply the throttle. It's very stable and maneuverable, and if you fly it the way the POH tells you to, it really delivers 100%," he said.

Honda is an innovator in all of the spaces that it competes in, and their forward-thinking, engineering-driven mindset may have actually had an unintended negative impact upon the company's first aircraft design.

"What's special about the HondaJet is that with its low wing design, one of the benefits is that you don't flare the aircraft because once you enter into ground effect – the low wing in ground effect will reduce your descent rate and essentially act like a flare. So, when you come in, you just hold that positive attitude, like an airliner, and











HONDA




N918A
HONDA
HondaJet ELITE II

take the power out over the threshold. Then, keeping that same attitude, you're on the ground at the 1000 ft. marker," he explained.

"If you flare, you'll float. I can only imagine that Honda engineers asked themselves how they could help pilots land easier and decided to take the flare out of the equation. The airplane is not a hard one to fly; you just need to land it the way it was designed to land, which is actually very easy to do."

Landing is a primary concern of operators and those who consider purchasing the aircraft, as there have been 39 recorded HondaJet runway excursions recorded (per FAA Safety Team notice NOTC4956 published on May 1, 2026).

This notice's recommendations are clear; fly the aircraft to the manufacturer's recommendations without deviation.

While the HA-420 is not a difficult aircraft to land, a specific technique is required. Review the following points:

- Perform landing procedure as outlined in the Performance Introduction section of the HondaJet Aircraft Flight Manual (AFM).

- Fly Vref with no additives. Incorporating Vref additives can negatively affect landing performance.

Like any other aircraft, there are nuances for performing type-specific maneuvers appropriately. Ko has said that when coming in at Vref and threshold braking just before the point of activating anti-skid (which can increase ground roll), he has landed his HondaJet under all published landing distances.

There are numerous other resources providing more color surrounding landing the aircraft, including the HondaJet Owners and Pilots Association (HJOPA) type club. This organization, of which Ko is a board member, is dedicated to the safety of the pilot community. One of their hallmark efforts is the Proficient Pilot Program (P3).

"This program integrates advanced flight planning capabilities using ForeFlight Flight Data Analysis (FDA) and sophisticated flight data analysis tools. By leveraging these cutting-edge resources, P3 aims to significantly enhance flight safety, refine piloting skills, and cultivate a stronger, safer HondaJet community through shared knowledge and best practices."

Ko explained that the HondaJet is "a beautiful flying aircraft and a joy to fly," before noting that he has his sights set on the company's next model – the Echelon. This 2,625 nautical mile aircraft would have the longest range of any single-pilot jet if initially suspected numbers are accurate upon certification.









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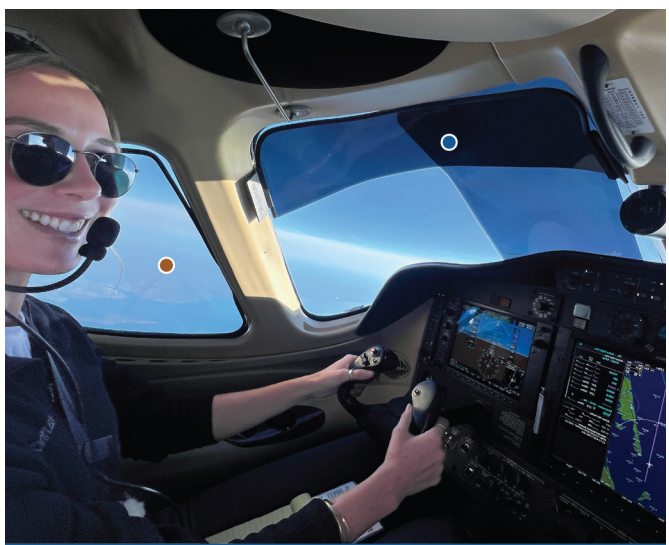
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"Honda is a very smart company, and they've recognized that many aircraft require pilots to do mental math to add half the gust factor to their approach speeds. Their intuition when they built the HondaJet was 'let's make it easy for pilots and design it so that our airplanes fly Vref regardless of the gust factor,'" he said.

"Pilots have this motor memory in their brain to add half the gust factor in every aircraft that they fly, and that's what gets HondaJet pilots in trouble. I think Honda will take into account this widely adopted pilot motor memory for the Echelon design and they will work on bigger tires and brakes. It will be a phenomenal machine that's more fuel-efficient; one that can take me cross-country nonstop and even over to Hawaii with my family on board."

Family has always played an important role in Nai's aviation journey, although the initial inspiration for becoming a pilot was never clear to him. It was just always something he wanted to do. But much later, after earning his wings, he learned that his grandfather flew B-24 bombers in WWII alongside the Americans.

In addition to his 2023 HondaJet Elite II, Ko is also the owner of a turbine helicopter – a 2023 Bell 407GXi that has a service ceiling of 20,000 feet. While a wholly different flying experience, the jet and helicopter having the same avionics suite helps lessen the mental workload required when switching between different systems.

"The PIC in an aircraft is often the left seat, and the PIC in a helicopter is often the right seat, so my left hand is the dominant hand for flying fixed-wing, and my right hand is my dominant hand for flying rotorcraft. This separation helps because it allows me to compartmentalize different channels in my brain. For example: in emergency flight maneuvers, my left hand pushes forward on the yoke to break a stall, and my right hand pulls aft cyclic to weight the rotor head."

Even with their distinct differences, one similarity is evident – a jet and a helicopter both provide pilots a unique view of the world that many are not fortunate to see themselves.

"The magic of flying a jet like the HondaJet is how it saves time. The magic of flying a helicopter is how it forces us to live in the present, where nothing should happen quickly. For me, the joy of flying either an airplane or a helicopter is the intimate romance with Mother Earth and the humility that comes from the fragility of flight. It's cool, but you better have your game on." T&T



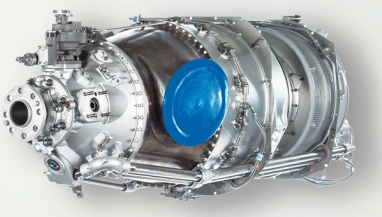
**Grant Boyd** *is a private pilot with eight years of experience in aviation business, including marketing, writing, customer service, and sales. Boyd holds a Bachelor's and a Master's of Business Administration degree, both from Wichita State University, and a Doctor of Education degree from Oklahoma State University. He was chosen as a NBAA Business Aviation "Top 40 Under 40" award recipient in 2020.*




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| 59 | ASTRA 1125SPX |
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| 266 | BEECHJET 400A |
| 250 | BOEING BBJ |
| 513 | CHALLENGER 300 |
| 317 | CHALLENGER 350 |
| 29 | CHALLENGER 3500 |
| 29 | CHALLENGER 600 |
| 25 | CHALLENGER 601-1A |
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| 52 | CHALLENGER 601-3R |
| 351 | CHALLENGER 604 |
| 283 | CHALLENGER 605 |
| 78 | CHALLENGER 650 |
| 3 | CHALLENGER 800 |
| 53 | CHALLENGER 850 |
| 5 | CHALLENGER 870 |
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| 130 | CITATION 500 |
| 375 | CITATION 525 |
| 345 | CITATION BRAVO |
| 207 | CITATION CJ1 |
| 107 | CITATION CJ1+ |
| 255 | CITATION CJ2 |
| 245 | CITATION CJ2+ |
| 489 | CITATION CJ3 |
| 267 | CITATION CJ3+ |
| 464 | CITATION CJ4 |
| 192 | CITATION ENCORE |
| 85 | CITATION ENCORE+ |
| 405 | CITATION EXCEL |
| 13 | CITATION I |
| 277 | CITATION I/SP |
| 436 | CITATION II |
| 50 | CITATION II/SP |
| 164 | CITATION III |
| 173 | CITATION LATITUDE |
| 58 | CITATION LONGITUDE |
| 376 | CITATION M2 |
| 510 | CITATION MUSTANG |
| 142 | CITATION S/II |
| 366 | CITATION SOVEREIGN |
| 118 | CITATION SOVEREIGN+ |
| 315 | CITATION ULTRA |
| 289 | CITATION V |
| 27 | CITATION VI |
| 135 | CITATION VII |
| 324 | CITATION X |
| 39 | CITATION X+ |
| 314 | CITATION XLS |
| 358 | CITATION XLS+ |
| 17 | DORNIER ENVOY 3 |
| 33 | ECLIPSE 550 |
| 317 | ECLIPSE EA500 |
| 20 | EMBRAER LEGACY 450 |
| 83 | EMBRAER LEGACY 500 |
| 113 | EMBRAER LEGACY 600 |
| 72 | EMBRAER LEGACY 650 |
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| 379 | EMBRAER PHENOM 100 |
| 580 | EMBRAER PHENOM 300 |
| 113 | EMBRAER PRAETOR |
| 57 | FALCON 10 |
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| 15 | FALCON 200 |
| 272 | FALCON 2000 |
| 5 | FALCON 2000DX |
| 23 | FALCON 2000EX |
| 162 | FALCON 2000LX |
| 148 | FALCON 2000LXS |
| 25 | FALCON 20C |
| 15 | FALCON 20C-5 |
| 17 | FALCON 20D |
| 1 | FALCON 20D-5 |
| 11 | FALCON 20E |
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| 75 | FALCON 20F-5 |
| 182 | FALCON 50 |
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| 8 | FALCON 50-40 |
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| 282 | FALCON 7X |
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| 173 | FALCON 900 |
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| 465 | GULFSTREAM G650 |
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| 175 | GULFSTREAM G-IV |
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| 142 | HAWKER 800A |
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| 14 | WESTWIND 1124 |
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| 70 | DAHER TBM-910 |
| 102 | DAHER TBM-930 |
| 138 | DAHER TBM-940 |
| 66 | DAHER TBM-960 |
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| 49 | EPIC E1000 |
| 1 | FOKKER 70 |
| 37 | JETSTREAM 31 |
| 70 | JETSTREAM 32 |
| 64 | JETSTREAM 41 |
| 32 | KING AIR 100 |
| 474 | KING AIR 200 |
| 21 | KING AIR 200C |
| 8 | KING AIR 200T |
| 261 | KING AIR 250 |
| 46 | KING AIR 260 |
| 190 | KING AIR 300 |
| 10 | KING AIR 300LW |
| 695 | KING AIR 350 |
| 91 | KING AIR 350C |
| 35 | KING AIR 350ER |
| 397 | KING AIR 350I |
| 6 | KING AIR 350IER |
| 73 | KING AIR 360 |
| 7 | KING AIR 90 |
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| 118 | KING AIR B200C |
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| 402 | KING AIR C90B |
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| 165 | KING AIR C90GTX |
| 18 | KING AIR C90SE |
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| 172 | KING AIR F90 |
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| 45 | MERLIN IIIB |
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| 836 | PILATUS PC-12/45 |
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| 91 | PIPER M500 |
| 263 | PIPER M600 |
| 601 | PIPER MERIDIAN |
| 292 | QUEST KODIAK 100 |
| 3 | QUEST KODIAK 900 |
| 15 | ROCKWELL COMMANDER |
| 6 | STARSHIP 2000A |
| 54 | TURBO COMMANDER 1000 |
| 21 | TURBO COMMANDER 690 |
| 134 | TURBO COMMANDER 690A |
| 136 | TURBO COMMANDER 690B |
| 80 | TURBO COMMANDER 840 |
| 27 | TURBO COMMANDER 900 |
| 26 | TURBO COMMANDER 980 |

## TWIN PISTON - 7,649

### OWNERS

| COUNT | AIRCRAFT |
|---|---|
| 37 | BARON 56TC |
| 1677 | BARON 58 |
| 428 | BARON 58P |
| 119 | BARON 58TC |
| 3 | BARON A56TC |
| 355 | BARON G58 |
| 108 | CESSNA 310 |
| 167 | CESSNA 340 |
| 552 | CESSNA 340A |
| 50 | CESSNA 402B |
| 124 | CESSNA 402C |
| 27 | CESSNA 404 |
| 317 | CESSNA 414 |
| 452 | CESSNA 414A |
| 42 | CESSNA 421 |
| 28 | CESSNA 421A |
| 309 | CESSNA 421B |
| 707 | CESSNA 421C |
| 59 | CESSNA T303 |
| 112 | DIAMOND D42 |
| 20 | DIAMOND IA |
| 186 | DUKE B60 |
| 80 | PIPER 600 AEROSTAR |
| 3 | PIPER 600A AEROSTAR |
| 45 | PIPER 601 AEROSTAR |
| 4 | PIPER 601B AEROSTAR |
| 201 | PIPER 601P AEROSTAR |
| 24 | PIPER 602P AEROSTAR |
| 589 | PIPER CHIEFTAIN |
| 26 | PIPER MOJAVE |
| 301 | PIPER NAVAJO |
| 255 | PIPER SENECA |
| 74 | ROCKWELL COMMANDER |
| 168 | ROCKWELL SHRIKE |

## HIGH PERFORMANCE MOVE-UP SINGLES - 10,002

### OWNERS

| COUNT | AIRCRAFT |
|---|---|
| 393 | BEECH BONANZA |
| 441 | CESSNA 182 |
| 55 | CESSNA 206 |
| 428 | CESSNA P210N |
| 22 | CESSNA P210R |
| 58 | CESSNA T182 |
| 1220 | CIRRUS SR20 |
| 3733 | CIRRUS SR22 |
| 2048 | CIRRUS SR22T |
| 121 | MOONEY ACCLAIM |
| 37 | MOONEY ACCLAIM ULTRA |
| 407 | MOONEY OVATION |
| 12 | MOONEY OVATION ULTRA |
| 263 | PIPER MALIBU |
| 199 | PIPER MATRIX |
| 565 | PIPER MIRAGE |

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Jessica Haughn, CFO


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# Consummate Companions

My decision to spiral down from Flight Level 400, at three thousand feet per minute with speed brakes extended, was not what I had planned. Our Citation Mustang was experiencing multiple anomalies as Patty and I approached a line of building thunderstorms over Louisiana. The amber WINDSHIELD OVERHEAT caution message, followed by the center multi-function display failure, had my complete attention. Coupled with a dual-engine power rollback from an ice-covered probe, exceeded my capacity to remain calm. I was over my head, and I could feel myself losing control of the situation.

Then, Patty changed everything.

"Would you like the descent checklist?" she quietly asked.

I remember thinking, "What the hell, why is she so calm?" Then it dawned on me. If she is going to be professional, I have to be too. And from that moment, my demeanor changed. I got my "stuff" together, and we safely diverted.

A competent, confident companion is the best resource in the cockpit. And while none of the ladies in this essay are licensed pilots, they are all amazingly talented.

Kirk Samuelson feels the same way. He departed Sonoma County Airport (KSTS) on a low overcast IFR morning in his Citation CJ2+, with wife Bonnie in the right seat. Together, they developed a specific, laminated co-pilot checklist for her to use on every flight.



Mark and Dena Aloe

It came in handy on that dreary morning.

Within a minute or so after rotation, the right engine suffered a catastrophic bearing failure. Kirk had his hands full with the weather, ATC, and setting up an approach for his takeoff alternate, Oakland, CA (KOAK). Bonnie ran the emergency checklist and the resulting ATC audio sounded like a routine training event.

Mark and Dena Aloe have been flying together for fourteen years. Inseparable in and out of the cockpit, Dena is a pilot's dream. She checked the engine oil on their Citation CJ3 after every flight. She installed the engine covers, programmed the Collins flight management system, and even talked on the radio.

I could sense Mark's uneasiness after I asked if I could sit up front on a flight from their home in Pittsburgh to Turks and Caicos. After all, they had invited us, and I am a highly qualified jet pilot.

"Well, he hesitated, I guess it will be okay."

The CJ3 is a very fast jet. Powered by Williams engines developing over 5,600 pounds of total thrust, it will easily exceed its maximum cruise speed of Mach 0.737. An audible warning system is installed to notify the pilot if the airplane is exceeding this speed and, if activated, the pilot must immediately reduce power using the thrust levers.

Mark is a highly competent pilot, in command in all respects. And it was there we found ourselves at forty-five thousand feet on a beautiful morning over the Atlantic Ocean, screaming through the clear skies.

BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP

I heard this overspeed warning tone in my headset and the overhead speakers. I turned to look at Mark.

BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP continued the warning.

Mark just stared back at me.

BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP continued as we accelerated to the maximum speed allowed.

"Mark, I yelled over the warning tone. Mark!"

And just as calmly, Mark said:

"That's Dena's job."

Fly safe. T&T

**David Miller** *has owned and flown a variety of aircraft from light twins to midsize jets for more than 50 years. With 6,000 plus hours in his logbook, speaks nationally and writes on a variety of aviation safety topics. You can contact David at* **davidmiller1@sbcglobal.net**.




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