



[www.eaa471.org](http://www.eaa471.org)

March 2025

## President's Message

Steve West

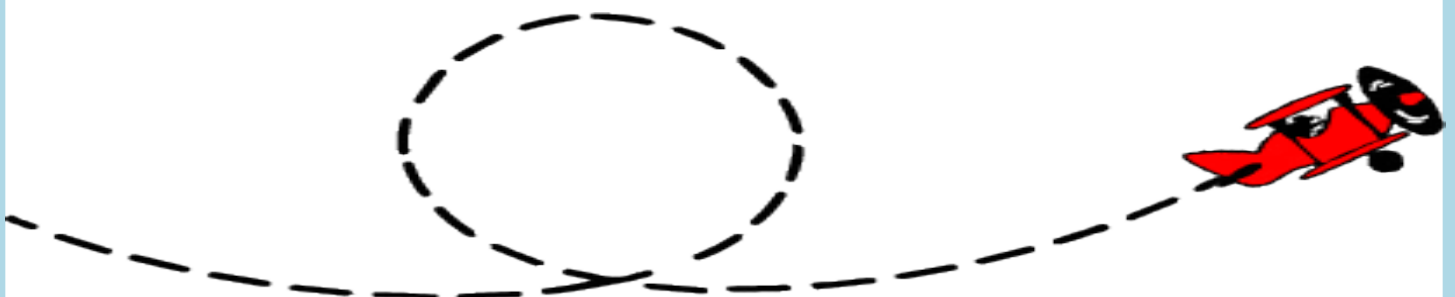
I'm looking forward to seeing all of you for breakfast this Saturday. Despite the forecast for cool weather, we'll be cooking the full breakfast menu! I'd like to thank everyone for their generous donations, which make such great and fabulous meals possible, and thanks to the cooks who show up early to put these breakfasts together.

Speaking of weather, an abbreviated Young Eagles event is planned to take place after breakfast, depending on conditions. More details are in the newsletter portion.

As someone who lives a small distance from Abilene, I do a lot of listening to streaming services in my vehicle via Apple Car play on my phone. As such, I use a streaming service called Spotify, which offers a variety of things to listen to, including just about any kind of music, podcasts, and even audiobooks. Lately, I've turned much of my attention to the world of aviation podcasts. I'm astounded by the number and variety of aviation - related content that's available free of charge! ( Try a Google search of 'aviation podcasts' ). There is one podcast series in particular that I've been listening to lately called 'There I Was,' which is provided by the AOPA Air Safety Institute. Earlier episodes were moderated by the late Richard McSpadden and, more recently, by David O'Leary. The thing that I like about this particular series is that it involves a situation that the pilot has had to face and the action they have taken to deal with the situation, in the pilot's own words. I've found the episodes to be very educational. Give it a try, or listen to any aviation podcasts available. I'd be interested in other podcasts that you find interesting. Let me know.

The breakfast line forms at 9:00 am. Come early for some hangar talk!  
See y'all Saturday!

Steve



## From the Desk of EAA Chapter 471 Vice President Steve Harbison

EAA 471,

Last month, in the newsletter and discussed during last month's breakfast meeting about an invitation from Dyess AFB inviting Chapter 471 members to bring five planes to promote the EAA during the 2025 Airfest that will be held on Dyess AFB on April 19th and 20th. As for an update to this invitation, as of today, March 6th, 2025, the chapter has had five members who have already expressed interest in this invitation and are interested in participating. 3 of the five have already submitted their paperwork, while I am still waiting on paperwork from the other 2 members. Just in case any of the five can't make it, I would like to open this invite up to more members for additional requests from pilots who are interested in flying their plane to Dyess AFB and participating in promoting the EAA during the 2025 Airfest and have not contacted me last month when we were initially invited. We will fly over on Friday night, April 18th, and leave the planes until Sunday evening, April 20th. If you are still interested in displaying your aircraft for this event and talking about flying to interested airshowgoers, please let me know, and I will forward the details / requirements to you. My contact info can be found below.

Thanks!

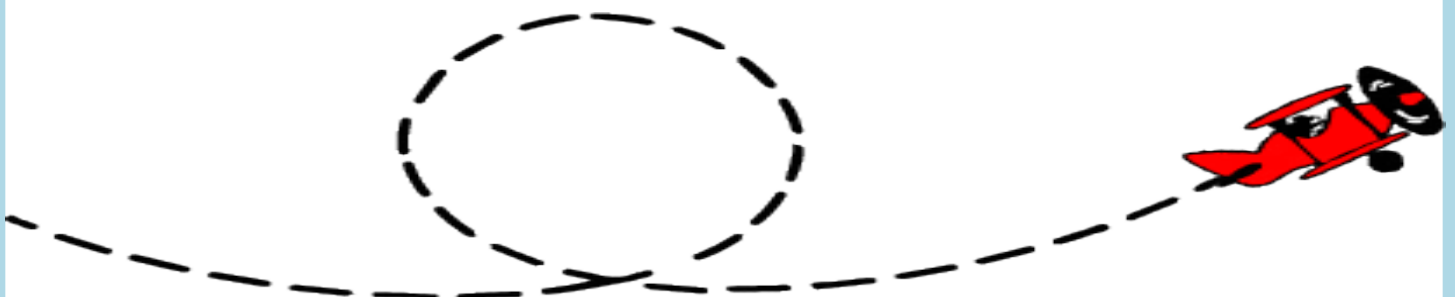
Steve Harbison

EAA Chapter 471 Vice President

[steven.harbison@faa.gov](mailto:steven.harbison@faa.gov)

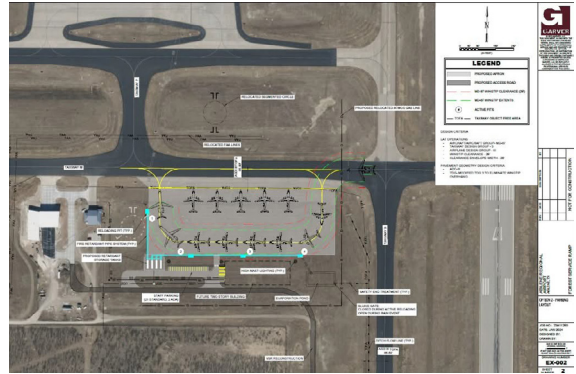
Cell : [\( 325 \) 660 - 2277](tel:(325)660-2277)

Office : [\( 325 \) 201 - 9464](tel:(325)201-9464)



# Big Changes to ABI

1. Construction is about to begin on a new aircraft ramp primarily for air tanker aircraft used by the Texas A&M Forest Service. This was made possible by a \$20 million State of Texas allocation and approximately \$8 million in City of Abilene funds. The new ramp will improve wildfire response capabilities and help protect communities across Texas and beyond. Stay tuned for updates as we bring this important development to life!



2. Abilene Aero (and Lubbock Aero) have been acquired by the Freeman Holdings Group. Freeman Holdings has a network of 24 FBOs around the country, some are branded as Million Air, others as Freeman Jet Center. The website for Freeman Holdings Aviation is: <https://freemanholdingsgroup.com/aviation/>. The Abilene location is now Freeman Jet Center - Abilene (legal name Freeman Jet Center - ABI). The new website for our location is: [www.fjcabi.com](http://www.fjcabi.com). All invoices, charter quotes, customer statements, etc. have been updated to reflect the new ownership. All Abilene Aero personnel have been retained, except for Joe Crawford, who retired effective 2/19/2025.

Congratulations and the Abilene Aero (Freeman Jet Center - Abilene) team wish him the best as he begins the new season in his life with their heartfelt gratitude. His influence on aviation in Abilene and Lubbock will be felt for years to come. Employee emails are listed below:

- Lynn Beard-General Manager:  
lbeard@freemanjetcenter.com
- Royal Villarreal-Parts Manager:  
rvillarreal@freemanjetcenter.com
- Stuart Douglas-Avionics Manager:  
sdouglas@freemanjetcenter.com
- David Stai-Director of Maintenance:  
dstai@freemanjetcenter.com
- Zach Bailey-Line Service Manager:  
zbailey@freemanjetcenter.com
- Meagan Baker-Accounts Receivable:  
mbaker@freemanjetcenter.com
- Jeremiah Bergert-Controller/Accounts Payable:  
jbergert@freemanjetcenter.com
- Greg Wilhite-Charter Director:  
gwwilhite@freemanjetcenter.com
- CSR/Front Desk:  
csr.abi@freemanjetcenter.com
- Automated statement and invoice delivery:  
NoReply@totalFBOweb.com

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. The employee's at Freeman Jet Center - Abilene look forward to their next chapter as a part of ABI. Stay tuned for further developments. Good things are on the horizon!

3. As the Abilene Regional Airport approaches its 57th anniversary, a new plan has emerged to give the building a refresh, with an estimated cost of \$70 million. At the Airport Development Board Meeting, Director of Transportation Services Don Green said Abilene was well overdue for a refresher at the airport. "The terminal was built in 1968. It needs improvements; it needs additions. It needs work to happen on it. No matter what kind of work we decide to do, what level, what phase... we have to start putting some money into the terminal," Green said. The project is broken into three phases and has an estimated cost of \$70 million, which Green said even if bonds cover it, the city would still have to pay \$20 million. "I don't think that this happens without a bond election. Right. Because we're talking big bucks," Green said during the meeting. The airport currently experiences a crowded lobby area during boarding time, with planes operating at full capacity. The plan's primary goals are to enhance lighting, increase capacity, and improve accessibility outside. Green discussed several proposals for the new building, including removing the top-tier driveway and adding another lane to the lower level instead. "That gives us larger restrooms. It gives us an assisted restroom, nursing mothers room, a vending area, a VIP business space, and seating for up to 200 people and the new jet bridge," Green said. "We're going to have more glass, and that opens up the feel of the terminal. It opens up the light to natural light during the daytime."

"The proposal will be brought up at the City Council retreat on Friday, January 31."



What the airport looks like now.



What the airport will look like after renovations.



# Impromptu Chapter 471 Small Group Flight to Meachum Vintage Aircraft Museum

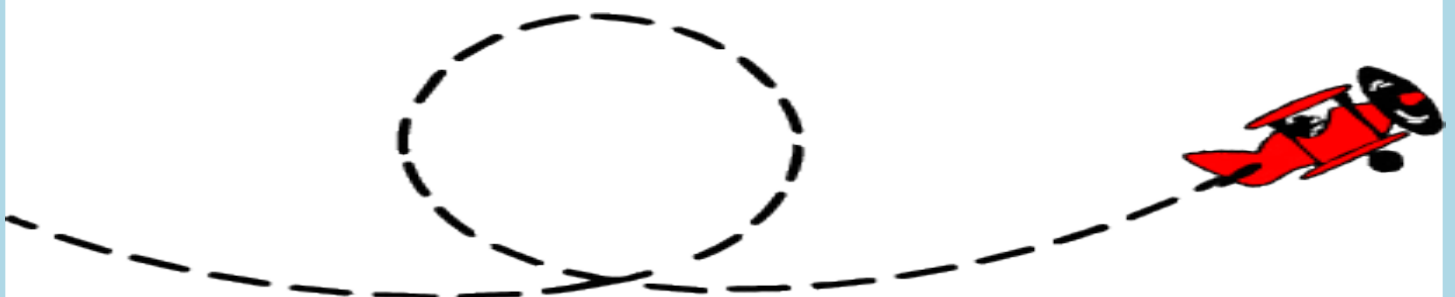
After last month's breakfast, Tyson Bradley and Ben Mallon jumped in Tyson's Cozy Mark IV, and Scott Wotherspoon and Bobby Richardson jumped in Bonanza A36 and decided to take off for a quick adventure. We pointed our planes East toward Fort Worth Meacham to check out the Fort Worth Aviation Museum, a place dedicated to preserving the rich aviation history, said Bobby.

Upon arrival, we were greeted by an impressive collection of over 36 aircraft, including iconic warbirds like the F-14 Tomcat, F-4 Phantom, and OV-10 Bronco, mentioned Bobby. The museum also houses the B-36 Peacemaker Museum and the Forward Air Controllers' Museum.

This place offered a fascinating look into aviation history. In addition to the outdoor displays, there are two hangars full of aircraft, engines, and memorabilia dating back to World War I. There was plenty to take in between the aircraft displays and interactive exhibits.

After soaking up the history, they met up with Chris Bordenave for lunch, then hopped back in their planes and headed home. A quick stop in Eastland to top off the tanks, and soon they were back in Abilene, already talking about making this trip again.

They all reported that it was a great time had by all, and they had a blast! The group mentioned they would love to get more pilots and EAA members involved next time. The Fort Worth Aviation Museum is doing an incredible job of keeping aviation history alive, and it's well worth the short trip for anyone passionate about flying.





# Webinars

INTERACTIVE | EDUCATIONAL | MOBILE

## EAA WEBINARS SCHEDULE

### March Webinars

Date	Time	Title	Presenters
3/5/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">Engine Temps Gone Wild?</a>	Mike Busch
3/11/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">Ernest Gann Collection</a>	Chris Henry and Amelia Anderson
3/12/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">Start Your Own Flight School</a>	Prof. H. Paul Shuch
3/13/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">Grow Your Chapter and the Aviation Community – Host a Flying Start Event</a>	David Leiting
3/26/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">Aircraft Engine Compression Testing</a>	Bill Ross

### April Webinars

4/2/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">Worth the Squeeze?</a>	Mike Busch
4/8/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">The T-6 Texan</a>	Chris Henry and Amelia Anderson
4/9/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">All About Airspeed</a>	Catherine Cavagnaro
4/16/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">Night Flight</a>	Larry Bothe
4/23/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">Flying to and Around Alaska</a>	Vic Syracuse
4/30/25	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#">Youth Program Coordinator: Supporting Your Chapter's Youth Activities</a>	

If you are interested in any of these webinars you can register for them by clicking the link below.

[https://www.eaa.org/eee/news-and-publications/eee-webinars?mkt\\_tok=eyJpljoiTnpkbVpUUTFaR1Ez-TUdabClslnQiOiJ2cWsybWJsZ3BMb0ZnNmYzYn-hwclM3SEhPNDgzdTZvMThkSnh6WWFudEt5UkdYcUZG-ZzY2ZStPY0ZCbXhmZ0s3WmxUcUtYblg5UU9YTUQwck-VOTGoyWFptb0djlU3k0aDBPaGVIVFpCUTRFaVvWZlWvS-jRmZWdLY0tlQThlbkh1eENuln0%3D](https://www.eaa.org/eee/news-and-publications/eee-webinars?mkt_tok=eyJpljoiTnpkbVpUUTFaR1Ez-TUdabClslnQiOiJ2cWsybWJsZ3BMb0ZnNmYzYn-hwclM3SEhPNDgzdTZvMThkSnh6WWFudEt5UkdYcUZG-ZzY2ZStPY0ZCbXhmZ0s3WmxUcUtYblg5UU9YTUQwck-VOTGoyWFptb0djlU3k0aDBPaGVIVFpCUTRFaVvWZlWvS-jRmZWdLY0tlQThlbkh1eENuln0%3D)

## In the Batcave

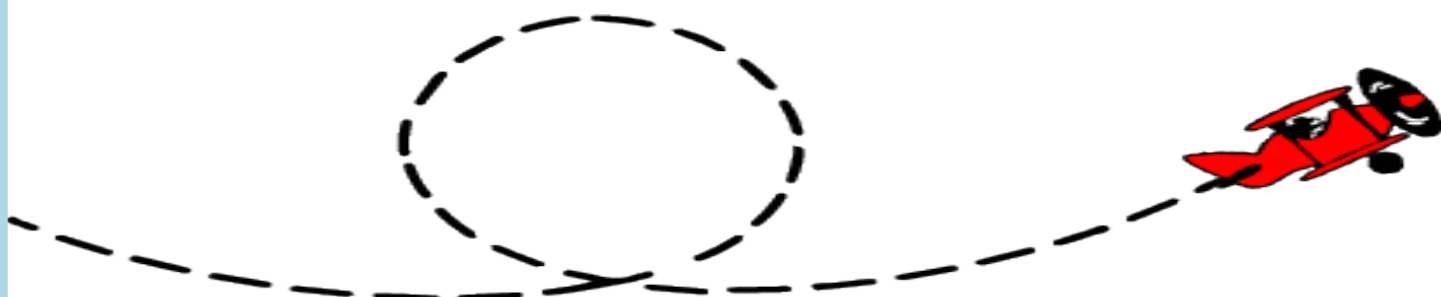



While Batman ( Audie Gill ) is on his way to Oysterfest in Rockport Robin ( Lon Beasley ) reports he got his Legal Eagle folded up to be stuffed into a trailer and transported to somewhere to test crash it ( .p.s. that was the exact words Robin used..... test crash. ) Batman notes he gets to help.



## In Other News.....

There's is a new phone number for Abilene ASOS. That new phone number is 1 ( 325 ) 238 - 3987.



Search us on 

[“Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 471”](#)

Visit our Website: [eaa471.org](http://eaa471.org)  
Email: [abilene.eaa471@gmail.com](mailto:abilene.eaa471@gmail.com)

## 2025 Chapter Officers:

**President:** Steve West  
**Vice President:** Steve Harbison  
**Secretary:** Dawson Mullins  
**Treasurer:** Matt Stark  
**Catagory II Directors:**  
Lon Beasley  
Bobby Richardson  
**Catagory III Directors:**  
David Bradshaw  
Gary Potter  
Charlotte Rhodes  
**Technical Advisor:** Chris Ulibarri  
**Young Eagles Advisor:**  
Bobby Richardson  
**Newsletter Editor:** Katelyn Petty  
**Web Page Manager:** Steve Krazer  
**Flight Advisor:** Gary Potter



**EAA Chapter 471**

**Hangar 3:** 1801 Navajo Trail • Abilene, TX 79602

**Mailing:** P.O. Box 2585 • Abilene, TX 79604

**email Address:** [abilene.eaa471@gmail.com](mailto:abilene.eaa471@gmail.com)

**DON'T FORGET**

**NEXT MONTHLY BREAKFAST**

**SATURDAY MARCH 8 9:00 . A . M . HANGAR 3**



## **Young Eagles Flights after Breakfast!!!!**

**THIS SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2025, WE'RE EXCITED TO HOST YOUNG EAGLES FLIGHTS AFTER OUR MONTHLY BREAKFAST!!!!**

Several pilots from EAA Chapter 471 are lined up to take cadets from Abilene High's Junior ROTC on unforgettable flights, giving them a firsthand aviation experience.

These flights will be conducted in general aviation aircraft, such as Cessna and Piper aircraft, which are known for their reliability and popularity among pilot training programs. Since its inception in 1992, the Young Eagles program has provided over 2.5 million youth with introductory flights, inspiring the next generation of aviators.

A special thanks to Colonel Davis Abilene High JROTC, our dedicated pilots, and the hardworking ground crews for making this possible. We pray for clear skies, good weather, and a fantastic time for all.

See you there! ~ Bobby Richardson, Young Eagles Coordinator