

APRIL | 2023

MID-CONTINENT

Aircraft Corporation



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Altitude, Airspeed & Brains

by JOSH RITTENBERRY



photo by GREG GALKO

“Have you ever had a dream that you were falling?” Tim Swanson asks. “Well, I don’t fall, I fly.”

If a few words could encapsulate one man’s mindset, it would be those words and Tim Swanson.

Like many of the operators featured in this space before, Tim's background is rooted in agriculture.

"I grew up farming and have always enjoyed agriculture."

As the former proprietor of Shady Lawn Farms, Tim wanted to do something to diversify the family farm, so he did what any future ag pilot would do; he married his love of agriculture and his love of flying. As a product of those passions, Tim has owned and operated SLF Air from its central Michigan base in Bannister since 2011.

"Flying Ag seemed very logical. It has been a real blessing ever since."

After completing ag training at Flying Tigers in Louisiana, Tim quickly realized there was no way he could start a business *and* do the flying. So that first year he hired a pilot and focused on the business side of the operation. But for the last several years, he has taken the lead pilot role, and seasonal pilots help pick up the slack of the two-aircraft operation. In the past, his ground crew has doubled as farm hands, but since Tim handed over operations of the family farm to his son, he's added seasonal ground crew to his team.

In the dozen years that I have worked with Tim, I have become familiar with his core beliefs as they relate to the aerial application industry. Safety is first. Always. Tim has had opportunities to pass down knowledge from his own experiences. With a humble and matter-of-fact manner, mistakes, for him, are valuable learning lessons for others. As he gathers his crew in the pre-dawn hours for a prayer that they be guided to finish the day safe and sound, at the forefront of his mind is the life of the pilot or ground crew he will instruct to complete a job. He is well aware that he has a hand in their fate.

Secondly, Tim has always championed the success of the industry, while being mindful of how it must change and adapt to the times and how it is viewed by outsiders. Involvement is key. Tim is a major proponent of his state association and the National Agricultural Aviation Association. As a secretary/treasurer of the Michigan Agricultural Aviation Association, he is instrumental in putting together the state's convention each year. In addition, he has served as the Michigan representative to the NAAA board for the last six years.

"We definitely need to be involved in the NAAA and our state associations as much as we can to help secure our place in agriculture."

Before his season begins in earnest, I asked Tim to leave us with something I ask all the others who are featured: *Do you have a motto or any words of wisdom you live by?* He couldn't choose just one, so they're both keepers, and they are helpful whether you're an ag operator or not.

Operating safely and allying yourself with groups that advocate for you aside, Tim's business success rests on the wise words of his dad: "If the ethics are in line, the finances will follow."

But with all other matters, either in the air or on the ground, he tows a line he heard some years before: Altitude, Airspeed, and Brains. You need at least two out of three at all times."



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Insurable Interest

by Josh Rittenberry

PRE-SEASON CHECKLIST



Some of the southern operators have had the good fortune of warm weather work since the start of the year. Our friends up north are not so fortunate. But north or south, working or waiting, have you made your pre-season checklist?

Your airplane might be tuned up and ready to go, but what about your insurance? Post-season and into pre-season is probably the best time to get your insurance in good order. Here are just a few things to check off your list:

- **Are your documents up-to-date?** When your insurance policy renews, your agent will likely ask for updated hours, medical dates, BFR dates for you and your pilots. Have this information ready to pass along to make the process smoother. Keeping a copy of the last signed application, as well as signed pilot forms for each of your named pilots. In the event of a claim, insurance adjusters will ask for copies of several documents, including logbooks, pilot certificates, etc. Having the most up-to-date documents on file will save you a lot of grief, especially if a claim occurs while you're in the throes of the busiest part of your season.
- **Where are your certificates?** Each year at renewal, we issue certificates for our customers' various state departments of agriculture, as well as for any applicable additional insureds, certificate holders, and lienholders. Make sure you have all the certificates on file that you will need for the upcoming year when contracts are fulfilled and state applicator licenses are renewed.
- **Do you have all the coverages you need?** Many operators spend the off-season adding improvements to their airplane. Does your value cover any upgrades you've made? Is your aircraft insured for a value in-line with the current fair market value? Are your liability limits high enough? If you don't have adjacent crops and crops-being-treated, look into pricing those now.
- **What about your GPS?** Is your GPS included or excluded from your aircraft hull value? Should it be excluded? GPS Systems are automatically included within the physical damage coverage unless your agent specifies to the insurance company that it is your wish to exclude it. If included, be aware that if your aircraft it totaled in a

claim and the GPS is attached, it is therefore considered part of the overall salvage and cannot be removed.

- **Do you need more insurance?** Your aircraft might be covered, but what about airport premises liability, workers' compensation, and your hangar? If you will be required to carry workers' compensation coverage or if you've built or bought a new hangar, now is a good time to ask your agent to quote coverage for you if you don't already have them. Life insurance is not a fun topic to discuss and not an easy or cheap purchase for a pilot. Buy some piece of mind and protect your loved ones before the season starts by asking your agent to checkout your options.



NAAA and Jim Mills of Turbines Inc. Establish Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship

NAAA is pleased to announce that two \$3,000 scholarships are available to eligible NAAA Operator and Pilot members for turbine transition training through the newly created Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship. The new turbine transition scholarship will be awarded starting this year. Jim Mills of Turbines Inc. established it in memory of Charles Stokes. [Read More](#)





Around 150 people turned out for the annual Stokes Flying Service fish fry. A good time was had by all.



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**1966 PIPER COMMANCHE
260B**

N9127P

5,899 TT, 1,120 SMOH, 90 Gallon Fuel, Avionics Master, Garmin 530 GPS Nav/Com, King KX-155 with Glide Slope, Piper Auto Control Autopilot with S-TEC Altitude Hold and Vertical Speed on Climb and Descent, Stratus ADS-B Out, Four Place Intercom

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**1977 AYRES S2R-T15
N2281A**

8,051 TT On Engine, 2,700 Since Light OH, Hydraulic gate, Satloc & Flow Control, Smoker, Electric Brake, CP Nozzles, VGs

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**1938 BOEING STEARMAN
A75 N1**

N54284

6,080.7 A/F TT, 520.4 TSMOH, 450 HP, Garmin SL-40 Com, PS Engineering PM-1200, Oilomatic Preoiler, Airwold Remote Oil Filter Smoker, Speed Ring, 46 Gal Fuel, Redline Brakes, Garmin GDL 82 ADSB-Out

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**1974 CESSNA 150
N3011V**

5,470 A/F TT, 2,100 SMOH, Continental 0200A, Cessna MX300 Nav/Com, Narco AT-50 Transponder w/Encoder, Two-Place Intercom, Spin On Oil Filter, Brackett Air Filter, Auto Gas STC, Nice Pain

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**1966 PIPER PAWNEE
N4484Y**

3,513 A/F TT, 780 TSMOH, 235 HP, Bantam GPS, Intelliflow, SMMker, Spreader, Completely Recovered, Replaced All Cables, Pulleys, Shocks and Windows, Repaired All Metal Parts. Very Clean Western Airplane.

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**2013 THRUSH S2R-H80
N3046N**

3,600 A/F TT, 800 HP, Load Hawg, VGs, Bottom Fuel/Dual Load, Intelliflow with Smart Pump, Leading Edge Lights, Stainless Steel Booms, Hopper Rinse, Bantam, Smoker, Spreader with Kicker Plate, CPs, MVP 50T Glass Panel

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**1978 PIPER PAWNEE
BRAVE
N3787E**

4,559 A/F TT, Lycoming TIO-540, 1851.0 TT Engine, 446 Hrs on New Carbine, Cylinders Top OH, Spreader, Boom & Nozzles, 86 Gal Fuel, Satlock GPS, 3656 Hrs Left on Wing Spars

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**1981 CESSNA A185F
N61955**

7,300 A/F TT, 770 SFRM, Continental IO520, 285 HP, Audio Panel w/ 3 Light Markers, Garmin 430 WAAS, Garmin 255 Com, Garmin GTX 345 w/ ADSM In and Out, Glide Slope, Stormscope, S-TEC-50 Auto Pilot with Altitude Hold, Rosen Sun Visors, VG Kit, Horton STOL Kit,



**1996 AIR TRACTOR
AT-402B
N60998**

7,166 A/F TT, 10253 Engine TT, 680 HP, Load Hawg, Heat & A/C, Comm Radio Hand Held, 1034 Hrs Left Before Wing Spar Due, Light Star SatLoc, Bottom Load Fuel, Boom w/ CP03 Nozzles

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Float Kit, Cessna Turbo Vents for
Cabin Cooling, Backup Altimeter,
Backup Artificial Horizon

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Congratulations to Regina Rhodes for celebrating 15 years of loyal and dedicated service to Mid-Continent.



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April 9



BRAD TAYLOR
April 9



LISA CURTIS
April 13



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April 19



CHRIS COBB
April 23



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FOUNDED BY RICHARD "DICK" READE

OUR MISSION: TO KEEP YOU FLYING

Since 1949, Mid-Continent Aircraft has been the leader in Agricultural Aviation by providing a variety of services that exceed our customers' expectations. We are committed to the advancement of general and agricultural aviation technology.

As we move into each day, we will continue to grow with your business and provide the tools you need to be a success.

Mid-Continent Aircraft Corp. is located in Hayti, Missouri, 80 miles north of Memphis, Tennessee. Although Hayti is not the geographical center of our nation, Mid-Continent is the center for all ag aviation needs. With excellent daily truck freight lines, air freight, Federal Express, and UPS delivery capability, MID-CONTINENT has and will continue to cover the world.

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