

AirshowStuff

Magazine



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Cover Photo

A Massachusetts ANG F-15C Eagle turns and burns at Wings & Wheels St. Thomas. For more, see page 42. Photo by Ryan Sundheimer.

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Monthly

Photo Contest

If you are a photographer, pick your best shot and enter our monthly photo contest! Just take your photos at an airshow or airport and send them in to RS@AirshowStuff.com!

Photo Contest Rules

- Two entries per person.
- All entries must be your own work.
- All photographs must be submitted by the 25th of the month they were taken in.
- If a show happens after the 20th, you can submit them for the next month.
- Photos must be at least 1000 pixels on their longest side.
- The photographer retains all rights to the entered images.

We will review all of the entries and pick one winner and two runners up to get published. The winner will receive a free DVD set or 8x10 print of their choice from AirshowStuff.com. If you don't win, try again next month! Good luck!





See yourself here!

If you are an airshow enthusiast, we want your help! Everything you see in this magazine is created and submitted by people like you. If you would like to join our team, e-mail us at **RS@AirshowStuff.com**. We'd love to have you!

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Thanks to those who submitted to this issue!

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Jenny's Journal



Air Force Wingwalking

Article by Jenny Forsythe - American Barnstormer Wingwalking Team
Photos by Ryan Sundheimer

Wing walking and the United States Air Force... bound together since 1918!

Ormer Locklear is the first man credited with bringing wing walking to the forefront of American aviation and airshows. He joined the US Army Air Service in the fall of 1917, just prior to his 26th birthday, and was stationed at Barron Field, Texas. While there are a variety of reasons given for Lt. Ormer Locklear's first walk out on the wing in 1918, the New York Times reports in an August 4,

1920 article that he had originally begun wing walking because,

He conceived the idea that it would be possible to mount machine guns on the wings of a plane. Army officers said it would be impossible to manoeuvre with a man's weight on the extreme edge of the wings, and some of his first "stunts" were done to demonstrate that a plane so weighted could be manoeuvred.

According to the US Centennial of Flight Commission, Although Locklear could have

been court-martialed for such antics, his commanding officer encouraged him, instead, to perform more "stunts" because they boosted his colleagues' moral, and their confidence in the soundness of their Jenny biplanes, which were suffering a rash of accidents at the time.

In short, the early USAF saw wing walking as a fantastic and successful recruiting technique!

The art of wing walking soon took off as other pilots who watched Locklear started devel-



Predecessors to the Thunderbirds? Jenny, Walt, and Tyson keep Ormer Locklear's legacy alive.

oping their own stunts. Lt. Locklear was honorably discharged in the spring of 1919 and chose to become a barnstormer by profession. Established as the "King of the Wing Walkers," America hon-

ored him during "Locklear Days" at various county fairs. He quickly became an international star. Perfecting handstands, hanging stunts, and many other skills on the wings of his Jenny biplane,

Locklear truly laid the foundation on which wing walking still rests.

Additionally, Locklear was the first person to transfer from one plane to another in flight. This is what inspired and led to the world's first air-to-air refueling in 1919. Wesley May, with a five gallon can of gasoline strapped to his back, transferred from a Standard flown by Frank Hawks to a Jenny piloted by Earl Daugherty ("Chewing Gum, Bailing Wire, and Guts" by Bill Rhode, 1970).

There is no doubt that wing walking and the United States Air Force have a long history together – one that should be cherished by the military and civilians alike, as we have all benefited from the risks accepted by this daring young man who served his country and was proud to call himself a Barnstormer!

"I don't do these things because I want to run the risk of being killed. I do it to demonstrate what can be done. Somebody has got to show the way someday we will all be flying and the more things that are attempted and accomplished, the quicker we will get there."

—Ormer Locklear

www.AmericanBarnstormer.com

Better Red than Dead

An insight into the war on fire with California's boys of summer



There I was, standing on the edge of the fire line in triple digit heat, 1,500 dollars worth of camera equipment in hand... watching, nearly frozen in amazement at the Grumman S-2 Turbo Tracker that was rolling in on my position. Head on. Diving in from 1,000 feet above me and about a mile away, the pilot of Tanker 73 was commencing his run; preparing to unleash 1,200 gallons of Phoschek liquid-gel fire retardant onto the very spot I was standing. It was not long before I was looking directly into the cockpit as his dive continued. I could make out the red and white design on his helmet. Most sensible people would be seeking shelter. After a life-long love of the aircraft and crews involved in aerial firefighting since my childhood, this was the exact place I wanted to be standing. In fact, I had purposely put myself in this very spot, seeking to capture photos of this drop in action.

Moments before he crossed over my head the first tank door opened, releasing a torrent of fire retardant which became a stream nearly a hundred yards long as it continued to fall out of the aircraft. I machine-gunned a series of photos as it continued to pass over me. Tanker 73 blasted over the ridge line, out of sight. Wow, what an experience; an experience I always wanted to get close to. REAL close to. This was it. It was then I heard the "Hot Shot" fire crew 75 feet to my left yelling "heads up!" and I was brought back to reality. Oh, that's right... I'm really close. Close enough to...

That was the exact moment the cascade of Phoschek started to impact

Article and Photos by Nathan Addison

the ground where I was standing. I quickly turned my back and doubled over, tucking my camera tightly to my chest. The amount of retardant falling on me was similar to what one would experience when drenched in sudden downpour of rain during a summer thunderstorm. Only difference is this is not rain. I'm getting an idea what it would be like to have a Jell-O food fight with the Jolly Green Giant. I was soaked. I'm going to need new clothes, but you couldn't wipe that smile off my face if you tried. I finally got to live the wildland firefighter's mantra: Better red than dead. I shared a quick laugh with the fire crew that just shared the experience with me. This is just another day in the life of a wildland firefighter.

But how does a typical day like this start?

It's a sweltering July day in

Southern California. It's only noon, and the temperature is already in triple digit territory. This is the time of year that the wilderness bordering civilization is no longer the lush, green landscape that it was in spring. The extreme heat and low humidity of late June and early July has already taken its effect... and the brush is dry to the touch. Some of the weaker timber is now dying from the heat and lack of rainfall. Others are dying from a recent bark beetle infestation. The spread of California's urban sprawl has left no room for comfort, as homes, entire neighborhoods, and businesses find themselves often intruding on the interface with nature.

Then it happens. A spark. Desert thunderstorms send fingers of lightning reaching into the dry mountain peaks. A careless human tosses a cigarette from their

moving vehicle. Or, even worse... a human with evil intentions puts the lives of residents and public safety in danger, purposely starting a fire. Within moments, what started as a spark is now a raging wildland blaze, covering ground at speeds sometimes rivaling a vehicle on the open highway. In its path - residential developments and resort communities. Depending on how soon this fire is noticed and reported is critical. Sometimes, if it's in a forested area, a volunteer manning a fire look-out tower will spot it. Other times it will go on until a resident notices the billowing, four-mile-high tower of smoke.

Dozens of miles away at Hemet-Ryan Air Attack base, pilots and crews stand by in ready rooms, on constant alert. Their aircraft fueled and loaded, poised to respond swiftly to any call. This is the same state of readiness found at each of the thirteen California Department of Forestry Air Attack bases located strategically across the state. Within moments of receiving the call, the sound of Garrett turboprops roaring to life fills the air. Often the aircraft are spooled up and on taxi in less than two minutes, and in the air in three.

Based here at Hemet-Ryan are Turbo Tracker pilots Deen Oehl, Mike Venable and Bob Forbes. These veteran pilots are fast, ef-



Click to turn the page



ficient and ready to answer the call at a moment's notice. A state of the art operation, the agency now known as Cal Fire's air attack always begins the same way... at least two Grumman S-2T Turbo Trackers, a North American OV-10A air attack aircraft (referred to by Cal Fire as Airtactical Aircraft) and a Bell UH-1H Super Huey are launched in immediate and rapid succession, regardless of the reported size of the fire. If it is a wildland fire, this same aggressive and comprehensive aerial attack is dispatched every time... because every moment is critical

in providing that initial air attack ability to ground forces. If necessary, S-2 tankers will be brought in from other bases to assist in a large fire.

Cal Fire's fleet is now fully modernized. The retired US Navy radial powered S-2A Trackers saw first use by the agency in 1973, but beginning in the 90s, all have been revamped, stripped down and rebuilt from the ground up as state of the art firefighting machines. Cal Fire approached Marsh Aviation of Arizona to complete the transformation, and an S-2 assigned as Tanker 180 emerged

as the test bed. After a successful fire season showing promising capabilities, a full speed program was rapidly initiated to convert all of Cal Fire's Trackers. Its last three radial powered S-2s were converted and delivered in 2005, completing Cal Fire's fleet of twenty three turbine powered S-2T "Turbo" Trackers. Cal Fire's air attack program is the largest and most modern fleet in aerial firefighting. 1,650 horsepower Garrett TPE331-14GR turbine engines replace the old Wright R-1820 radials, giving the aircraft unrivaled reliability, maintain-

Click to turn the page

ability and a new payload capacity. Its 800 gallon retardant tanks have been pulled in favor of new 1,200 gallon retardant tanks. The aircraft is also faster pulled by its new power plants, with published cruise speed increasing from 195mph to 270mph. Its cosmetic surgery no doubt played a role there - the original stub nose being replaced by a newly designed, sleek nose cone that looks like it belongs on an S-3 Viking. Having turboprop engines also benefits its short field capability both in takeoff power and in its new ability to reverse propeller pitch on landing.

Another BIG plus - with the turbines comes an air conditioned cabin. The radial-engine Trackers often subjected their pilots to 110

degree temperatures in the cabin while fighting fires.

Cal Fire's fourteen OV-10A Broncos came from a variety of sources and rounds out its new turbine powered fleet. Delivered in a deal with the Department of Defense, the ex-Marine Corps and USAF Broncos were just what Cal Fire was looking for in an Air Attack Aircraft. The field of view alone is dramatically improved over the aircraft they were replacing - Cessna O-2s. Factor in all other benefits and it's simply a more capable airframe. Cal Fire's OV-10s are used in basically the same way they had been used in combat service... as forward air controllers. Its crew of 2 consists of pilot, and an Air Attack Officer. Once on station, the OV-10 flies

high above the fire and loiters for as long as 5 hours at a time; the Air Attack Officer directs all air assets as they come into the area. Fixed wing tankers often are given duties on one flank of a fire, while rotorcraft are positioned on the other. Amid the chaos of a wildland fire there is a flurry of activity in the air, as well as on the ground. Residents are made witness on the ground to a barrage of sirens, fire crew trucks, and in the air - thumping helicopters and the roar of low flying airplanes. Even with activity resembling that of a hornet's nest, the operation is expertly controlled and executed.

As tankers commence their attack, they dive in at low altitudes necessary to insure proper, directed coverage of the brush and veg-

etation. Too high, and the retardant being used to slow the fire's progress will be less effective and distributed over a wide area. With many of Cal Fire's air tanker pilots having extensive backgrounds in this type of "tree top" flying, it's fascinating to watch them in their element... often fighting a fire in rugged terrain makes it necessary to dive down ravines, momentarily enter knife edge flight dropping retardant onto vertical terrain, or pop up over ridgelines. The pinkish red retardant is a bright color for a reason - to serve as an obvious mark to where a drop has occurred. Following drops from air tankers will build upon the drop left by the previous aircraft in an attempt to patch a continuous line in the path of the fire. Planes return to base and head back to the fire continuously for hours, days, and in some cases weeks while fighting a large fire. The only pause in the air attack comes at night.

Coating the brush and vegetation, the slime-like retardant slows and discourages the fire from being able to continue. The retardant used today is a chemical substance known as Phoschek, delivered to the base as a powder and mixed with water before being pumped into the aircraft. Once mixed, it takes on the gooey, gelatin consistency it's famous for that sticks to brush, trees, and



homes. Phoschek is much safer than the retardant used from the 1950s through the 1970s and is completely water soluble.

Heroic piloting by these Cal Fire pilots is often the direct factor in saving neighborhoods. Tanker pilots have been known to swoop right in on a series of homes at the last moment and drop retardant directly on them as the approaching flames draw too near, often resembling the climactic drama and excitement of a Hollywood film.

Firefighters on the ground are accustomed to being drenched by retardant drops when working on the fire lines. A group of residents once complained that their homes had been covered in the red gooey substance during a fire... no doubt helping to spur that phrase "better red than

dead". Phoschek has the uncanny ability to penetrate numerous layers of clothes and stick to your skin. It safely rinses off once one is able to find a shower. Most times the pilots are able to ensure fire crews on the ground only receive a dusting, or glancing blow... but on occasion the blast of retardant is more direct and if a poor soul is in the way they can be knocked to the ground. Speaking of that drop I was able to experience... it's a good thing I only caught the spray of it. Luckily camera and equipment was spared any damage, and a good time was had by all.

Cal Fire's UH-1H Super Hueys are distributed throughout Air Attack bases California. In addition to the 13 Air Attack bases, there are also 9 Helitack bases. The Super Huey is used to transport as many as 8 firefighters to hard-to-



reach locations. They are then used to attack the fire themselves, equipped with a 360 gallon belly tank and siphon system that pulls water from ponds, lakes and even backyard pools. In contrast with Phoschek retardant, the helicopters routinely drop their water directly on the fire. This makes the helicopter invaluable for reacting to dangerous portions of the fire immediately threatening homes, fire crews or residents.

companies for dozens of helicopters like Sky Cranes, Bell 205s, 212s, 412s, Jet Rangers and even a Vietnam-era AH-1 Cobra and CH-46. In the western US, Cal Fire and the US Forest Service work hand in hand, in many cases maintaining joint air attack bases.

A salute goes out to these men and women that make up the national air tanker fleet, with Cal Fire's veteran crews playing a prominent role. If a wildland fire threatens your community, take comfort in knowing that the heroes on the ground are being assisted by heroes in the air. Expert pilots and skilled crews with years of experience are on the way, and they won't stop until your homes and families are safe.



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The Avenger's First Lady



Article and Photos by Aaron Haase

On July 12, 2009, I was able to take the ride of my life in a TBM-3E Avenger owned by Brad Deckert and Linda Schumm. What made this flight the most memorable was that it was piloted by Linda. She is one of only two type-rated TBM Avenger pilots. The other is the one and only Patty Wagstaff. I have been talking with Linda since Victory Days 2008 in Terre Haute, IN. On the Sunday of the Peoria Airshow, I was asked to go for a ride with Linda in the Avenger.

Linda was kind enough to talk with me about the Avenger, how they acquired it, and what it is like to fly, maintain and own a true World War II combat veteran. Brad and Linda acquired the Avenger from what they state was a "good idea". They acquired the Avenger from Fargo Air Museum in North Dakota in 2008 and have since then restored it to beautiful condition and painted it in the markings of VMTB-234, a descendent of the VMGR-234 "Rangers" who are based in Ft. Worth, Texas and fly the KC-130T Hercules Tanker.

The history of N81865 started with the US Navy in March of 1945 when it was assigned to Marine Torpedo Bombing Squadron - Two Three Four. It served for 6 months on

CVE-111 "USS Vella Gulf". It took part in many air raids and strikes on the Marianas Islands and also took part in the historic invasion of Okinawa. After the war she was transferred to VMTB-662 in October 1945 and then on VMTB-623 during November 1945. They were both based in MCAS Santa Barbara, CA. Following this brief stint, it went to Hawaii and served with service squadron 44 from December 1945 to February 1946. After this, it was moved to NAS San Diego where it was stationed until December 1946. It was moved to the east coast in January 1947 where it was re-assigned to a Naval Reserve Training Squadron. In 1950, it was overhauled and sent back to the Reserve Squadron until 1952. She then went back to the west coast in April 1952 to another overhaul shop in San Diego. It stayed there until October 1952 when it was moved to another Reserve Squadron in Spokane, Washington. In September 1954 it moved to its final combat spot in NAS Litchfield Park, AZ. It stayed there until it was taken off Navy records in May 31, 1956. Its total last known military flight hours: 1333.

N81865 began its civilian life in 1957 when it was sold to Plains Aero Service for a cheap \$1,768.00. It stayed with them until 1963 when it was sold to Air Tankers to be used as a fire bomb-



er. It was part of their squadron until 1972, when it was sold to Fire Tanker of Casper, WY. It had a two year stint there and was exported to Canada in 1974. In 1989 it was brought back to the United States when it was bought by Norfolk Aerial spraying by Carbondale Co. It stayed there for 16 years until it was bought by the Fargo Air Museum in 2005. Then in 2008, N81865 was purchased by TBM Avenger, INC where it is happily flown and shown to spectators at airshows in the Midwest.

Brad and Linda bought the Avenger in flying condition. When they bought it, they realized neither of them were type-rated in the Avenger. So they had some work to do. Brad had no tailwheel time at all and Linda only had some in a Luscombe! With the help on the Henly broth-

ers and Greg Valero, they became type-rated in the T-6 Texan. After they achieved this, they were able to finally solo in the TBM Avenger. Brad earned his type rating in September 2008 and Linda followed suit, earning hers in December 2008. Since then, they have been flying, fixing and enjoying their beautiful TBM-3E Avenger. They have also acquired a gun turret for the Avenger which will soon be installed.

At the Prairie Airshow on July 12, 2009, I was asked to ride with Linda on the TBM-3E Avenger. This was an opportunity of a lifetime for me. Other than the Phantom, the Avenger is my second favorite aircraft. It's big, it's good looking, and it's reliable. I got strapped in and put the headset on. Linda called back to me to see if I was ready and I gave her



the thumbs up. We taxied out and did a quick run-up to make sure the Avenger was running well. When the checks were complete we taxied onto the runway and prepared for take-off. Linda powered up and let off on the brakes and we were rolling. The Avenger has a large wing area which allowed us to get up pretty quickly. Once we were airborne we decided to go give Linda's airport where she works at a flyby. We hopped over to Mt. Hawley airport and did, what seemed to me, a torpedo run. A low pass into a pitch up and break away. I pictured a battleship right in front of me. After our run, we did a little sight-seeing flying up the Illinois River and getting to see the city of Peoria from



the air. After our little fun, we headed back to Peoria for a full stop. We did an overhead to setup for landing and the flight came to an end, although she had one more little surprise for me as she folded the wings when we were taxiing in. It was really neat to see from the inside and an overall neat experience. Once we shut down, I unbuckled and climbed out of combat veteran. It was a truly awesome experience for me. My grandfather's best friend was an Avenger gunner in World War II. Whenever he came to visit, he always shared his stories of what it was like to fly in an Avenger. I had now lived his history. Many thanks go to Linda for the amazing ride. It was a great time and a rare treat to fly with such an experienced pilot such as her. Also, I want to thank Linda and Brad together. Without them, this Avenger may not be flying today. They keep it flying because of their love for aviation. Thanks to them, history is living on today! If you are ever at an airshow, go up and say hi and speak with them. They are very nice people and have a lot of knowledge about their beautiful Avenger.

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Photo Tip Of The Month



Dynamic Variations - From Aviation Photos to Fine Art

Article and Photos by Chris Adolor

We have all been there. Planning for weeks if not months for the big show. Lenses have been thoroughly wiped, sensors tediously cleaned, batteries freshly charged only to arrive on show day to dark, dreary, low ceiling conditions with extremely poor light. Not the best conditions for aviation photography. Yet it doesn't prevent us from shooting gigs upon gigs of images, but it often cuts down on the number of keepers as the range of detail achieved is substantially diminished as a result of the poor light.

Last season had its share of days like this for me. One such date in '08 occurred after the six hour drive south to NAS Oceana.

Having been an artist and designer long before ever picking up my first DSLR, I quickly started experimenting with those shots which just didn't pop and lacked considerable dynamic range. During the off-season I had spent some time experimenting with HDR photography shooting primarily landscapes and cityscapes using this technique. After months of trial and error, I fine-

tuned my processing and began to apply the technique in a variety of ways depending on the subject and the ultimate goal for a particular project. With this new weapon in the arsenal, I couldn't wait to get back out to the tarmac and start shooting those statics, apply this technique, and see what was possible.

HDR Basics

Without digging deep into the scientific explanation of luminance values and technical specifications and capabilities of digital

camera sensors, in simple terms, dynamic range refers to the variation of luminance values of a scene from the brightest to the darkest areas. The human eye is far better at adapting and capturing real world ranges of light in a scene than that of any technology available today. The ongoing challenge of photography and digital camera technology is the ability capture and record a scene, and the luminance values contained within it, to get ever closer to that of the human eye.

Using a series of images taken at various exposure levels (multiple individual shots or using (AEB) auto-exposure bracketing features available in many digital cameras) essentially widens the range of luminance values captured resulting in shots that often reveal a range of values and detail

not achievable from a single exposure or conventional shot. The process of merging multiple exposures, and mapping the resulting images to a single image file results in photos which reveal much greater color, enhanced shadow detail and often better exposed highlights.

Shooting multiple exposures of a static aircraft on show day with crowds and spectators wandering in and out of frame can be a challenge in itself. But how can we achieve a similar effects, apply the same processing technique to an aircraft moving at hundreds of miles-per-hour? Obviously, auto-exposure bracketing or taking multiple images that will correctly map are impossible to capture at these speeds. Well this brings me back to the gigs of poorly lit, dreary, overcast shots taken on

Saturday at Oceana '08. I wasn't necessarily looking to create HDR images as much as find a way to pull out some of that missing detail and add some dynamics to the colors and exposure to these otherwise flat photos.

Shooting RAW has many advantages, one being greater flexibility with regard to manipulation of photos with much less in terms of penalties. There is always Photoshop if I really wanted to invest an enormous amount of time, masking, creating adjustment layers, etc., but I wanted to find something that fit into the workflow, that for an aviation or air show photographer can mean reviewing and processing hundreds or even thousands of frames for each day of an event.

I started by gathered many of the shots from Saturday at Oceana and began manipulating the exposure of the RAW image files. After adjusting exposure up and down I saved each incremental adjustment, creating a new individual image files, then processed the series of images just as I had with other HDR's. Hence, my take on the HDR "after the fact" approach or cheat. After quite a bit of experimentation, the results were quite interesting.

Shooting with goals in mind

If at all possible try to schedule to be at the field on a practice day or some time where you can



shoot statics using the “true” HDR method, as opposed to the “after the fact” approach. Use a tripod, remote, and auto-exposure bracketing to capture the multiple shots. Not that it’s impossible to achieve during a show day, but it is much easier to move around with the extra gear and far fewer humans wandering into frame while cycling your shutter, especially since you are attempting to capture multiple exposures.

On show day, shoot statics by hand and depending on the results, you will likely find several shots that will be candidates for some experimentation using the HDR “after the fact” method. I do nothing different in my approach to shooting flying aircraft. Shoot as you normally would, remembering that you now have an additional tool in your arsenal to do something creative to those shots that just don’t seem to pop (may not have otherwise been “keepers”) or those which may need just a little help in the post processing to enhance some of the detail and light.

HINT: Clouds, smoke and vapor are our friends. These elements add an incredible amount of depth, range, and dynamics to a shot. Find ways to incorporate cloud formations and smoke trails as part of your compositions when shooting both statics and action shots. This applies to everyday

shooting but these elements really add depth and drama to shots when using a dynamic enhancement technique.

Workflow and Processing

For me, workflow is an ongoing battle and one which changes shoot by shoot. Management of the enormous amount of images accumulated in this process can become cumbersome. Finding a place for this type of processing in your workflow will be no different so you may consider keeping a separate project folder for this type of processing to eliminate clutter and confusion when you are now using 3 to 5 individual images to ultimately create one final image.

Whether you lugged your tripod to the airfield and shot multiple exposures of each static display or use your photo editing software to manipulate RAW im-



ages to create the multiple exposures, you will need a tool to tone map these images to create the working file. I have downloaded and tested a few of the available HDR products and decided that HDRsoft’s Photomatix Pro was the best application for my needs. It is available as a plug-in to Apple’s Aperture, Adobe Lightroom and as a standalone application to perform tone-mapping and merging of different exposures into a single image.

My workflow consists of shooting RAW then importing into Apple’s Aperture 2.1. Images shot specifically for HDR (using AEB) or similar post-processing are imported to a separate project file from those which will be processed as part of my normal workflow. Those which require creation of the multiple exposures after-the-fact, are dumped into another



separate project file. To create your “after-the-fact” exposures, open your original file using your Raw editor. Move exposure settings up and down (example +1, +2, -1, -2) saving each incremental adjustment as a new file (note: I do not apply any other adjustments or correction other than the exposure adjustments at this stage). I will then select the multiple exposure files and drag into Photomatix Pro. (Note: Try merging 2, 3, 4 or even 5 different exposure images to see the results). It is at this point that you can really experiment with the adjust-

ment parameters in Photomatix Pro, making notes regarding the effects of higher and lower values, and how the different levels and settings (Strength, Saturation, Luminosity) relate to one another. Also, repeat the same trial and error approach experimenting with Gamma, Black/White Point and settings such as Micro-Contrast. Document and save your settings (as presets) as you come across interesting and useful resulting effects. As you get more comfortable with the capabilities of the software, you will find ways to apply it to your work and begin

to visualize results in your head while out on a shoot, whether it be at an air show or on the top of a mountainous overlook while on vacation with the family.

Once you have achieved your desired look and feel, the resulting image file is then converted, saved, then imported back into Aperture (in my case) for some final adjustment or correction. On occasion, I will put some additional finishing touches on the final image in Photoshop.

Choose your style(s)

As you experiment with HDR

and tone mapping techniques you will find a wide variety of results and effects are possible. Those familiar with HDR Photography recognize that high contrast, extreme saturation and unnatural shadow detail, look and feel. That does not necessarily need to be the effect achieved by applying these techniques. I will often use some variation of these techniques in a fashion that does not scream of HDR and the resulting surreal almost painted quality. It can be applied to simply enhance a real-world feel, giving a deceptive appearance as to the detail and exposure not commonly seen in everyday photos without the identifiable surreal effect.

Where Aviation Photos Become Fine Art

Obviously, shooting in great light and capturing accurately and properly exposed photos needs very little work in terms of post processing, but often we will have a collection of decent, sharp, well composed shots that may just need that little extra to really have some impact. Whatever your workflow involves or applications you may use, find ways to expand and experiment by applying more creative and artistic touches. Using this approach I slowly began to push beyond that real-life photo feel and have created a series of artistic renderings with more creative impact, more like fine art.

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I look at photography as an art form and each shot, pure or enhanced through application of this or any other technique, must be fundamentally sound. I always approached aviation photography from a technical side, concentrating on proper exposure, framing, composition, shooting/panning techniques, etc.. Now that I feel that I have progressed and have become more technically sound as a photographer, the next logical step was to explore the creative side of both shooting and processing which has now added a new wrinkle and allows the artist in me to slowly creep out, once again. Ultimately, it's the finished product that provides us with the reward for our long planned efforts. Don't be afraid to experiment while shooting and especially during the post process stage as you might find something very different, interesting and rewarding along the way.

If you found these tips useful and have an HDR or DV that you'd like to share, show us by sending your shots you get to RS@AirshowStuff.com so they can be featured in next month's issue!

You can see all of Chris' HDR, Dynamic Variations, and Aviation/Airshow galleries at www.ChrisAdolor.com



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First Place - Chris Brennan (11 points)

Third Place - Chris Adolor (9 points)

Second Place - Joe Osciak (10 points)



Monthly **Photo Contest**

Congratulations to the winner of the June photo contest - Chris Brennan! If you want to see your photos here, be sure to enter next month's contest! The rules are on the inside cover. Thanks to everyone who entered!

Judging: Each judge selects their top five pictures. Their first choice gets five points, their second choice gets four, and so on. The points are added up and the one with the most points is the winner.

Fourth Place - Mike Lynaugh (7 points)

Fifth Place - Andy Nixon (4 points)



The Fastest Sport



Article and Photos by Mark Hrutkay

Take a hint; the fastest and most exciting motorsport on the planet doesn't have four wheels. More properly, it has three wheels. NASCAR is nothing compared to watching the Unlimited Class race at Reno. Airshows happen every weekend all over the country, and after you have been to a few of them, you have pretty much seen it all. The Races at Reno are something that you can't compare to any other aviation event in the world.

Warplanes from WWII relive their glory days as highly modified "Unlimited" racers, engaging in a race for a trophy (and of course the bragging rights that go with being the winner). Cars may hit

200 MPH, and virtually every class at Reno exceeds that speed. The Unlimiteds go as fast 450 MPH with a jet class that hits 500MPH.

Since 1964 the Races have given the city of Reno the most unique tourist draw on the planet. Other places have tried Air Racing over the years, but few have managed to last more than a year or two. Reno is going to have its 46th Season this year; it's going strong and it looks like there is no end in sight.

This year may well be one of the more exciting seasons of all time. We should see about every major Unlimited airplane flying. In the past, there was always one or two down for maintenance or a

lack of the piles of money it takes to come in and race.

Rod Lewis of Texas has bought his own stable of racers. He bought both of Mike Brown's Hawker Sea Furys, "September Fury" and "September Pops" along with Brown's former TigerCat "The BigBossMan". Rod bought another legendary aircraft too, the "Rare Bear".

The Rare Bear is a fixture at the races. It's been racing for 40+ years, winning the Unlimited Gold Race an amazing ten times. The Bear is also the world's fastest piston-engine propeller driven aircraft at 528 MPH. What started out as a derelict, rescued by former owner and pilot Lyle Shelton,

was transformed into something so different that the original designers at Grumman may not have been able to recognize it. But it does what it is supposed to do and that is go fast. In the past, the Bear has missed a few races because of mechanical problems that nobody could afford to fix. For this year, the Rare Bear has a new paint job (looks really good) as well as lots of "support". This could well be the year of the Rare Bear.

Another top Unlimited is the P-51D owned by Bill "Tiger" Destefani named Strega (which I believe is Italian for "witch" and that would explain why my ex-wife liked it so much, I guess they hang together). Strega does have

witches painted on it here and there but it moves more like a bat from you know where. Tiger has managed to push Strega to 7 Unlimited National Championships including 2008.

Tiger pushed Strega to the limit in what may have been motorsport's most exciting race in history. Back in 1995, Strega was racing the Rare Bear and another P-51 "Dago Red" for the National Championship in the Gold Race. I was in the crowd watching as Tiger won one of the fastest Reno races of all time at 475 MPH. If you took your eyes off the planes for a second and looked around, ALL eyes were on the race; nobody else was looking around. Some sounds are distinctive and sound

of a P-51 at 475MPH is amazing. There is a unique screaming sound at the tips of the prop as they hit the speed of sound, as well as the engine behind it running a power setting the guys at Rolls Royce never thought of. It was a riveting experience.

This year Tiger has retired and turned the reins of Strega over to last year's rookie star Steve Hinton. Steve (commonly known as "Steve O" for reasons I'd rather not know) is here to see that the Rare Bear doesn't win.

There are two Steve Hintons in the world, father and son. Steve the father is (in my humble opinion) the greatest pilot in the world. He has been flying warbirds all his life and can be found



as President of the Planes of Fame Museum in Chino, CA. When you see the P-38 Glacier Girl (another Rod Lewis airplane) flying, you can bet that Steve is at the controls. If I had a P-38, Steve may be the only one I'd trust flying it. He has flown about every type of war-bird that is currently airworthy in the USA. He has won the Gold Race and Championship at Reno and currently flies the T-33 pace plane at Races.

His son, Steve, is 21 and the youngest pilot to fly in an Unlimited Race when he competed in 2008. He is one of the youngest P-51 pilots in the country. Well-qualified by any means. Of course, we all remember him for his acting abilities as the "kid with the ice cream cone" in the Mel Gibson movie Forever Young. Steve has a great future ahead of him and if there was one real opportunity in a life time, it's this year at Reno. A win would make him "the man". We shall all see when the races run this September.

There are many other classes of racing there as well as a world class air show. This year, the Reno Air Racing Association is hosting the US Navy Blue Angels for their first return since 2000. The Races will be held in Reno Nevada from September 16th through the 20th. Time to ask the boss for a vacation and get permission from the wife (better yet bring her along) and make some reservations. Reno is an experience that can't be compared to anything.

See their site at www.AirRace.org



Reports from the Field

July 2009

Quad Cities Air Show, Davenport, IA

Quad City Air Show
By Chad Grosvenor

The 2009 Quad City Air Show was devastated by storms on Friday night that blew down two-thirds of the tents set up, but didn't damage any aircraft. Due to those storms, most of the static displays came in early Saturday morning, so that was a little bonus for those who came early. The show began with the United States Army Golden Knights jumping from one of Davenport's own CH-47 Chinook helicopters. Once all of the Golden Knights landed, two F-16s from the Iowa Air National Guard's 132d Fighter Wing out of Des Moines International Airport did a flyover from behind the crowd. Then the Chinook landed and Kyle Franklin performed his routine. After that, the Indy Boys and their Jet School Bus came onto the runway to challenge Kyle Franklin to a race, which he lost.

John Mohr then put his stock Stearman through maneuvers that Stearmans shouldn't do. Paul "Harb" Brown and the United States Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II West Demonstration Team then took to the skies to showcase



the Warthog's capabilities. Once "Harb" landed, Mike Wiskus went up for his low and fast demo in his Lucas Oil Pitts. Following Mike Wiskus was John Klatt's fast paced routine in his Air National Guard Staudacher S-300D. The Indy Boy's Jet School Bus then went out for their speed run. To stay with the jet powered theme, Bob Carlton took his Jet Powered Glider up for his graceful performance.

Kyle Franklin then went back up again, but this time with Todd Green on his wings for their Pirated Skies Wing Walking routine. Otto the Helicopter then took off for the one of the most kid-friendly performances in the air show industry. Paul Stender then went out to challenge Otto to a race in his Jet Powered Port-A-Potty. After that, the Golden Knights did their full parachuting demonstration. Next, "Cheez" and his Harrier rattled the Quad City area with the United States Marine Corps AV-8B Harrier Level Three Demonstration. Then John Mohr went up with Todd Green along with Otto the Helicopter to do the heart stopping airplane to helicopter transfer. It took a couple tries, but on the third try, they got it and if that wasn't enough, Otto then did hammerheads and other passes with Todd Green hanging from only the helicopter's strut.

Once the Blue Angels had full control of the airspace, the Blue Angels' C-130T Hercules trans-



Nate Burrows



Nate Burrows



Nate Burrows



Chad Grosvenor



Chad Grosvenor



Sam Larson



David Jacobson



Sam Larson

port plane, affectionately known as Fat Albert, took to the skies to perform a short demonstration of the C-130. Once Fat Albert landed, the Blue Angels came in head on with the crowd in delta formation and then the solos detached from the formation to begin their amazing performance. The Blue Angels staged out of Quad City International Airport due to lack of space at Davenport Municipal Airport. Static displays were a little light, but the great line up of performers made up for it. It was my first time at this show, but I know I'll be back next year.

Reports from the Field
Dover AFB, Dover DE



Joe Osciak



Joe Osciak



Joe Osciak



Joe Osciak



Joe Osciak



Chris Brennan

Reports from the Field
Dover AFB, Dover DE



Chris Adolor



Mike Lynaugh



Steven King



Steven King



Chris Brennan



Mike Lynaugh

Reports from the Field
Dover AFB, Dover DE



Chris Adolor



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Chris Adolor



Chris Adolor



Chris Adolor

Reports from the Field

Wings & Wheels, St. Thomas, ON



Wings & Wheels 2009
By: Michael Rehbaum

Every other year the skies over St. Thomas, Ontario become alive with the sounds of aircraft soaring over the azure Canadian Sky. 2009 promised a large and diverse line-up of aircraft for St. Thomas's Wings & Wheels. Unfortunately, two events nearly conspired to shorten this year's festivities. The first mishap occurred the week prior to the show. The

event's headlining act, the Canadian Snow Birds, began an operational pause due to a problem with their ejection seats. In the week preceding Wings & Wheels it was uncertain if the Snowbirds would even be able to perform.

The second thing to happen to Wings & Wheels was one that no show, no matter how prepared they are, has any control over. That, of course, is the weather. Attendees woke up Saturday

morning to find that in place of the beautiful blue skies that Ontario can offer in the summer, there were dark grey clouds and a nearly torrential downpour. The rain did have breaks that allowed the crowd to trickle in, but it was obvious that the crowd was much smaller than one would expect for a Saturday at this biannual show. But both of these events were not enough to stop 2009's Wing's and Wheels.

Michael Rehbaum

By mid-afternoon on Saturday the weather had begun to break. This allowed the flying to begin. Featured acts on Saturday included a CH-146 Griffon from CFB Borden, a HH-65C Dolphin from USCG Detroit that did a rescue demonstration, and the New Mexico ANG F-16's did an amazing number of low fast passes that appeared to thrill the crowd. Bill Carter took to the skies in his Pitts Special S2S and showed his "world's longest knife edge pass" at the end of his routine. As the day progressed Ric Peterson, the announcer, continued teasing the crowd with updates on the status of the Snowbirds. By the end of

Saturday it was becoming pretty clear that the second possible trouble was going to be taken care of too. And indeed half of the Snowbirds showed up at the end of the day.

One of the reasons that this year's Wings and Wheels is such an important Canadian show is because 2009 celebrates the 100th year of powered flight in Canada. On February 23rd 1909 John McCurdy flew the Silver Dart off the ice of Baddeck Bay. The Silver Dart was designed by the Aerial Experiment Association under the leadership of Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. To celebrate its 100th anniversary of

Michael Rehbaum



Reports from the Field

Wings & Wheels, St. Thomas, ON

flight, Canada has sponsored a large number of events and aircraft. Wings & Wheels was lucky to have three of the main attractions fly on both days of the event. The three airborne celebrations that attended Wings & Wheels were the Centenaire Tutor, the CF-18 Centruy Hornet, and the belle of the ball, the Hawk One Saber. Each of these three aircraft carry an important history in their paint schemes. Seeing them speed across the sky certain made for a memorable air show.

On Sunday the crowd was considerably larger. Due to the large amount of rain that the parking lot had received the day before, the air show organizers were forced to re-route parking to one of the runways. This caused some delays due to the fact that flying couldn't occur while people were in their cars. But the event's organizers did an applaudable job at keeping everything safe and orderly.



Ryan Orshinsky



Ryan Orshinsky



Ryan Sundheimer

Once the crowd was in place they were treated to an incredible show that included all of Saturday's acts, plus additional passes by an E-2C Hawkeye from NAS Oceana, a KC-135R from Birmingham AL, four F-15C's from Barnes ANGB, and four A-10's demonstrated just how tight of a turn they could make as they did an impressive Lufbery circle over the middle of the field.

Both days saw just how short of a runway a C-17 needs to be effective in a combat zone. The C-17 flew in from Elmendorf AFB Alaska. And it certainly wowed the crowd because of its high maneuverability even though it is such a large aircraft.

The highlight of the show had to be the combination of the three 100th anniversary aircraft and then the Snowbirds soaring ballet that this year includes a portion with Hawk One. It is certainly an amazing scene to behold as the ten aircraft soar across the sky in perfect formation. If you get a chance to see it this year, don't miss it!



Ryan Sundheimer



Ryan Sundheimer



Ryan Sundheimer



Ryan Sundheimer



Michael Rehbaum

Reports from the Field
Wings & Wheels, St. Thomas, ON



Ryan Sundheimer



Michael Rehbaum



Michael Rehbaum



Ryan Orshinsky



Michael Rehbaum



Michael Rehbaum

Reports from the Field
Rhode Island Open House and Air Show,
Quonset Point, RI



Joe Osciak



Joe Osciak



Chris Adolor



Chris Adolor

*Reports from the Field
Rhode Island Open House and Air Show,
Quonset Point, RI*



Chris Adolor



Joe Osciak



Joe Osciak



Chris Adolor



Joe Osciak



Joe Osciak



Chris Adolor



Joe Osciak



Joe Osciak



Chris Adolor

Reports from the Field
Baraboo Air Show, Baraboo, WI

Photos by: David Jacobson



Reports from the Field
USAF Museum Air Tattoo, Dayton, OH

Photos by: Ryan Grantonic



Reports from the Field
Fort Drum Open House, Watertown, NY

Photos by: Michael Rehbaum



Reports from the Field
Tacoma Freedom Fair, Tacoma, WA

Photos by: Anthony Richards



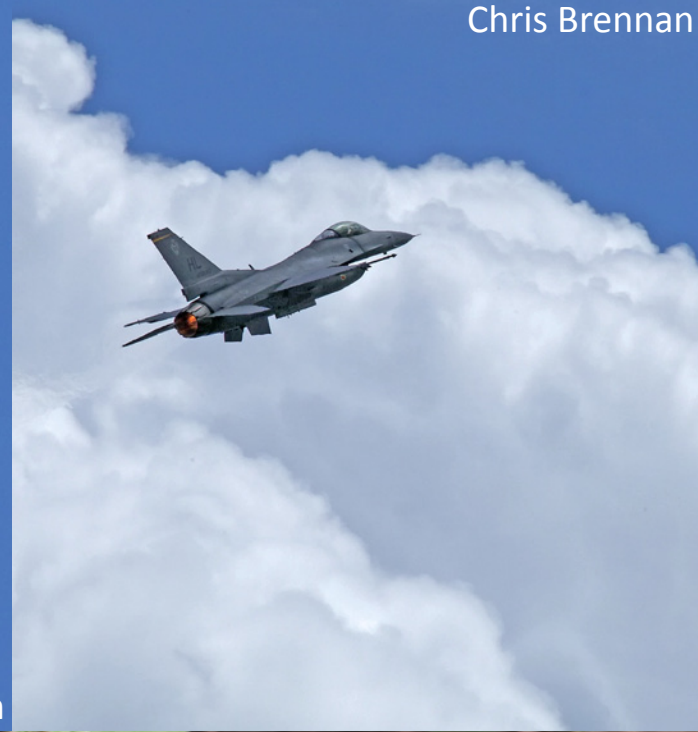
Reports from the Field
Greater Binghamton Mets Game, Binghamton, NY

Photos by: Steven King



Reports from the Field
Greater Binghamton Air Show, Binghamton, NY

Chris Brennan



Chris Brennan



Mike Lynaugh

Reports from the Field
Greater Binghamton Air Show, Binghamton, NY



Chris Brennan



Chris Brennan



Mike Lynaugh



Mike Lynaugh



Steven King



Steven King

Reports from the Field
Greater Binghamton Air Show, Binghamton, NY



Chris Brennan



Chris Brennan



Mike Lynaugh



Steven King



Mike Lynaugh



Steven King



Mike Lynaugh

Reports from the Field
Battle Creek Field of Flight, Battle Creek, MI

Photos by: Ryan Sundheimer



Reports from the Field
Dubuque Riverfront Airshow, Dubuque, IA



Nate Burrows



Sam Larson



Nate Burrows



Nate Burrows



Nate Burrows

Reports from the Field
Thunder Over Cedar Creek, Tyler, TX

Photos by: Andy Nixon



Reports from the Field

The Greatest Show on Turf, Geneseo, NY

Geneseo 2009

By: Michael Rehbaum

Step right up ladies and gentlemen and prepare yourself for THE GREATEST SHOW ON TURF! In the three rings this year we have a theme focused on naval aircraft. If one has never been to Geneseo, you might not understand the excitement that it generates. But it certainly is one of the most important warbird-focused shows in North America. Along with perhaps five other shows world-wide, it is known for its ability to draw in rare and unique warbirds. The 2009 show didn't disappoint the warbird fan.

The Naval theme insured that Geneseo got some aircraft that it usually doesn't host. Among the aircraft that were in attendance were three Corsairs, a Hellcat, the world's only flying Helldiver, a Canso (Canadian manufactured PBV) and a GM manufactured FM2 Wildcat. Seeing these aircraft is always a treat. Seeing three Corsairs flying in formation certainly made the weekend outstanding. One would have to go back to 2002's Gathering of

Corsairs and Legends in Indianapolis to see that many Corsairs flying at the same time!

Unfortunately, Saturday's weather wasn't completely cooperative. The show started with light observation aircraft and a large number of Texan/Harvards were

preparing to take off when the rain forced a delay in the show. Later in the afternoon some flying did occur with Chris Baranaskas and Dale "Snort" Snodgrass competing for who could take their P-51 and Corsair the lowest down the runway.

By many accounts Saturday's unsponsored competition seems to have been won by Mr. Baranaskas.

The weather Sunday was simply perfect. Western New York is known for its incredibly tolerable summers, and Sunday proved it.

With white puffy clouds floating in the background and the green grass used as a runway at Geneseo was host to all of the aircraft in attendance. The Canadian Harvards and The Great War Flying Museum WWI group in their replica Folker DRI's, S.E.5a, Nieuport 28 & Sop-



Mark Hrutkay

Michael Rehbaum

with 1 1/2 Strutter looked perfectly at home on the grass runway.

The highlight of the day was without a doubt the two naval flights that brought the theme front and center. Seeing the Wildcat, Hellcat and Helldiver take off from the grass runway and climb rapidly into the sky reminded the crowd of how short of a runway naval aircraft needed. And then watching the three Corsairs take off and form up with a B-25 and P-51D was simply wonderful. Once the five ship formation broke up the Corsairs flew past in a formation of their own. Finally the Corsairs took turns buzzing past the field. The three Corsairs in attendance were the Collings Foundation's F4U-5NL, American Air Powers FG-1D "Sky Boss" & The Military Aviation Museum's FG-1D.

Geneseo is in a rare class of airshows due to its unique runway, the number of Canadian and American warbirds it draws, and the fact that it is slightly off of the beaten path. If you are a lover of piston driven warbirds, this is a show that you certainly should go out of your way to attend.

Hopefully we'll see you next year at "The Greatest Show on TURF!"

Reports from the Field
The Greatest Show on Turf, Geneseo, NY

WELCOME TO GENESEO AIRSHOW

Mark Hrutkay



Mark Hrutkay



Michael Rehbaum



Mark Hrutkay



Mark Hrutkay



Michael Rehbaum



Michael Rehbaum



Michael Rehbaum



Mark Hrutkay

Reports from the Field
The Greatest Show on Turf, Geneseo, NY

Michael Rehbaum



Michael Rehbaum



Michael Rehbaum

Mark Hrutkay



Mark Hrutkay

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Michael Rehbaum



Mark Hrutkay



Michael Rehbaum



Reports from the Field

Prairie Air Show, Peoria, IL

2009 Prairie Air Show
By Chad Grosvenor

This year marked the Prairie Air Show's 25th Anniversary. Each and every year, you can expect them to bring in the top acts of the air show industry, both Military and Civilian. The opening ceremonies for this year's show was a parachuter from the United States Army Special Operations Command

mance in her Extra 300L. Once C.C. was done, the United States Air Force Heritage Flight composed of Vlado Lench and his P-51 Mustang, "Moonbeam McSwine", and the F-16 East Demo Team from Shaw Air Force Base, came down from Gary, Indiana.

Once the Heritage Flight left the air show box to go back to Gary, Indiana, Mike Wiskus went back up to challenge the United States Air Force Reserves

When the Harrier landed, Matt Younkin took off to do his performance with maneuvers that would be considered unthinkable in his Twin Beech 18. Next, Lt. John "Smeagol" Stanton performed his F/A-18C Tactical Demo. After that, the T-2 Buckeye joined up with "Smeagol" for the United States Navy Tailhook Legacy Flight.

This year's Prairie Air Show was a special one for Amanda

ter Greg Poe was John Mohr to put his stock Stearman through maneuvers that Stearmans shouldn't do. To cap the show off was the United States Air Force Thunderbirds.

All in all, it was a great air show and the organizer did an excellent job bringing in the best performers. The air boss also did a great job dealing with the departures and arrivals of airlines in the middle of the show. Last but not least, Rob Reider did an awesome job announcing the show and singing the National Anthem on Saturday. There was a fair amount of static displays in addition to the great performers. In conclusion, the 2009 Prairie Air Show was great and I would recommend going to it next year.



Carl Wilcox



Carl Wilcox



Carl Wilcox

Black Daggers jumping out of Bill Leff's T-6 Texan with the American Flag and Rob Reider singing the National Anthem. After the opening ceremonies, Mike Wiskus took to the skies to perform his fast paced act in his Lucas Oil Pitts. Then Bill Leff did his graceful demo in his T-6 Texan. To follow that up, C.C. Gerner took to the skies to do her perfor-

Smoke-N-Thunder Jet Car to a race, which he lost. Then Peoria's own 182nd Airlift Wing did a short demo to show what their C-130s could do. After the C-130 demo, Clyde Zellers took to the skies in Ray Thomas' T-28 for a graceful performance. Following that, it got loud as the Harrier blew thousands of minds, showing its hovering capability.

Younkin Franklin as she made her public debut wing walking performance piloted by her husband, Kyle Franklin in his Waco Mystery Ship. Following Pirated Skies Wing Walking was the United States Army Special Operations Command Black Daggers Parachute Team. Greg Poe then Kicked Gas with his Ethanol Powered MX-2. Af-



David Jacobson



David Jacobson



David Jacobson



Carl Wilcox



David Jacobson



Sam Larson



Sam Larson



Sam Larson



Sam Larson



Sam Larson



Sam Larson