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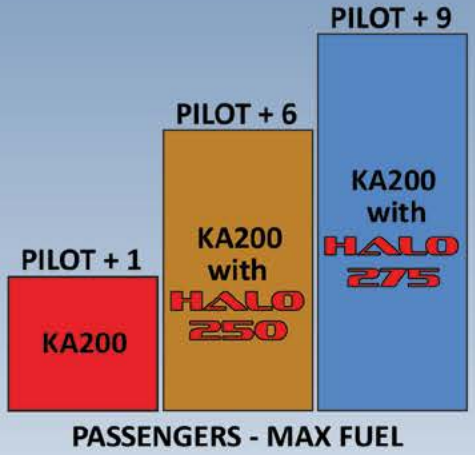

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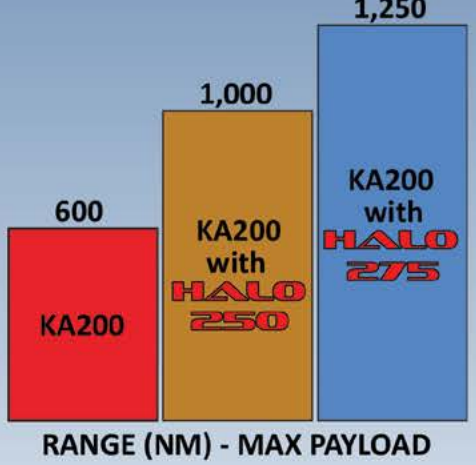

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December 2025 Volume 19 / Number 12
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COVER PHOTO
Eye-catching paint on a B200GT
Courtesy of Elliott Aviation

Engine Failure!

Build confidence in handling worst-case scenarios by training in *your* aircraft.

by Zach Cleaver

"Oh $#@!! ... " That's the thought that goes through every pilot's head when they have an engine problem. Engine failures are one of the most feared emergencies we have in aviation, though they don't have to be. With preparation and training, we can take the fear out of a failure and remember to fly the plane.

When we first start flying multi-engine airplanes we are taught a version of: Mixtures-Props-Throttles-Identify-Verify-Feather.

This works well in piston-powered planes. In King Airs, we modify it a little: Power-Props-Flaps-Gear.

For readers who have followed Tom Clements' teaching, this should sound familiar. It is also referred to as "Your Four Friends." It is the place to start when you have a suspected engine failure on your hands.

Power

Push both power levers forward until you are making maximum power. Respect your ITT and torque limitations!

Props

Both prop levers go full forward. Our props are more efficient at high RPMs with low airspeed. We want to get the most performance out of our remaining engine, and this helps!

Flaps

Getting rid of drag will help maintain speed. Retracting flaps will help here. If in doubt, bring your flaps up.

Gear

This is another drag reduction. When in doubt, retract the gear.

Let's talk about putting this into practice.

We train to improve our skills and stay proficient. The safest place to do this is a simulator. It allows us to practice failures that could happen at the worst possible moment – low to the ground and slow – and we can repeat them until we get it right and continue to get it right. The downside of using a simulator is that we know it is not real. We know that if we make a mistake, we can reset and try again.

If we train in the aircraft, certain things should not be done because the safety margin is just too small. However, practicing engine-out emergencies in the aircraft at a safe altitude can be beneficial to your understanding of your aircraft and how you react to the emergency.

The reason in-aircraft training can be so beneficial in King Airs can be summed up with: "If you have flown one King Air, you have flown exactly one King Air!" With so many models, various avionics possibilities, engine differences and other modifications, each King Air really is different. This is where getting expert training in *your* specific plane, focusing on how it is equipped, can be so beneficial.

Getting back to single-engine training. Understanding your aircraft, how it behaves and its capabilities while operating with a single engine are important. The only real way to find out what your airplane's characteristics are is to do in-aircraft training. We can read all the manuals and spend hours practicing in the simulator, but it will never replace actually doing it in the plane.

Prior to conducting single-engine training in the aircraft, I'll do a brief on what we are going to do, the

pilot's responsibilities and the instructor's responsibilities. We cover what altitudes we will fly, our minimum altitudes (5,000 AGL) and options for nearby airports. We cover procedures and memory items. All of this is done before leaving the ground.

Once we are in the air and in the practice area, we typically start with basic maneuvers, steep turns, stalls, etc. This is a good warm-up for what is to come. After we have completed our maneuvers, it is time for the in-flight engine shutdown. We do a quick recap of what is going to happen, make sure we are at a safe altitude and verify we are close to an acceptable runway in case it's needed.

I start by making the "failure" a worst-case scenario. Rudder boost is turned off initially and the engine "fails" in such a way that autofeather is not activated. What I am looking to demonstrate is that the plane will remain controllable under the worst-case scenario as long as we pilots do our job. You do not need to react quickly, but you do need to react appropriately.

As we go through the engine failure procedure, we talk about how the plane is handling under the various conditions. We talk about how much trim is needed, show how banking into the good engine affects performance, observe what adding rudder boost back in does, and see how feathering the prop changes performance. Time is spent on single-engine performance and what your plane is capable of. Will it climb? What speed will it cruise at?

How do configuration changes affect performance?

I see an incredible change in pilot confidence, especially in pilots transitioning from piston twins to turbines. I regularly see a pilot who is terrified of having an engine failure change to a pilot who knows they can handle the emergency. The only way for them to experience this is through in-aircraft training. With the differences between every King Air, training in *your* aircraft is the way to go! KA

Zach Cleaver, a Gold Seal flight instructor since 2009, started teaching in King Airs in 2010. He has worked for King Air Academy in Phoenix, Arizona, since 2013 and flies all models of King Airs.

Preview: Elevating Standards in Safety, Maintenance and Avionics

by Zach Cleaver & Kevin Carson

As the aviation world continues to evolve, so does the community surrounding one of its most beloved aircraft – the Beechcraft King Air. With an impressive legacy spanning more than half a century, the King Air series has become synonymous with reliability and versatility, making it a favorite among owners, pilots and operators alike. As we gear up for the highly anticipated King Air Gathering 2026 – scheduled for March 26-28, 2026, in Fredericksburg, Texas – let's preview the key themes that will shape discussions at this premier event: safety, maintenance, avionics and aftermarket options.

Pratt & Whitney: PT6 Connect owner hands-on seminar

March 26 has been reserved for the P&W Connect session. Almost every King Air since its inception has had a PT6A engine. Anyone associated with a King Air must know and understand the nuances of operating a PT6 efficiently and safely. This deep dive into the PT6 will be conducted by P&W field and service personnel and includes hands-on exercises and relevant seminars.

Safety first: A collective responsibility

In an industry where safety is paramount, King Air Gathering 2026 will emphasize the importance of a proactive safety culture. The gathering will serve as a platform for sharing insights and best practices that can enhance the safety of King Air operations. Whether through engaging workshops or expert-led panels, attendees will have the opportunity to delve into topics like flight operations quality assurance (FOQA), flight data monitoring (FDM), emergency procedures and the latest safety technologies.

As pilots and operators, we must embrace a mindset of continuous improvement. KAG will highlight real-world case studies and lessons learned from industry leaders, reminding us that safety is not just a regulatory requirement – it's a collective responsibility. By fostering open dialogue and collaboration, we can ensure that every King Air flight remains a safe one.

Maintenance matters: Keeping the King Air in peak condition

Maintenance is the backbone of any aircraft operation, and the King Air is no exception. At KAG, maintenance experts will be on hand to discuss the latest trends in aircraft upkeep, including preventive maintenance practices, troubleshooting techniques and the importance of adhering to manufacturer guidelines.

With the advent of new technologies and materials, maintaining a King Air has never been more complex or more crucial. Attendees will learn about innovative maintenance solutions that can minimize downtime and enhance aircraft longevity. From engine care to airframe inspections, the gathering will provide invaluable insights that can help operators keep their aircraft in peak condition, ensuring they are ready for every journey.

Avionics: Navigating the future of flight

As we soar into an era defined by rapid technological advancements, the role of avionics in enhancing flight safety and efficiency cannot be overstated. KAG 2026 will feature sessions on the latest avionics upgrades, including advanced navigation systems, autopilot technologies and the integration of artificial intelligence into cockpit operations.

Pilots and operators will have the opportunity to engage with avionics manufacturers and industry experts, exploring the benefits of modern systems that not only improve situational awareness but also streamline operations. King Air pilots should not overlook the importance of staying current with avionics advancements as we navigate an increasingly complex airspace.

Aftermarket options: Maximizing value and performance

In the world of aviation, aftermarket options can significantly impact both performance and value. KAG will showcase a variety of aftermarket solutions, from performance enhancements to aesthetic upgrades. Attendees can explore how these options can optimize their aircraft's capabilities while also enhancing passenger comfort and overall experience.

Moreover, the gathering will provide a forum for discussing the importance of choosing reputable aftermarket providers. With a plethora of choices available, owners and operators need to conduct thorough research and seek recommendations from their peers. By making informed decisions, we can maximize our investment in the King Air and ensure that our aircraft remain competitive in a dynamic marketplace.

Conclusion: A gathering of minds and ideas

As we look forward to King Air Gathering 2026, it's clear that this event will be more than just a celebration of a remarkable aircraft; it will be a convergence of minds dedicated to elevating the standards of safety, maintenance, avionics and aftermarket options. The discussions and insights shared at this gathering will not only enhance our individual operations but also strengthen the King Air community as a whole.

In the spirit of collaboration, let's come together to share our experiences, learn from one another, and continue to uphold the legacy of the King Air. After all, it's our collective commitment to excellence that will ensure the King Air remains a staple of aviation for generations to come.

Mark your calendars and prepare for an inspiring event that promises to shape the future of King Air operations. Registration is scheduled to open mid-December at *kingairgathering.com*. See you in 2026!

Kevin Carson operates the King Air Academy training center in Phoenix, Arizona, and he organized the first King Air Gathering in 2017. He is often accused of being a Beechcraft zealot, as he has owned and/or flown almost every different model of Bonanza, Baron and King Air manufactured.

Zach Cleaver, a Gold Seal flight instructor since 2009, started teaching in King Airs in 2010 and has worked for King Air Academy since 2013.

King Air Academy and King Air Nation are the lead organizers of KAG 2026.

Credit: Textron Aviation

Contemplating Paint

Tips on repainting your King Air

by Dean Benedict

Thinking of having your King Air painted? No doubt the first thing that comes to mind is the cost. New paint is pricey and you'll want to shop around. Ten years ago, I saw quotes ranging from $25,000 to $50,000 or more to paint a 90 series King Air. With today's prices, I bet those numbers have doubled. And with bigger aircraft and custom paint schemes, the cost goes up from there.

But before you start salivating over paint colors and design, you need to get down to the nitty-gritty. I've seen a lot of King Airs in my day – some with great paint, others not so much. Below, I've included things to keep in mind when contemplating new paint for your King Air.

Dissecting paint quotes

At minimum, get several quotes. They may vary enormously in price and what they cover. You're going to have to dig into these quotes to get an apples-to-apples comparison. You'll need to ask questions; now is not the time to be shy.

First off, determine what exactly is being stripped and painted. Are they painting the gear? What about the wheel wells and flap wells? Do they pressure wash and paint over certain areas or do they strip and paint *everything?* You need to know.

How much time do they allow for a basic paint job on your type of aircraft? Does the quote detail the preparation steps? Does the quote identify what materials are used? You don't want a shop that cuts corners, but you don't want to be taken to the cleaners, either.

Stripping

A King Air will always be stripped before repainting. This can be done with media blast (such as glass beads or walnut shell particles), chemical strippers or, in certain circumstances, sanding. Chemical strippers are the most common choice.

Careful masking of everything not being stripped and painted is vital. Chemical strippers destroy plastic and rubber. Windows and light lenses, beacons and boots, seals and tires – all these items will be ruined if they come in contact with stripper. Meticulous masking is time-consuming but critical.

Special attention should be paid to the antennas as they have a protective coating that is destroyed by strippers. Many are mounted on the belly, and gravity brings the stripper down to that area. Regardless of location, all antennas must be well protected.

Chemical strippers are highly corrosive so after they've done their job, they must be cleaned off thoroughly. Close attention must be paid to getting stripper out of every crack and crevice where it may have seeped, such as skin laps and inspection panels.

I once heard of a B200 with a lot of problems following the installation of a G-1000 panel. Everything was double-checked and triple-checked. A great deal of time was spent chasing the issues to no avail. Finally, as a last resort, they inspected and found corroded skin under the antennas. That airplane had been recently painted! Apparently, stripper seeped into the antenna bases and compromised their bond. Precise and thorough masking would have prevented this.

During the paint stripping process.

After all the paint has been stripped.

Prep & prime

After stripping and cleaning, bare aluminum needs protection against corrosion. For decades, zinc chromate primer, that ubiquitous

yellow-green coating found on the innards of every airplane, was the go-to protection for aluminum. When chromates were deemed a health hazard, zinc phosphate was used instead. Since it looks exactly like zinc chromate, all of us old-timers keep calling it that even though it's now zinc phosphate. Old habits die hard.

Alodining is another anti-corrosion option. Some shops offer alodining as a "pre-treatment" before primer. Once it gets going, corrosion can be a big problem. By the time you see it, it has done considerable damage. If you operate in a corrosive environment, pay close attention to the anti-corrosion methods offered.

The world of aircraft paint systems has advanced dramatically from the old days of zinc chromate. Now there are pre-treatments, multi-step primer systems, adhesion enhancers, etc. All of this comes before the application of any paint!

Prepping the areas on the aluminum skin that were less than perfect by adding filler and then smoothing it out via sanding.

When it comes to painting anything – a model car, a real car, a house or an airplane – surface preparation is crucial. Before or during priming, minor dents or distortions in the aluminum skin are smoothed out with filler and sanded. Although power sanders are often employed, I'm a stickler for sanding by hand whenever possible. The use of a power sander on an airplane makes me cringe.

I'll never forget the King Air that came to my shop for a routine phase inspection. As the owner pointed out his new N-number, I noticed some button-head rivets were missing. I looked a little closer and saw that every rivet in the N-number area was shorn down flush with the skin! Apparently the shop that performed the work used a power sander where they shouldn't have. I was horrified; sawed-off rivets compromise the structural integrity of a pressurized aircraft such as a King Air. It was an expensive squawk to remedy. Every rivet had to be drilled out and replaced, and the button-head on each new rivet was painstakingly retouched with paint. King Airs are loaded with button-head rivets.

Control surfaces & flaps

When repainting an aircraft, the ailerons, elevators and rudder are removed and painted separately. They are rebalanced in accordance with the maintenance manual, then reinstalled on the aircraft. Failure to balance a control surface per the manual can result in flutter during flight. If the flutter is extreme, the control surface can rip off.

Flaps are another story. Some paint shops remove them, others do not. I feel strongly that flaps should be ›

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The aircraft has been primed and is now ready for the paint process (left). The application of the base coat, Matterhorn White, is nearly complete in this photo (right). Wing lockers, cowlings, panels and grates are removed and painted separately.

removed for paint. When they are left on the wing, stripper can seep into areas that are impossible to clean. Wherever stripper is left sitting, corrosion develops. In this case, the flap bearings and washers are at risk and when they go bad, the flap tracks are the next to go. Flap tracks are nothing to mess with. If I had a King Air being painted, I'd insist the flaps be removed.

Post-paint inspection

Don't be in a hurry to pick up your King Air from the paint shop. Take at least a half day to look closely at everything. Check for drips, fish eye, orange peel texture, gaps and overspray. Minor blemishes and flaws can be remedied. A good shop will address them without complaint. Hopefully, there are no such issues. If possible, bring your mechanic along to verify the control surfaces have been balanced per the manual. It behooves you to have someone double-check their figures.

Years ago, one of my customers picked up his C90 after a new paint job. He got into the cockpit and noticed that both airspeeds were stuck at around 80 knots. He checked the pitots and they looked fine – they weren't covered or blocked in any way. So, he gave me a call and we hatched a plan.

He flew to my shop in another aircraft. I grabbed a spare airspeed indicator, and we flew to the paint facility together. I installed my spare airspeed on one side and did a quick pitot static test to verify everything was good. The plan was to get his King Air to my shop with the loaner airspeed and address the airspeed issues. As I chatted with the paint shop staff, I discovered they used a blow gun to remove the dust. It seems their guy blew directly into the pitot tubes – that explained the airspeed problem.

Then I began to wonder about other things. I asked to see what maintenance manual they used for control surface balancing. They showed me an F90 manual. Needless to say, this C90 did not leave the paint shop that day. They had to pull all the control surfaces back off, balance them per the C90 manual and reinstall them yet again. Eventually we got this King Air over to my shop, had the airspeeds repaired and all was well.

Fortunately, the owner of the paint shop took this one on the chin. He used this incident as a learning lesson

for all his guys and ultimately took his business to the next level. In the years following, he called me many times with King Air questions that I was happy to help answer.

Level the playing field

Most paint shops will give you a generic quote. But, as you can see, it is vital that you ask questions and delve into these quotes to flush out any differences. You're trying to get them all on the same page for a true apples-to-apples comparison of the basic repaint cost. Once you start adding design features (colors, stripes, ribbons, fades, custom logos and more), sticker shock will set in.

Screws – pay now or pay later

With new paint, there's one more thing to consider: screws. What will happen to your gorgeous, fresh and pristine paint job at the next phase inspection? Mechanics with pointed tools must open access panels for inspection and repair. There are many panels, each with six to 20 screws. That's a lot of screws, and *every one of those screws has been painted over.*

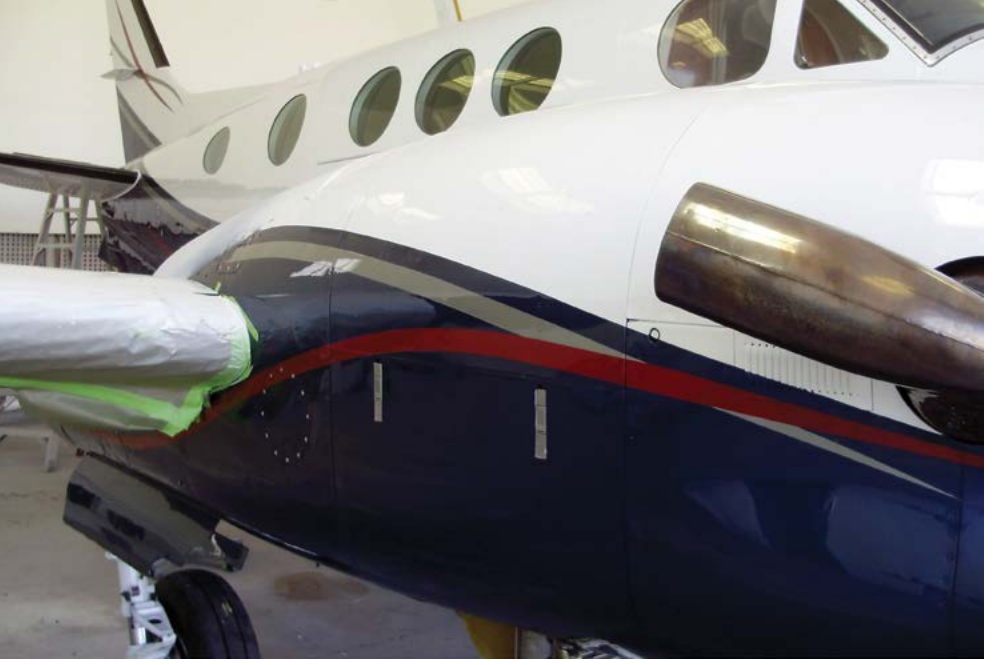
Your new paint job has essentially sealed every screw in place. When these screws are removed for the first time, the new paint around the screw heads will twist and tear or chip away. The thicker the paint, the bigger the problem. I've seen paint so thick I could barely make out the screwdriver slots.

It's heartbreaking for all. No decent mechanic likes to tear up brand-new paint, but there is only so much one can do to minimize the damage. Paint cutters are a good start. Tool sets are available to cut through the paint around various sized screws. This is extremely time-consuming, and the added labor won't be included in the flat rate for the phase inspection, but it's much better than taking no action at all. Cutting the paint around every screw is the "pay later" option.

The layout of a design is underway in this photo. The rudder has been reattached to achieve continuity in the arcing stripe on the tail.

Extensive masking is required to apply a color over the base coat. The rudder is still on but will be removed later, balanced per the maintenance manual and reinstalled before the aircraft is delivered to the customer.

Each time a different color is applied, all else must be masked off.



This paint job is near the finish line on a King Air that looks new again.

You can avoid this situation altogether by planning before you have the airplane painted. These are the "pay now" options. One is to have the paint shop back out every screw a couple of turns before painting the aircraft. After the paint has cured, the screws are screwed all the way in. The paint around the screw heads won't chip when the screw is removed for maintenance, and it's a much cleaner look than a paint cutter could provide.

The other "pay now" option is to have the paint shop install stainless steel screws after paint. The advantages of stainless hardware are many: Nothing is painted over; paint around the screws does not chip; there's no paint to chip off the screw head itself; and the screw head will never rust. This is my preference. Plus, I like the finished look of stainless hardware.

Many designers prefer painted screw heads for the smooth and seamless look. They feel this showcases their design to its maximum potential. But you need to look beyond the designer's mindset as they won't be around after five or 10 years to see what the painted hardware looks like after the wear and tear of required maintenance. It's impossible to remove and reinstall painted screws repeatedly without chipping the paint. It's something to consider carefully.

Stainless steel screws have one minor downside. They must be treated properly. You cannot use a power screwdriver and run these screws in with one shot. A stainless screw gets hot very rapidly, so if screwed in too quickly, it will gall in its receptacle. Once galled, that screw will never come back out. This is easily avoided by running the screw in with several short bursts. Otherwise, you have the laborious task of drilling out the screw and tapping or replacing the receptacle. Good mechanics deal with stainless steel screws all the time and know how to avoid galling.

It's a big job

Painting an airplane is labor-intensive. It's hard to imagine the scope of work involved until you see it firsthand. The accompanying photos, taken from a variety of King Air paint jobs, help illustrate the complexity of painting a cabin-class aircraft.

Stripping, surface preparation and priming must take place before any paint is applied. In addition to control surfaces being removed and painted separately, items such as wing lockers, engine cowlings, panels and grates are also removed, painted separately, then reinstalled. One photo shows the design layout underway on the rudder, which has been reattached to achieve continuity in the arcing stripe on the tail. The rudder will be removed again for painting of the design scheme, then balanced per the maintenance manual and reinstalled a second time once the aircraft is ready to be delivered to the customer.

I mentioned the importance of masking during the stripping phase. There is a lot more masking involved during the paint phase. Once the base coat is finished and has cured, it's time to add the colors in the paint scheme design. Each time a different color is applied, everything not being painted that color must be masked off. After a color is applied, it must fully cure before masking can begin for the application of another color. It's a big job, and it takes time to do it right.

All this discussion of paint schemes, colors and design may seem purely cosmetic but there is a functional aspect to aircraft paint. Remember that every step of a paint job, up through the base coat, is really required protection for the aluminum skin of your aircraft. When it's time to repaint your King Air, choose wisely and allow time. KA

Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of Master Aircraft Services in Wickenburg, Arizona, *masteraircraftservicesinc.com*.

Dean Benedict is a certified A&P, AI with over 50 years of experience in King Air maintenance. He received the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award from the FAA in 2025. He was an inaugural inductee to the King Air Hall of Fame in 2022. Dean owned and ran Honest Air Inc., a Beechcraft maintenance boutique with a strong following of King Airs, for 15 years. Currently, with BeechMedic LLC, Dean and his wife, Lisa, consult with King Air owners, pilots and mechanics on maintenance issues, troubleshooting and pre-buys. Dean performs expert witness work on request. He can be reached at dr.dean@beechmedic.com or 702-524-4378.

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Motivated by Mission

Two pilots – both military veterans – share their experiences with charitable flying organizations.

by MeLinda Schnyder

Tragic flash flooding at summer camps in Texas, storm surges destroying villages in western Alaska, a Category 5 hurricane devastating Jamaica – King Air pilots have had the opportunity this year to make a difference for people and communities facing difficult situations. Beyond these natural disasters, the ongoing need continued to grow for the aviation community to support patients of all ages, veterans, Special Olympics athletes and even wildlife and environmental causes needing a special lift that only private aviation can provide.

"Charity flying gives you a chance to use an asset that you already have, and you're using the skills that you've honed in a way that makes someone else's life easier," said Patrick Murphy, president and CEO at Trident General Contracting.

The New York-based pilot flew his 1981 Beechcraft King Air C90 in the 2022 Special Olympics Airlift and estimates he has flown about 250 hours for SkyHope, a nonprofit organization providing free flights to those in need. He served 10 years in the U.S. Navy as a lieutenant commander, flying search and rescue helicopters, deploying to the Japan-based 7th Fleet and Iraq multiple times. An itch to fly returned after his active service ended, and he started flying fixed-wing aircraft through a local club in early 2017.

"I flew to all the hamburger spots in the area so I was looking for another reason to fly, another mission," he said. "With my military background, I realized I needed a mission. I started volunteering to make charitable flights and found they gave me a reason to fly while also allowing me to gain more experience with planning, executing and completing flights."

That same mission mindset propelled James Halepaska to get involved with Operation Airdrop's disaster relief efforts earlier this year. As a 13-year veteran of the United States Marine Corps, Halepaska knew immediately he needed to do something to help when news broke of the tragic flash flooding in Texas Hill Country during the first week of July.

"With the Marine Corps, we went to Haiti a few times to provide aid, and I'm always looking to do something to help others," he said, adding that this was the first time he'd been able to combine flying and humanitarian help since becoming a pilot in 2023. "It was cool to see something like this from the civilian side – seeing that people can affect change without incredible amounts of government support. It was heartwarming to watch communities come together so fast."

As we close out 2025 and head into a new year, we're sharing these accounts from two King Air pilots and military veterans to inspire you to consider getting involved with a charitable flying organization.

Operation Airdrop

Operation Airdrop began as a grassroots response by pilots in the Dallas area to Hurricane Harvey, the Category 4 hurricane that ravaged the Texas coast in 2017.

Now a fully registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, OAD has grown each year as it responded to hurricane-damaged areas in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Puerto Rico, the Carolinas and Tennessee, tornado-hit communities in the Midwest and more. The mission has always been about speed, compassion and action – focusing on the first 24 to 72 hours after a disaster, filling the critical gap before traditional relief systems can fully mobilize.

Operation Airdrop has flown thousands of missions providing millions of pounds of relief to communities in need by activating its nationwide network of general aviation pilots, partners and ground volunteers.

Halepaska saw Operation Airdrop's call for donations of supplies and volunteers to help sort and pack the supplies in response to deadly flash floods along the Guadalupe River in Central Texas on July 4-5. He lives in North Texas and is part of a four-pilot crew at Tradewind Charter, a Part 135 operator with a King Air 300 and a Falcon 2000 at Dallas Executive Airport (KRBD).

He told his employer he was going to take some time off to volunteer at Addison Airport (KADS) loading supplies onto aircraft bound for Burnet Municipal Airport (KBMQ) in Burnet, an airport OAD was using to stay out of the search-and-rescue operations happening at Kerrville Municipal Airport (KERV).

"The owner of the King Air 300 is from down around those parts of Texas, and he said what if we volunteer our plane to fly supplies down to the affected area?" Halepaska recalled. "I had the day off already and our King Air captain Bryce Albrecht also had the day off, so we both agreed to volunteer to make the mission happen."

They flew N124CM from KRBD to KADS, where massive amounts of donated supplies were ready to go in support of debris removal, cleanup and safety for affected families and volunteers on the ground in Central Texas.

"Cleaning supplies, personal protection equipment, chainsaws with no fuel – anything we could legally put

In response to deadly flash flooding in Central Texas, Tradewind Charter donated pilot time and N124CM to transport supplies from the Dallas area to Burnet Municipal Airport. Pictured at KBMQ, left to right: pilot Chris Burrows, pilot James Halepaska and Tradewind Charter captain Bryce Albrecht.

in an airplane, we put in the King Air," said Halepaska, who is not type-rated in the 300 but has hours in the King Air 90 series. "We made use of that trip and had every inch of the plane jam-packed."

There were all sizes of aircraft making the journey to KBMQ that day, Halepaska said, and he was proud of how much the King Air could hold and the speed they were able to get to Burnet. N124CM was headed to scheduled maintenance the next day, but Halepaska spent more time loading supplies onto other aircraft.

When that airlift mission concluded, OAD reported 105 flights carried essential tools and supplies directly into areas that were otherwise difficult to access. Next, Operation Airdrop coordinated with partners and volunteers to respond to two more natural disasters in October and November: unprecedented flooding in Western Alaska caused by remnants of Typhoon Halong and the Category 5 Hurricane Melissa that devastated Jamaica.

A King Air supporting Operation Airdrop's relief efforts following Hurricane Melissa.

Operation Airdrop focuses on responding rapidly with supplies following disasters.

Operation Airdrop

Mobilizes pilots and non-pilot volunteers to deliver disaster relief

HQ: Greater Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, area

Geographic coverage: North America and the Caribbean

Needs: pilot and non-pilot volunteers, donations

Learn more: *operationairdrop.org*

Patrick Murphy, standing on the right, has flown 89 legs for SkyHope, most of them in this 1981 King Air C90.

SkyHope

SkyHope began its mission to provide free regional medical, compassion and veteran flights in 2010. Fifteen years later, they've completed more than 37,000 free flights totaling 6.5 million passenger miles. Those numbers include serving over 4,300 families and assisting more than 2,700 veteran flights.

The nonprofit based at Republic Airport (KFRG) in Farmingdale, New York, arranges air transportation for individuals and families who would otherwise need to travel hours by car for essential medical diagnosis, second opinions, treatment or follow-up care. Operating predominantly east of the Mississippi River, the organization's mission is to ensure no one in need of lifesaving or life-changing treatment is grounded by financial or geographic barriers.

In addition to no-cost flights for patients, their caregivers and companions, the Hope for Heroes program provides free air transportation for military personnel and veterans to support the wellbeing of their body, mind and spirit with flights for medical treatment as well as rehabilitative retreats.

The SkyHope staff reviews flight requests, coordinates mission logistics and provides patient support and pilot oversight. At the heart of the organization is a network of more than 560 volunteer pilots who donate their aircraft, time and compassion.

Murphy was flying single-engine piston aircraft when he first volunteered to fly for SkyHope, previously known as Patient AirLift Services SkyHope. He credits a mechanical issue that occurred while returning home from a SkyHope mission with convincing him it was time to move to a twin-engine turboprop. He owned his King Air C90 from 2020 until this fall, when he couldn't pass up an unsolicited offer to sell.

Across the 89 legs he's completed for SkyHope in the King Air and other aircraft, Murphy flew 181 passengers and accumulated 26,000 miles during 250 hours of flying. Those flights have included taking groups of veterans to Major League Baseball games as part of a partnership between SkyHope and MLB to honor the veterans' service, provide camaraderie and help in the

SkyHope

Free medical flights and more

HQ: Republic Airport (KFRG) in Farmingdale, New York

Geographic coverage: east of the Mississippi River

Needs: pilot and non-pilot volunteers, donations

Learn more: *skyhope.org*

With the help of volunteer pilots like Patrick Murphy, right, SkyHope provides air transportation for individuals and families who would otherwise need to travel hours by car.

healing process. He's also flown adult patients to cancer treatments as well as families with young kids needing specialized treatment at children's hospitals.

"The King Air is a great platform for this type of flying," Murphy said. "We're talking 500 to 1,000 nautical mile trips in two hours versus three to four hours in a piston."

Besides the financial assistance they receive, SkyHope passengers are appreciative of the privacy and ease of traveling via private aircraft. They are often new to flying in smaller aircraft, and Murphy said his passengers were often happy to see the size and comfort of the King Air. For that reason, he'd like to see more King Air pilots participate.

"If the reason you're not flying for SkyHope is that you're concerned it'll take a lot of time to handle the logistics of a flight, don't let that stop you. There's not a big administrative burden to doing these flights; the organization has volunteers and staff to coordinate with your passengers," he said. "There's no pressure coming from the organization to make a flight. They have a plan B for every flight; you're still the pilot in command."

There is no minimum requirement for the number of flights a pilot must support, and SkyHope is flexible in order to match missions with a pilot's availability, weight, distance and geography.

SkyHope helped Tommy and his family travel more conveniently from their home in West Islip, New York, to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to see the leading doctor in research and care for children with Krabbe's disease.

SkyHope began its mission to provide free regional medical, compassion and veteran flights in 2010.

Special Olympics Airlift

For King Air pilots who struggle with spur of the moment requests to fly for charitable organizations, Murphy recommends signing up for the 2026 Special Olympics Airlift.

The dates are set – transport athletes to Minnesota's St. Paul Downtown Airport Holman Field (KSTP) on Friday, June 19 and return to take them home on Saturday, June 27 – and according to Murphy, involvement couldn't be easier.

"Everything outside of the actual flying of the aircraft is taken care of for you by Textron Aviation's team," Murphy said of his 2022 airlift experience. "A lot of corporate flight departments fly in the SOA but it's a great event for the individual operator too."

Organized by Textron Aviation, the SOA mobilizes hundreds of volunteer Beechcraft, Cessna and Hawker pilots and aircraft to create the world's largest peacetime airlift. The event will transport hundreds of athletes and coaches across the country to the 2026 Special Olympics USA Games in Minnesota's Twin Cities.

Special Olympics uses year-round sports training and athletic competition to help children and adults with intellectual disabilities discover new strengths, abilities, skills and success while championing for a more inclusive world. All expenses – from facilities during training to meals and lodging during competition – are paid for by Special Olympics in hopes that no one is left on the sideline due to inability to pay. Travel is one of the

During the 2022 Special Olympics Airlift, New York-based pilot Patrick Murphy, second from left, flew a delegation of Tennessee athletes and chaperones in the 1981 King Air C90 he owned at the time.

largest expenses for state programs sending athletes to the USA Games, which take place every four years in different locations throughout the country.

Wichita, Kansas-headquartered Cessna Aircraft Company started the tradition of the airlift in 1995 and to date the SOA has transported nearly 10,000 athletes and coaches from across the country. The 2022 SOA – the first since Cessna and Beechcraft became Textron Aviation – was the first time organizers invited select Beechcraft, including King Air models, and Hawker aircraft to fly alongside Cessna Citation jets.

Murphy loved that he could plan months ahead and block out the SOA dates on his calendar. Because he was flying a King Air C90, he was assigned to fly a delegation closer to the host city. He arrived in Smyrna, Tennessee, the night before the airlift and the next morning flew three athletes and two chaperones to Orlando.

"It was cool to be a part of the airlift because of the complexity of the entire operation," he said. "It was a conga line from just south of Atlanta into Orlando. It was remarkable to see the amount of coordination that happens between the ATC, the Textron Aviation folks and the Special Olympics team to slot everyone in there. They have a fine-tuned process of getting you out of the aircraft, parked and fueled with enough time to get a bite to eat with other pilots at the hospitality tent."

If he purchases another King Air before the 2026 event, he'd love to fly another SOA. "I appreciated how extremely well organized and well run it was, even when the day we flew into Orlando was not a good weather day." KA

2026 Special Olympics Airlift

Help transport athletes and their coaches to the 2026 Special Olympics USA Games in Minnesota's Twin Cities on Friday, June 19, 2026, and then return them to their home bases on Saturday, June 27, 2026

HQ: Coordinated by Textron Aviation in Wichita, Kansas

Geographic coverage: across the U.S.

Needs: Owners and operators of Beechcraft King Air, Beechjet and Premier jets, Hawker jets and Cessna Citation jets to donate the use of their aircraft, crew, fuel and time

Learn more: *airlift.txtav.com*

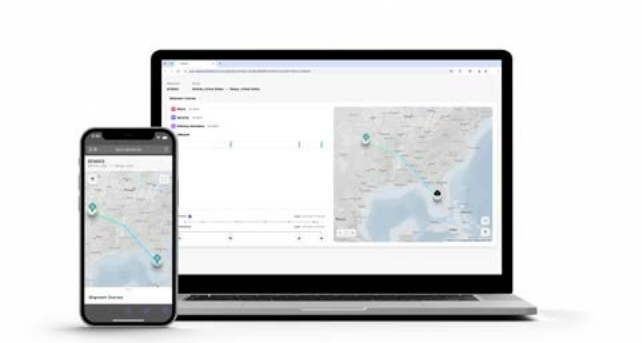
Pro Football Hall of Famer and philanthropist Peyton Manning is honorary chair for the 2026 Special Olympics Airlift organized by Textron Aviation.

Textron Aviation Offers Real-Time Tracking of Parts Shipments

Textron Aviation has integrated Sensos Smart Labels into its parts distribution process, offering customers the option to purchase access to real-time location data and shipment status updates for select parts orders.

The Sensos labels are available for purchase for orders through the Textron Aviation Parts website at *ww2.txtav.com/parts*. The labels are lightweight, wireless trackers that provide continuous location updates throughout the shipping journey. Live tracking information can reduce downtime and enhance proactive planning, whether shipping domestically or internationally.

Textron Aviation offers worldwide parts availability and service programs designed to lower predictable maintenance costs. The Textron Aviation Parts network consists of seven parts distribution centers, 17 stockrooms and a worldwide online parts website. *Source: txtav.com*



Sensos Smart Labels are available on select Textron Aviation parts shipments and offer real-time location data and shipment status updates.

AOPA Foundation Opens Scholarship Applications, Speeds Up Award Process

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association and the AOPA Foundation opened their scholarship application window in October with a new, streamlined process that shortens wait times and helps current and future pilots take advantage of the scholarships sooner.

There will be two shorter application windows each year, with award decisions announced soon after. The current application period closes on Dec. 31, with notifications to recipients beginning in February. The next scholarship application period runs from April to June, with notifications to recipients beginning in August.

"The AOPA Foundation scholarship program is more popular than ever," AOPA Scholarship Manager Taz Thomas said in a news release. "Earlier this year, we awarded more than $2 million to nearly 400 people. With these changes, applicants will learn their results sooner and move forward with their training faster than before."

There are a variety of scholarships available through the AOPA Foundation, including at least 90 students and up to 10 teachers annually receiving at least $10,000 toward training for their private pilot certificate. Other scholarships include funding for primary flight training, such as a sport or private certificate, or helping pilots obtain additional ratings and certificates such as instrument, commercial, flight instructor or multi-engine. The AOPA Foundation also offers several scholarships for non-flying pursuits, including mechanic and flight dispatcher training.

Applicants must meet scholarship-specific criteria and hold a current AOPA membership, which is free for high school students. Find details at *aopa.org/training-and-safety/students/aopa-flight-training-scholarships*. The AOPA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and its scholarships and programs are not funded by AOPA member dues but by donations from individuals and organizations. *Source: aopa.org*

National Aviation Hall of Fame Announces 2026 Class

The National Aviation Hall of Fame announced the outstanding individuals selected for induction in 2026. These trailblazers have made groundbreaking contributions to aviation and aerospace, from breaking barriers and advancing safety standards to pioneering innovative technologies and inspiring future generations. Their induction ceremony is scheduled for Sept. 24, 2026, in Washington, D.C.

With 270 notable individuals enshrined to date, the NAHF remains the only Congressionally chartered aviation hall of fame in the United States. The inductees are chosen

Julie Clark was enshrined in the National Aviation Hall of Fame in 2025 for her career as a trailblazing airline captain, airshow performer and mentor. (Credit: NAHF)

by a distinguished panel of aviation professionals from across the country. Here is the Class of 2026:

William F. Bahret (posthumously): Groundbreaking radar engineer at Wright Field's Avionics Lab, Bahret is often called "the father of stealth." He developed groundbreaking methods to measure and predict radar signatures based on shape and materials – without the need for physical models. His work identified key contributors to radar reflection, such as curved surfaces, jet turbines and antennas. By the 1960s, his theories had been applied to stealth-enhancing designs, such as the Hound Dog missile, placing the U.S. decades ahead in radar evasion technology and laying the foundation for modern low-observable aircraft.

Leonard Michael Greene (posthumously): Visionary inventor and aerodynamics engineer, Greene held more than 200 patents to improve aviation safety and performance. He is best known for inventing the widely adopted Aircraft Stall Warning device, a critical advancement that has saved countless lives. To bring his innovations to market, he founded Safe Flight Instrument Corporation in 1946, which became a leading developer of aircraft safety systems. Beyond engineering, Greene was also a compassionate humanitarian. In 1981, he co-founded the Corporate Angel Network, which uses the empty seats on corporate aircraft to fly cancer patients to treatment at no cost.

Dr. Shannon Lucid: Former NASA astronaut and biochemist who logged over 5,300 hours in space across five missions, including a record-setting 188-day stay aboard Russia's Mir Space Station. Selected as an astronaut in 1978, she was among the first women to join NASA's astronaut corps and later served as NASA's Chief Scientist.

John D. Odegard (posthumously): Born and raised in Minot, North Dakota, Odegard was the visionary founder of the University of North Dakota's School of Aerospace Sciences. Odegard transformed a small flight program into one of the world's leading collegiate aviation schools. Starting with two aircraft and a handful of students, he grew UND into a global leader in pilot education, aerospace research and space studies. He pioneered FAA-accredited degree programs, helped develop international training standards and expanded UND's work in weather, atmospheric science and space exploration, leaving a legacy that continues to shape aviation education worldwide.

Captain Ross Perot Jr.: Accomplished business leader and aviation pioneer who made history as the first person to circumnavigate the globe in a helicopter at age 23, copiloting the Bell 206L-2 "Spirit of Texas" in 1982. A lifelong champion of aerospace innovation, he developed the nation's first purely industrial airport – Fort Worth Alliance Airport – and continues to break records, most recently setting multiple speed records in the Gulfstream G650ER. As Chairman of The Perot Group and Hillwood, he is advancing next-generation aviation technologies while actively supporting programs that inspire young people to pursue careers in flight and engineering, ensuring a strong future for the industry he has helped shape.

Captain C. B. "Sully" Sullenberger: Acclaimed airline captain whose quick thinking and calm leadership during the emergency landing of US Airways Flight 1549 on the Hudson River in 2009 saved all 155 people on board. The event, known as the "Miracle on the Hudson," made him a global symbol of aviation heroism. In the years since, he has become a leading advocate for aviation safety, pilot training and public service, including serving as U.S. Ambassador to the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Dr. Peggy Whitson: Accomplished biochemist and astronaut whose groundbreaking career spans both NASA and commercial human spaceflight. She flew three long-duration missions aboard the International Space Station, became the first woman to command the ISS and later commanded two Axiom Space missions. In 2009, she was appointed NASA's Chief of the Astronaut Office, the first woman and first non-pilot to hold the role. With a U.S. record for the most cumulative days in space and more than 60 hours of extravehicular activity or spacewalking, she continues to advance human spaceflight as a leader at Axiom Space and serves as a powerful inspiration to future explorers. *Source: nationalaviation.org* KA

Saving Lives

King Air 360C air ambulances transform emergency response in Peru.

Beechcraft aircraft are saving lives in Peru. The government recently expanded its emergency response capabilities with a second Beechcraft King Air 360C air ambulance, equipped with vital sign monitors, incubators, stretchers and cold chain systems for organ transport.

Since October 2024, more than 100 Peruvian Air Force aeromedical flights have evacuated over 145 critically ill patients. Many of these patients were in remote areas, demonstrating the life-saving capabilities of these special mission platforms.

"Special Missions Beechcraft and Cessna aircraft continue to prove their value in some of the world's most demanding environments," Bob Gibbs, vice president, Special Mission Sales, said in a news release. "It's an honor to support these life-saving efforts through the Peruvian Air Force's emergency response missions."

As part of the King Air 360C sale, Gibbs said, the company signed two offset agreements with the Peruvian Ministry of Defense with long-term aviation growth in mind. These include support for a new Virtual Reality Center of Excellence in Peru, featuring simulators for the Cessna 172 and Beechcraft King Air to train pilots for both normal and emergency scenarios.

Textron Aviation provided this photo gallery showcasing Peru adding a second King Air 360C air ambulance to its Special Missions operations. KA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All in the Family

Beech granddaughter updates, reprints "The Barnstormer and The Lady."

by MeLinda Schnyder

Originally published in 2010 by Mary Lynn Oliver, the youngest daughter of Walter and Olive Ann Beech, the book "The Barnstormer and The Lady" chronicling the personal lives of the aviation pioneers has been out of print for a decade. Mary Lynn's daughter, Jennifer Pitt, has updated the first edition and reprinted a 15th anniversary edition that is now available for purchase.

An updated version of "The Barnstormer and The Lady" published this fall.

"Everywhere I went, people would ask me where they could find a copy of the book," Jennifer, who lives in Wichita, Kansas, said in an interview with *King Air magazine*. "And there have been so many milestone events and different celebrations honoring my grandparents lately, it seemed like the right time to update the book."

In the book's foreword, Mary Lynn explains her motivation behind the original book on her parents, who founded Beech Aircraft Co. in 1932 in Wichita, and why so little had been written about their personal lives:

"It has long been in my mind and heart to have a biography written about these two remarkable people. Much has been written about the airplanes Beech Aircraft made, but little has been written about the man and the woman behind those airplanes. Many people know that my father never went anywhere without a pipe clenched in his teeth and that my mother's favorite color was a particular shade of blue. But very little is known about the warmth of their personalities and strength of their characters. … it is a pity I did not start this project long ago when their contemporaries and close friends were still around. But that would have been when my mother was still alive, and I respected how fiercely she guarded her personal life and feelings. Even now, I feel I am treading softly on her wishes, but I think their story is worth telling and recording for history and my family before all is lost."

For the original book, Mary Lynn and former *Wall Street Journal* journalist Dennis Farney conducted interviews and solicited recollections about the Beeches from family, friends, former employees, political figures, and history and aviation authorities. Other sources included the Beech archives at Wichita State University

The 15th anniversary edition of "The Barnstormer and The Lady" includes this 1966 photo of Olive Ann Beech in front of her Beechcraft King Air.

and Olive Ann's private desk diaries. Seventeen chapters range from "The Boy Who Wanted to Fly" and "The Girl Who Kept the Books" to "Two Lives, Lived in Full."

Jennifer spent several months creating the book's new pages, which sandwich Dennis' original content and are identified with a blue border. Among these sections are recent tributes to her grandparents, including induction at the Paul E. Garber Shrine at Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina; a look at the company's technological contributions, from a hybrid electric car to supersonic drones and human spaceflight systems; and never-before-printed photographs from the family's archives.

The update also includes a QR code to watch a documentary segment on Olive Ann that includes a rare televised interview she granted to Wichita journalist Larry Hatteberg, who persistently requested the interview for three decades.

Jennifer Pitt with her grandmother Olive Ann Beech at the aviation executive's office.

Jennifer Pitt with her grandmother Olive Ann Beech, left, and her mother, Mary Lynn. Jennifer, who updated the book on her grandparents, has a bachelor's degree from Pepperdine University and master's from Emporia State University. She lives in Wichita, Kansas, where she has long been an active supporter of the Kansas Humane Society and an equestrian champion rider of American saddlebred horses.

Olive Ann Beech was a private person, so it wasn't until years after her death that her family decided to record the story of Walter and Olive Ann in the book "The Barnstormer and The Lady."

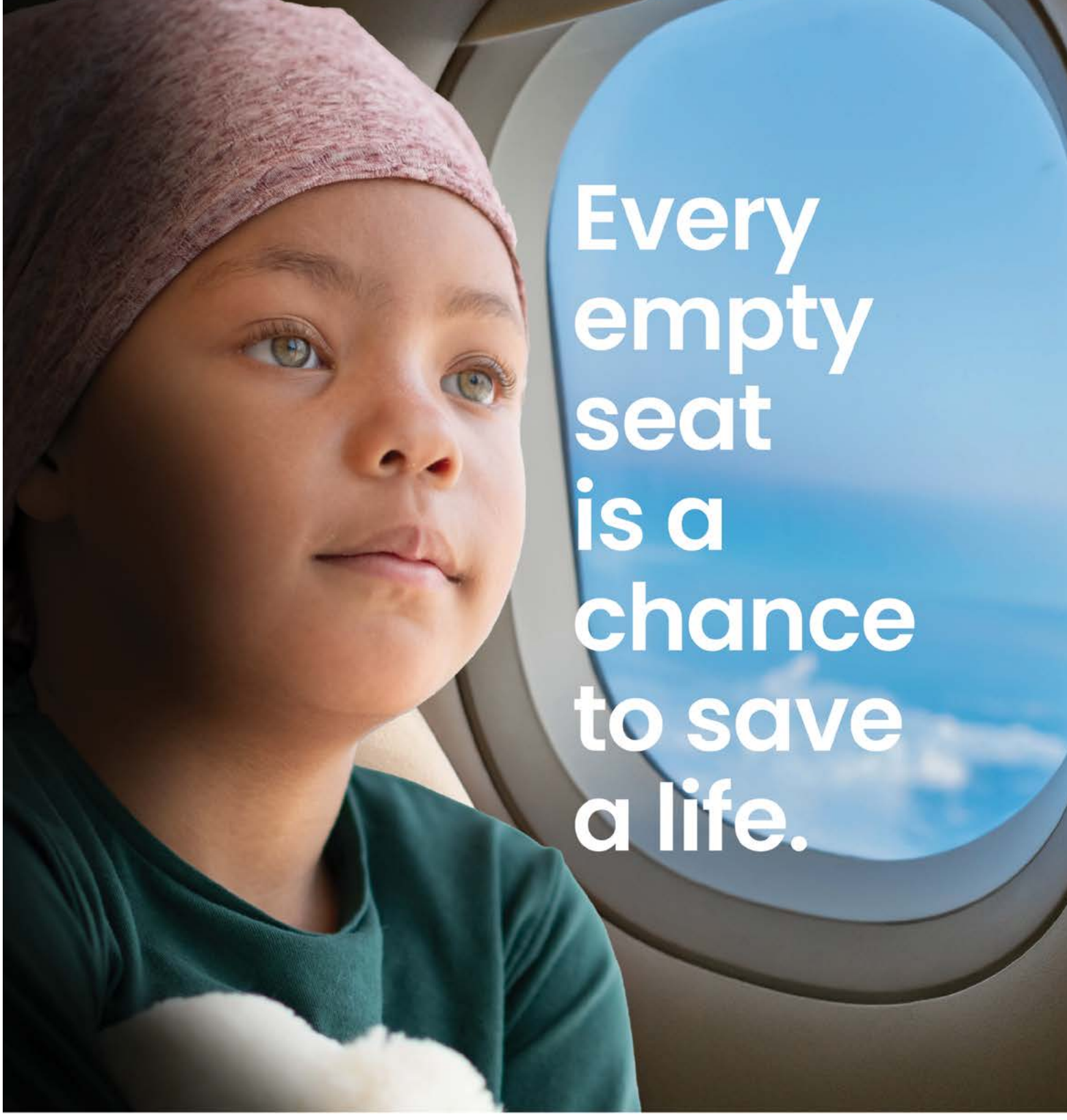
Jennifer never met Walter, who died in 1950, and she was 23 years old when her grandmother died in 1993. She said among her favorite memories of her grandmother are grade school field trips where her entire class would visit Olive Ann's office; magical Christmas Day gatherings at Olive Ann's house, where the woman known for her impeccable style expected visitors to dress formally; and seeing the Christmas card Olive Ann received each year from the President of the United States.

"Anytime a celebrity came to town to pick up their airplane she would call me to come meet them," Jennifer added. "I was out of town when Christopher Reeve visited but she had him sign a poster for me."

Though she was too young while Olive Ann was living to understand the significance of her grandmother's contributions to aviation, business and the community, Jennifer now is focused on preserving her grandparents' legacy and bringing awareness to younger generations.

"I don't want the history to get lost or their names to be forgotten," she said, adding that she has another project in the works that she wants to keep under wraps for now. "I want to do whatever I can to keep their legacy alive."

"The Barnstormer and The Lady" is a 272-page hardcover book that sells for $44.95 plus tax and a shipping charge of $10. It can be ordered at *thebarnstormerandthelady.com*, and Jennifer will include a personal dedication upon request. KA



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