King Air

A MAGAZINE FOR THE OWNER/PILOT OF KING AIR AIRCRAFT

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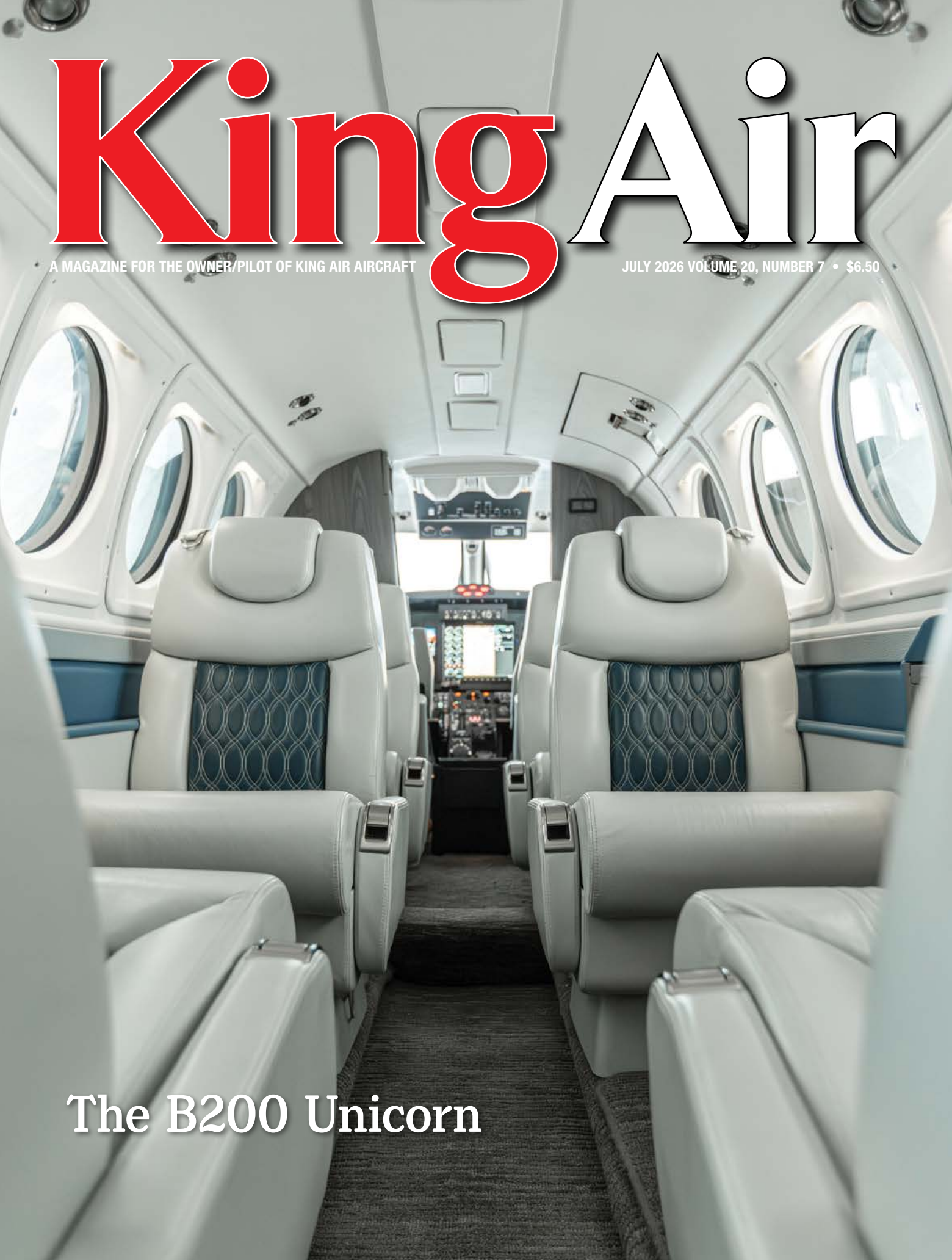

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King Air
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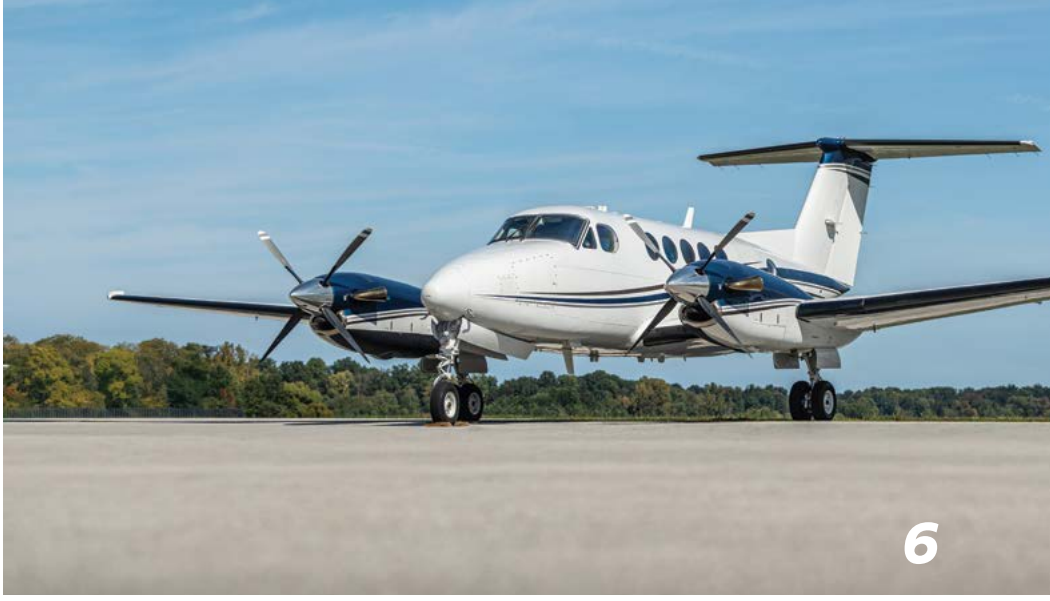
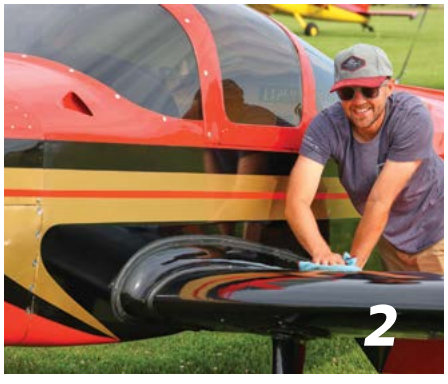
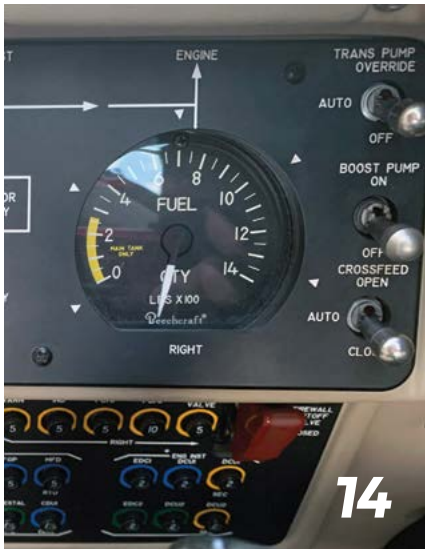
COVER PHOTO
Tim Russell's 1998 King Air B200 (BB-1625)
Courtesy Elliott Jets



WHAT'S INSIDE





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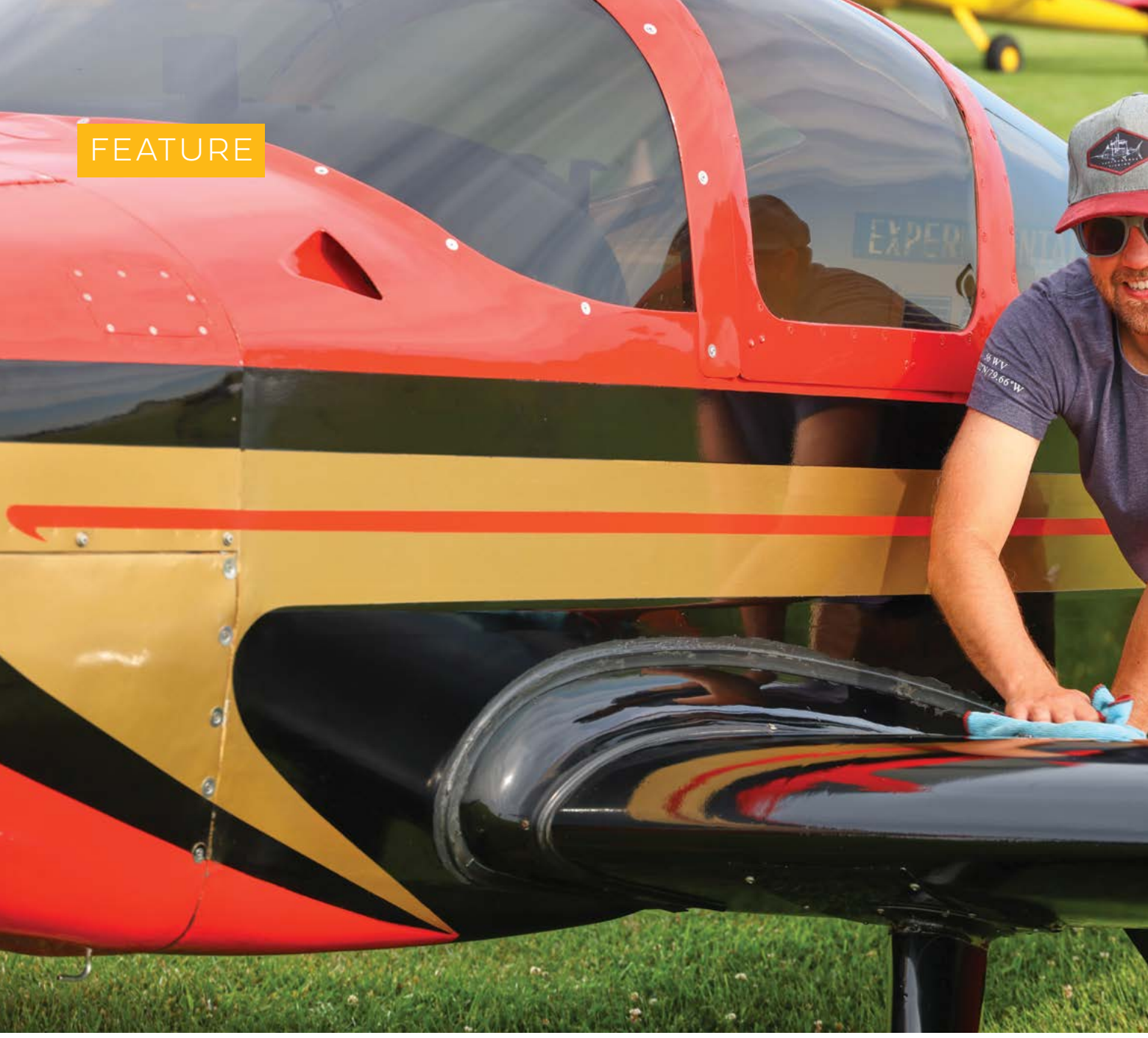
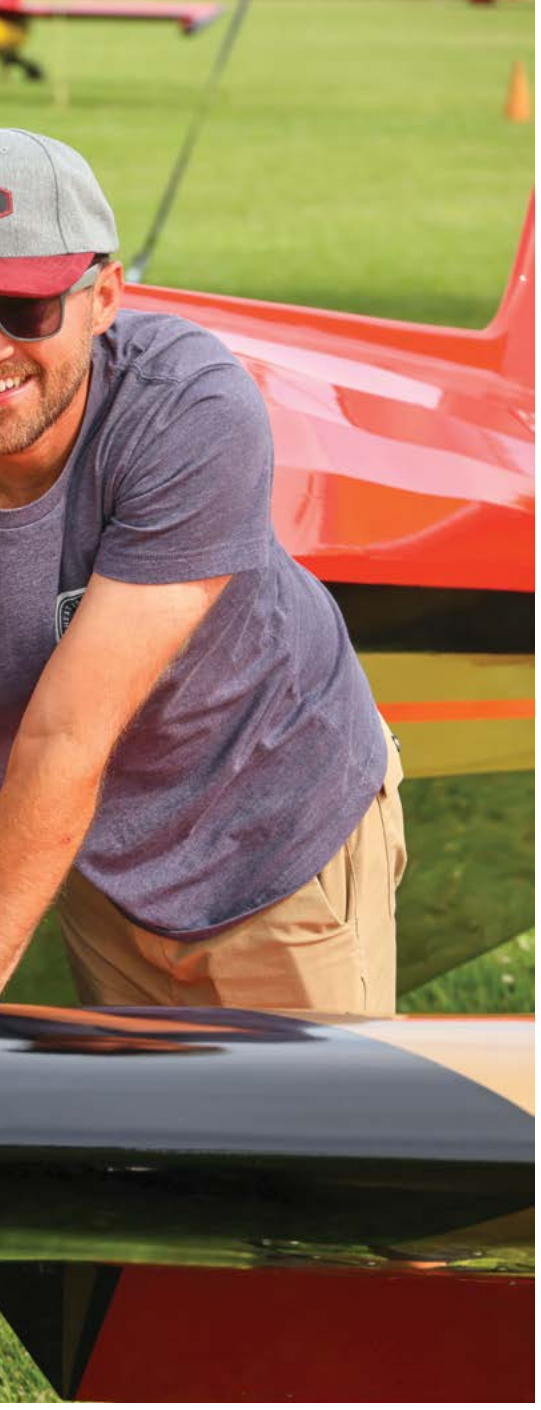


That's a Pilot

EAA AirVenture and other reminders that our aviation community is made up of good folks

by Dennis K. Johnson



No matter how many pilots are flying on a busy Saturday, they all remain courteous, kind and cheerful.
PHOTO CREDIT: BRETT BROCK/EAA

One evening at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, I was walking behind a gray-haired pilot and his wife. It had been a hot, lengthy day of airshows and he was holding on to his wife for a little extra support as he made the long walk from the flight line to the far reaches of the parking lots. He wasn't moving fast and appeared to be worn out. Yet, when he saw a piece of trash on the ground, he stopped, slowly bent down and with much effort picked it up. Only then did he continue the long walk to his car or RV, trash in hand. That's a pilot.

Living in an urban Northeast town where there's more trash on the street after the sanitation workers roll through than before, where smokers litter the sidewalks and dog owners let their animals drop wherever they want, I'm amazed at Oshkosh. Tens of thousands of people on any given day and there's not a scrap of garbage anywhere. That's the community of pilots.

Do you know anywhere else in America where you'll find a "courtesy car"? You've just landed from who knows where, walked into an unfamiliar FBO and they offer you the keys to a car: "Just bring it back when you're done." They don't know you, but they trust you – because you're a pilot.

I landed at an airport in central Pennsylvania on a holiday weekend to find a sign that read "the office is closed." That really meant there would be no staff around, because the office was unlocked. I walked in, used the facilities and bought a soda. I rested a few minutes on the leather couch and flipped through a few magazines. I could have grabbed the computer and loaded it in my airplane. I could have rifled through the office for anything of value. But, being a pilot, I wouldn't do that.

There's always a helpful and friendly person around my airport to help push your airplane into the hangar or consult on a maintenance issue. I've been given spare tools and excess materials many times. The philosophy of pilots seems to be, "as long as it gets good use."

No matter how many pilots are flying on a busy Saturday, they all remain courteous, kind and cheerful, even if that means they must veer away and make a second approach into the pattern. If there's a conflict or someone is going against the flow, that person is usually asked politely to adjust. I've never heard an angry voice or curse over the radio. Most pilots follow the rules because they know that rules make things work better and keep them safe.

Clean and reverent? Usually

I've seen some greasy aircraft owners but usually only when they're changing the oil, and I've sometimes heard some irreverent oaths coming from under the same airplane engine. However, I've never heard such comments aimed toward any person and I doubt I know a single pilot who peppers his conversation with curses like I hear every day on the city streets.

When I was in the Boy Scouts, I had to memorize the 12 points of the Scout Law and repeat them before every meeting: "A Scout

is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent." Many of these attributes that Scouts strive toward seem to describe most pilots I've met. According to NASA, 20 of the 24 men who traveled to the moon on the Apollo missions were Scouts, including 11 of the 12 moonwalkers. Maybe we can thank the Scouts for the good attributes of many of our finest pilots.

Pilots help others

The charitable organizations founded and operated by pilots number in the hundreds, if not thousands. Nine independent Angel Flight organizations across the United States offer free flights in GA aircraft to people in need of medical treatment. The Honor Flight Network transports veterans, especially World War II veterans and those who are terminally ill, to Washington, D.C., to visit the memorials. The glider pilots of Freedom's Wings International give physically challenged people an opportunity to experience soaring in an adapted sailplane and provide specialized flight training.

Pilots, like those at Pilots N Paws and FlyPups, use GA aircraft to save man's best friend. Volunteer pilots fly dogs from kill shelters to foster homes where they'll be protected until they can be adopted. Mission Aviation Fellowship flies 2 million miles a year in developing countries in support of Christian and humanitarian organizations. MAF flights support indigenous churches and provide access to medical care by flying doctors into remote areas and flying seriously ill patients out. The list goes on and on.

If I say pilots are the best people, I may receive rebukes that many other people are equally good and dedicate their lives to good causes. I never claimed I was unbiased. However, I truly don't know any group of people across our nation – and the world – who make up such a consistently honest, hardworking community.

Years ago, in the middle of nowhere Tanzania, I met a mechanic/pilot for MAF. Instantly, we were brothers in the community of pilots. "Come on home for lunch. Ya need a bed for the night?" He didn't know me from Adam, but he knew I was a pilot, so it'd be all right. That type of generosity, that's a pilot. KA

Dennis K. Johnson is a freelance writer and pilot living in Hoboken, New Jersey.

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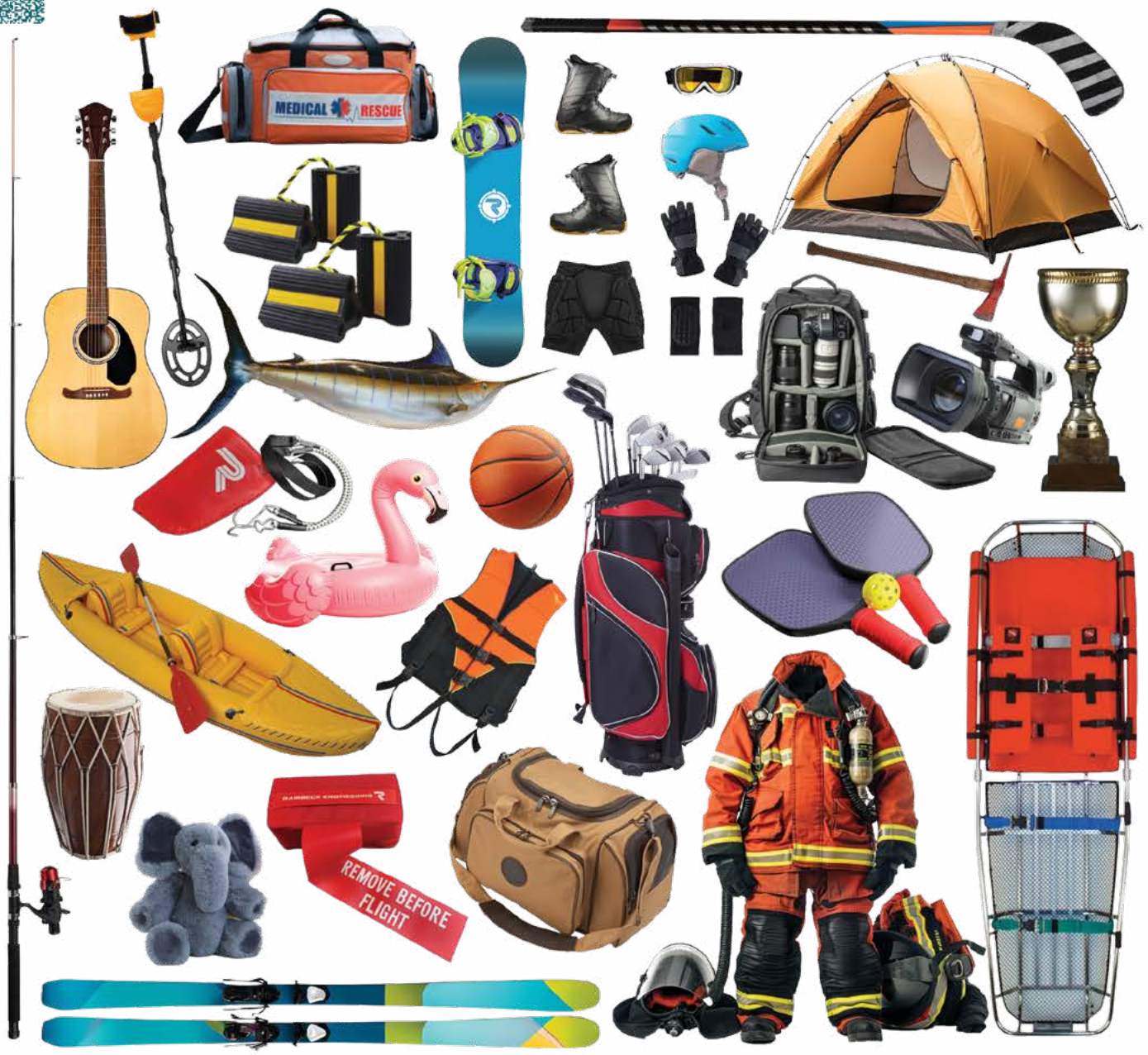

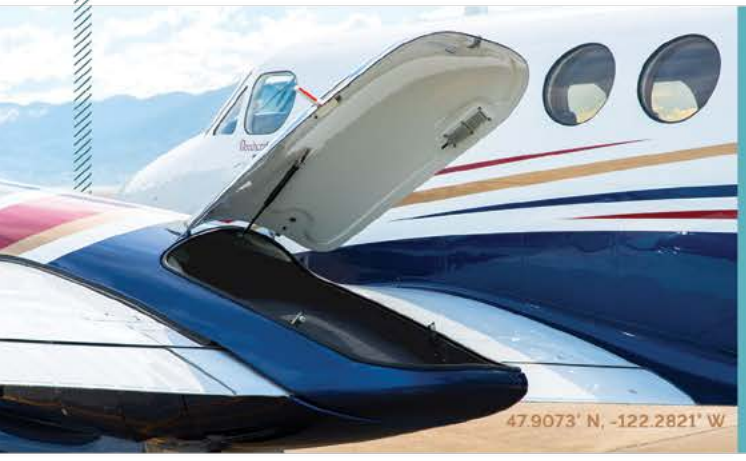

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From One Engine to Two

The B200 Unicorn

A Caravan owner's search for his next airplane led him to one of the top B200s out there.

by Grant Boyd

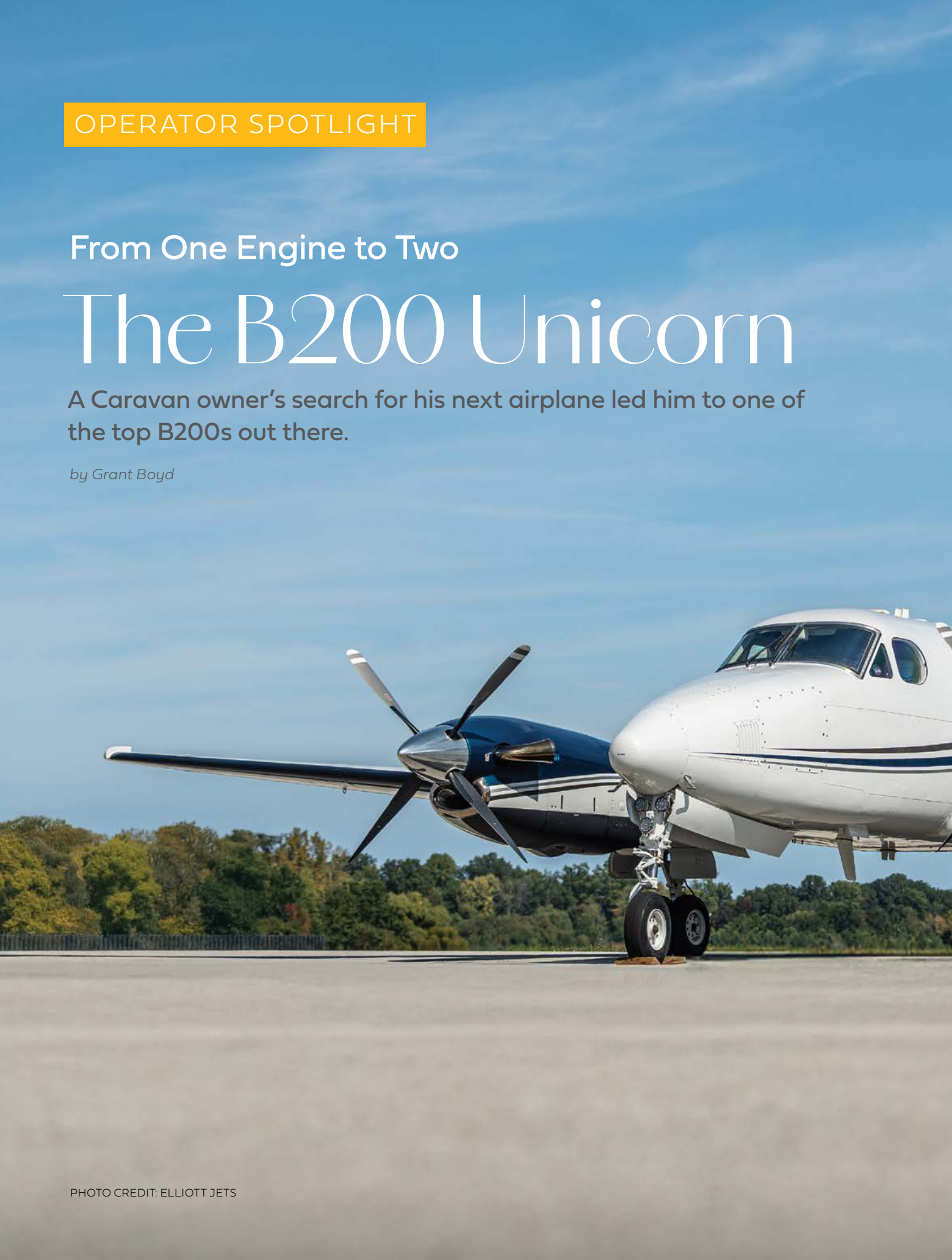


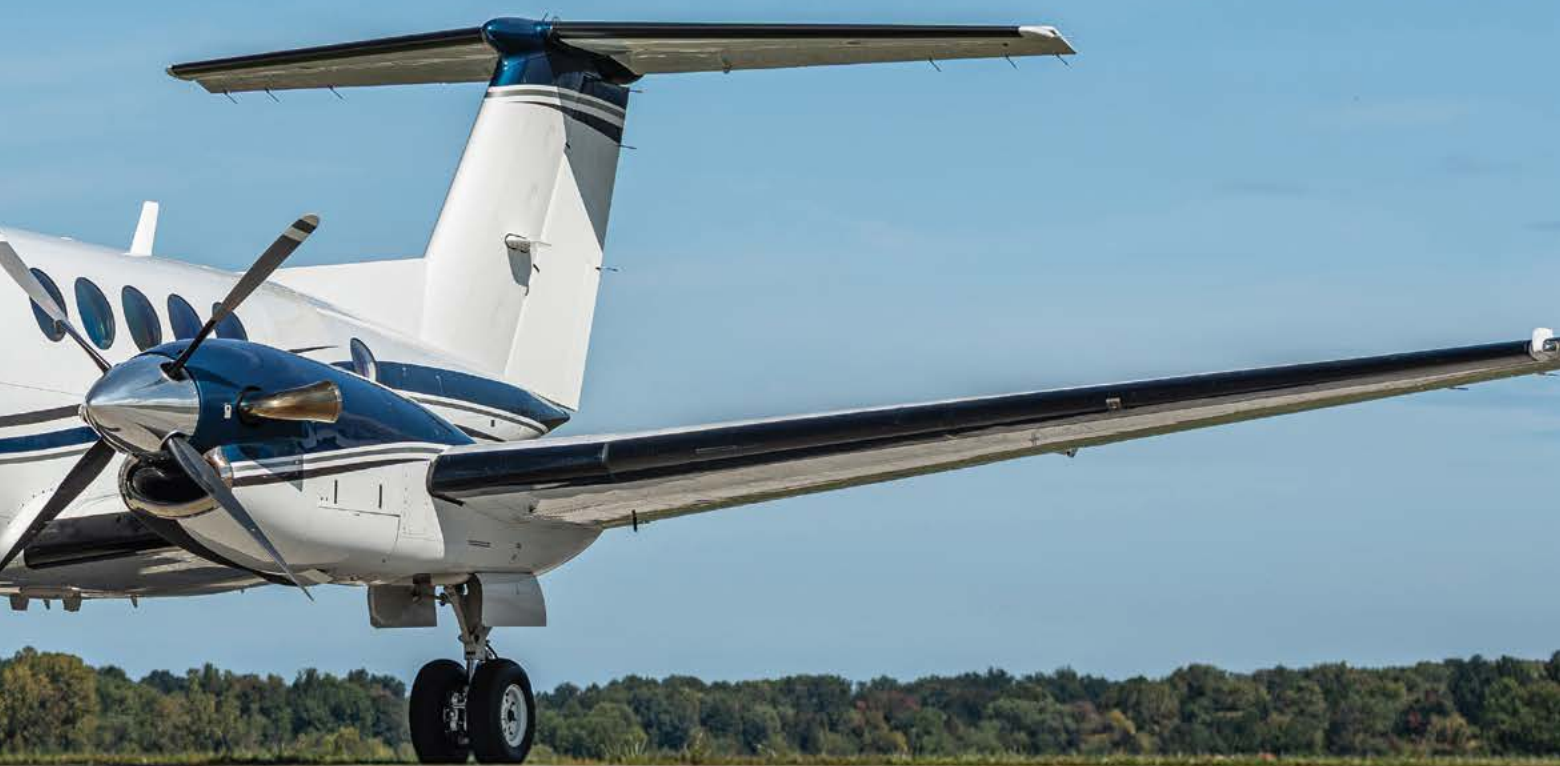
PHOTO CREDIT: ELLIOTT JETS

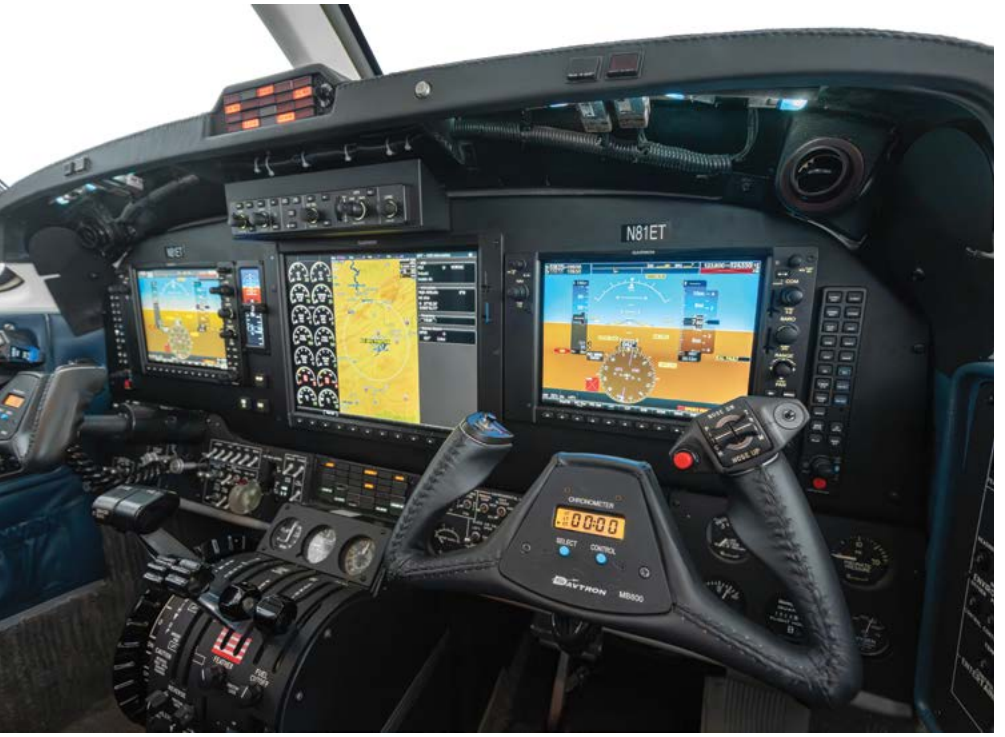
For many pilots, it would be a difficult decision to move on from a mint condition Cessna Grand Caravan EX. This was a problem that Tim Russell of St. Petersburg, Florida, had in 2025, when faced with the prospect that the single-engine turboprop may no longer be the best aircraft for his mission.

"We had the Caravan for nearly five years and it served our purposes really well. Deciding what to get next was a process but we had to get a new plane as a tax benefit," Russell explained, noting that he had to move intentionally because of the looming end-of-the-year tax deadline.

"We first looked at the Cessna Citation Mustang and Epic E1000 but those got shot down by the wife because they didn't have a bathroom. I couldn't convince her that even though most of our flights are less than 90 minutes, we don't need one. I wanted a HondaJet because of the Autoland capabilities but didn't go that route either," he recalled.

"So, I thought bathroom, fast, Autoland. We are talking about King Airs now!"





This B200 has the G1000 NXi Platinum package and autothrottles.

PHOTO CREDIT: ELLIOTT JETS

Finding the right King Air

After a lot of independent research, he enlisted the support of Chip McClure and the team at Jet Acquisitions to accelerate the buying process. Russell started to believe that either a King Air 90 or 200 would be a perfect airplane for his mission.

There were two types of aircraft that he wanted to consider purchasing: either a beat-up bird that could be entirely refurbished or, his best-case scenario, one that already had the work done. McClure helped scour the on and off-market listings before presenting an option that seemed like the perfect candidate.

"We actually ended up with a unicorn that I think is maybe the best King Air B200 that I have ever seen," Russell said. "The previous owner bought the airplane and literally stripped everything out of it. He redid all the interior last year down to the switches and the exterior, as well as added the G1000 NXi Platinum package and autothrottles. It was what I would have done if I were buying the plane in that condition, and I got a really good deal."

The timing of the transaction was unique in several ways. One being that the purchase closed on Russell's birthday, December 23, and was immediately put into service. Secondly, the aircraft was in hand before he had even started his multi-engine training.

Autoland's first save

The Garmin Autoland system was something Russell and his family wanted and this aircraft was one of the few for sale that had the system installed.

"I'm 60 and have no problem with the risk [of flying without an alternative way to land] for my own travels. But when I put family and friends in the plane, that system gives me a lot of confidence if something were to go wrong with me," he said.

"And on December 20, just before the closing, Chip called me and said that the plane just went up in value because of the Autoland system having been used in the real world for the first time [when BB-1179 landed at KBJC; see *King Air* magazine's January 2026 issue for details]. You are buying peace of mind and if Garmin had said that's a million-dollar retrofit, I would have paid for it."

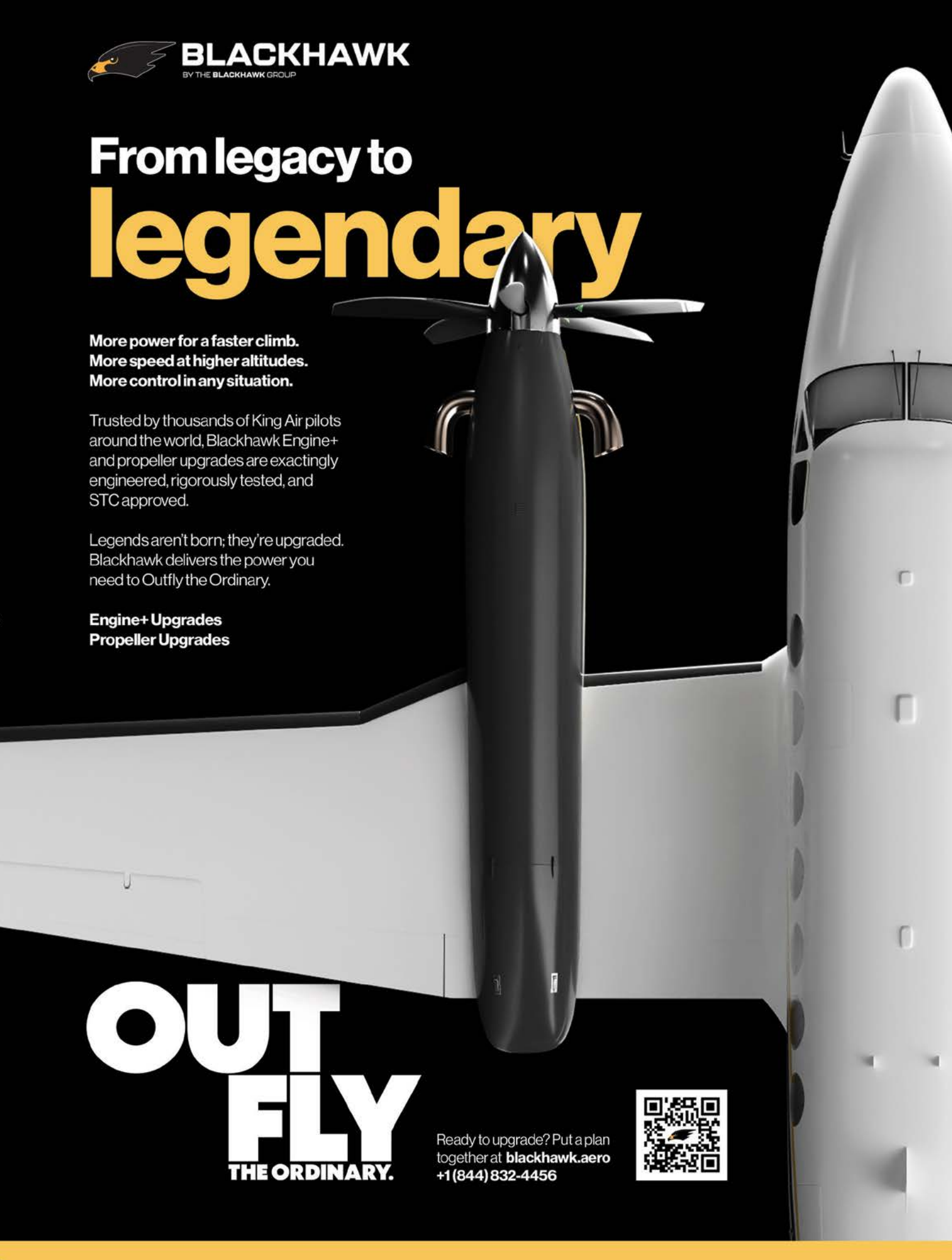
Russell's 1998 King Air B200 (serial BB-1625) is also equipped with autothrottles, which have many benefits of their own.

"There is nothing scary about King Airs except a VMC rollover on takeoff. You lose an engine on takeoff, at low altitude while slow, you have got to be prepared because really good pilots have lost these planes in that condition," he noted, adding that not only do the autothrottles help in engine-out scenarios, but they also make all flying much simpler.

Another safety-related inclusion on the aircraft that provides peace of mind is the Garmin G1000 NXi's autopilot with built-in Electronic Stability and Protection (ESP). This software helps ensure stable flight, including protecting against underspeed and overspeed scenarios.

Only the best

Russell's philosophy with aircraft, cars and other equipment is that it's ›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not worth having if it's not the best. This often means a lot of time spent thinking about improvement and hours in the shop making those goals a reality. Even though the B200 he bought was well equipped, there were some items that he saw that could be improved.

One of the benefits of King Air ownership is that you can customize the aircraft to your needs. There are a multitude of STCs and other options for enhancement from tip to tail.

After the Stevens Aerospace Nashville, Tennessee, location recently added wing lockers, Starlink internet and Garmin's GWX 8000 weather radar, there isn't much left to be done to this serial.

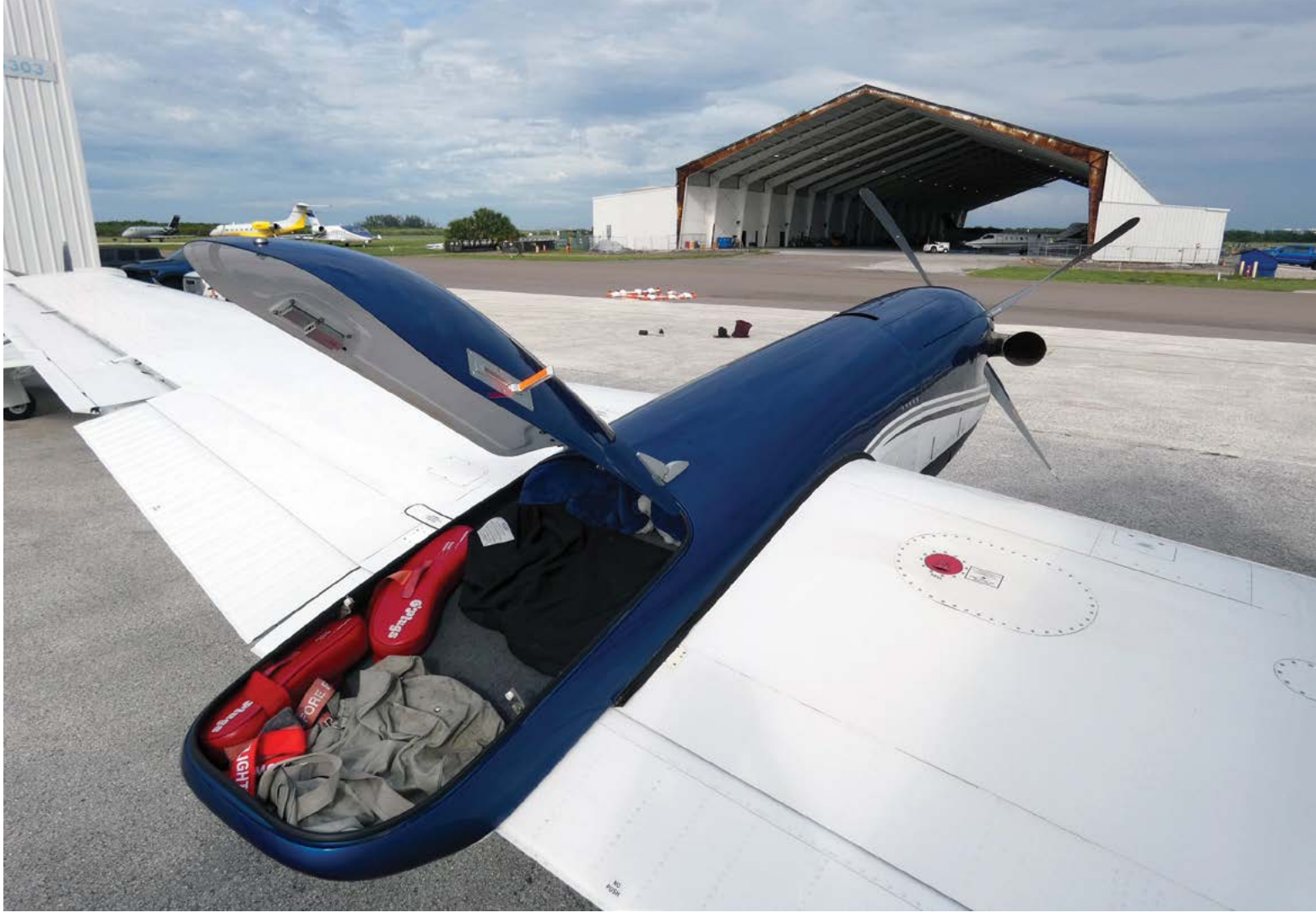
"The digital radar we put in is great. [There is] no more gain, no more tilt, nothing. It shows you exactly where the hail is. You would really have to try to get it not to work," Russell said.

"The wing lockers hold 300 pounds each. I hold all the dirty stuff in the pilot side wing locker, all the plugs and stuff. On the right side I have a 6-foot ladder and Starlink fits in there perfectly. So, all the stuff that normally clutters up a plane isn't inside anymore. You walk into the plane and the giant baggage area that holds 550 pounds is completely clean. Then all your luggage stays nice and clean."

A potential improvement one could call out is that the aircraft still has the original -42s, which have about 250 hours until they are due for HSI inspection. Changing to -52s would have a negligible performance impact since Russell typically flies shorter flights. Increased engine performance was solved by adding Raisbeck's ram air recovery system.

Operating from a coastal climate, Russell chose the ram air recovery system primarily to be able to avoid salt air ingestion as best as possible. He keeps them open on the ground and when flying under 5,000 feet 100% of the time and has found them to be useful during the two times he's encountered ice so far.

The only thing Russell suggested could make the aircraft better would be for it to have a pilot door.



One of the improvements made to the aircraft was the addition of left- and right-side wing lockers, great for keeping dirty items out of the cabin and freeing up interior baggage space.

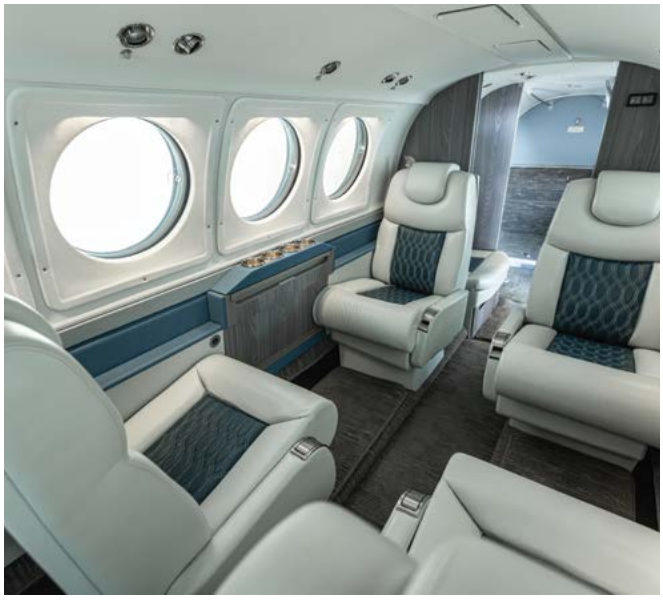
PHOTO CREDIT: BLAKE AMBRESTER

At 6-foot-3-inches tall, he described getting into the cockpit as "not elegant."

A Southeastern U.S.-focused mission

The aircraft is used for a mix of business and personal reasons, usually within a 450 nautical mile radius. Some frequent destinations include several cities in Florida, as well as North Carolina and Alabama.

At approximately 278 knots in cruise, the King Air goes a lot faster than the Caravan. Russell is also flying the B200 roughly twice as high as he ever had in the unpressurized Caravan. Although the aircraft is burning more fuel, it is also going considerably faster. When accounting for diverting around storms, though, fuel burn is not much different. Comfort-wise, it's a tough comparison against the Caravan's executive interior, but the King Air has a similarly spacious and comfortable seating area for passengers.



Minor details were not forgotten during the interior restoration, down to the switches and stitching on the seats.

PHOTO CREDIT: ELLIOTT JETS

Tim Russell's 1998 King Air B200 was listed by Elliott Jets. The aircraft's newer exterior paint featuring Matterhorn white base with Ocean Blue, Midnight Sils and Titanium stripes was one of the aircraft's many positives.

PHOTO CREDIT: ELLIOTT JETS

If Russell's mission required longer legs, he would have considered a jet but he doesn't anticipate flying farther than 1,000 miles at a time with six or fewer people. Outside of range, he advises that there really are no other trade-offs with the B200.

As a new owner, he has been absorbing as much as he can about King Airs. McClure remains one of his first calls whenever a question comes up, from operational queries to determining whether an upgrade is value-added and which shops are best to do the work.

"The reality is the closing is when our client gets their new airplane, not when our job is done," McClure said. "I tell our clients that they'll never make me mad calling with a problem, but they might make me mad if they don't call and inadvertently make the problem bigger!"

McClure added, "We believe in clients for life. We spend less than $100 a month on advertising and most of our business is repeat clients and referrals from clients. Taking care of folks after they buy an airplane? I would do it just because it's the right thing to do. But not only is it an integral part of our business model, many of our clients also become friends. The best part of my job is talking airplanes with my friends."

The King Air Gathering and beyond

Attending the 2026 King Air Gathering proved to be beneficial and another source of new relationships. Russell met many fellow owners, both newer and older. He learned more about the aircraft model's unique aspects, including some parts and support headwinds that unassuming new owners could be surprised by.

"The King Air Gathering was great; everyone was aviation people, which was fun. It was an amazing event," said Russell, noting that swapping stories with other owners came naturally as everyone was so happy to talk about their planes and lessons learned over the years.

There were a handful of interactions and seminars, he said, that made the approximately 840 nautical mile flight to Texas' Horseshoe Bay Resort Airport (KDZB) worthwhile, including the PT6 Customer Connect event

coordinated by Pratt & Whitney before the official start of the King Air Gathering.

"The roundtables were great, especially the Pratt & Whitney one – which I flew in early for," he said. "No joke, it was eight hours of just engines. I am a scientist and love that stuff. Getting to talk to the engineers was very interesting to me and it was good to hear from others about which shops they use and how problems can be solved."

Russell added, "It was worthwhile because these planes are expensive. There was another talk about windshields. I had no idea that they were that big of a problem."

After learning that the scarcity of replacement windshields is ongoing, Russell decided he should put some on order now for when he inevitably will have to replace his. Similarly, he has a wing bolt kit on order for when those come due.

A great experience so far

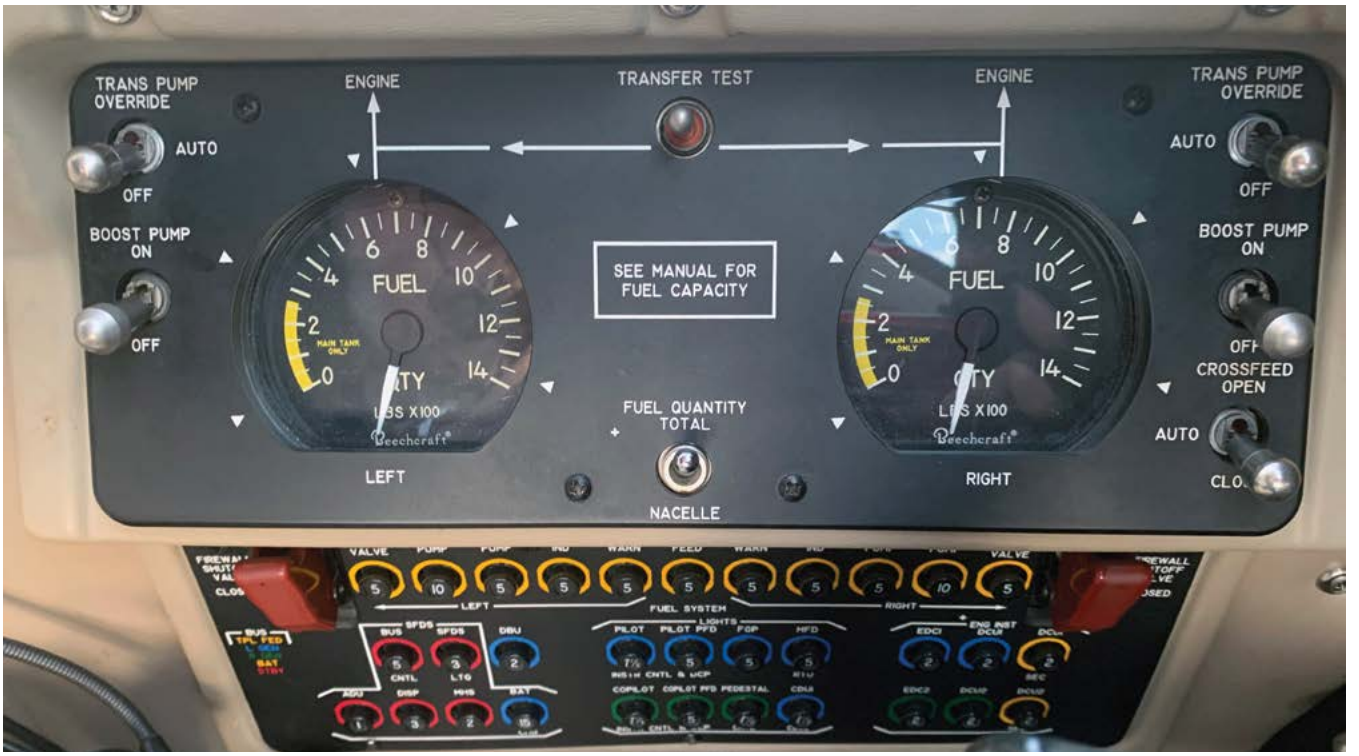
Coming from what he called "the best Part 91 Caravan in the world," Russell knew he had a tough act to follow. With a little over six months owning and 150 hours of flying the King Air B200, though, Russell is complimentary of his airplane.

Many others may have the same feeling about their aircraft, but with all the work that has been put into this one, it wouldn't be a stretch to say that BB-1625 is among the best Part 91 King Airs out there as well. KA

Grant Boyd holds a doctorate of education and is a private pilot and business aviation professional with a passion for writing. His background includes aviation marketing, communications, customer service and sales roles.

The Auto Crossfeed Dilemma in the C90

by Pete Marx



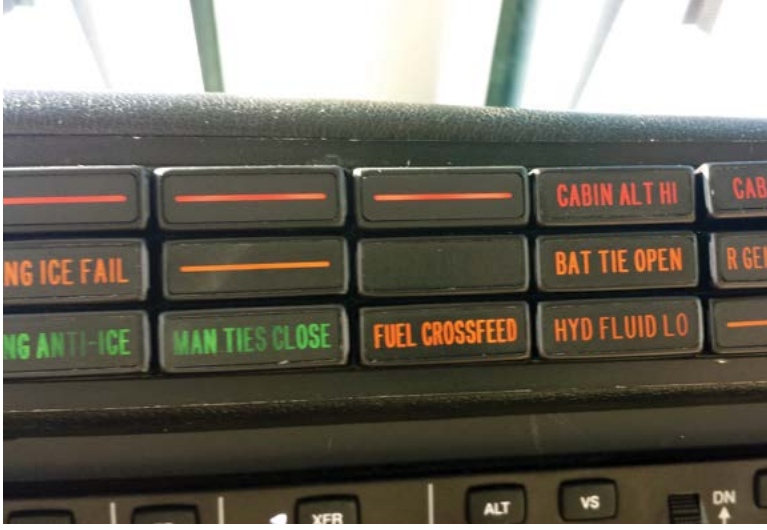
Automatic crossfeed is a popular topic of discussion at King Air Academy for several reasons. The first reason has to do with why we go to recurrent training in the first place – to review procedures like crossfeeding, which we rarely perform on normal flights. The second reason is to discuss the potential pitfalls when using the automatic crossfeed feature.

This article applies to the auto crossfeed operation in the A90, B90, C90, C90-1, C90A, C90B, C90GT, C90GTi and C90GTx King Airs.

A quick review: The PT6 engine incorporates a high-pressure, engine-driven fuel pump to provide high-pressure fuel to the fuel nozzles. Without this high-pressure pump the engine will not operate. To prevent cavitation, this high-pressure pump needs head pressure supplied by an electrically driven, low-pressure boost pump. Without head pressure, the high-pressure fuel pump will fail over time. Hence, the 10-hour operating limitation with the fuel press light illuminated. The boost pump cannot take over for the high-pressure fuel pump; it does not put out enough pressure. Therefore, we want to be nice to the high-pressure fuel pump. This is where the automatic crossfeed feature comes into play.

The designers of the 90 series models listed above decided to include an automatic crossfeed feature. If a boost pump fails, this feature would guarantee head pressure from the remaining boost pump to both high-pressure fuel pumps (one for each engine).

The King Airs listed only have one low-pressure boost pump per side to prevent cavitation of the high-pressure pump. If a boost pump fails, we can use the remaining boost pump for crossfeed operation to provide head pressure to both high-pressure fuel pumps.



The straight 90 and straight 100 King Airs have two low-pressure, electrically driven boost pumps per side. All other King Airs not listed have one low-pressure, electrically driven boost pump *and* one low-pressure, engine-driven boost pump. With two boost pumps per side, there is a standby boost pump ready to take over if the first one fails; no need to crossfeed.

In theory, the auto crossfeed sounds great – it will prevent damage to the high-pressure fuel pump if its boost pump has failed. However, it is important to understand when crossfeeding the fuel provided to both engines is coming from one wing only. The side with the operating boost pump provides fuel to both engines. We are now only using half of the fuel onboard. If we are not careful we could flame out both engines.

In 2017, the FAA published a Safety Alert for Operators (SAFO 18001) regarding the King Air 90 series auto crossfeed. A SAFO addresses a specific safety issue and contains important safety information and possible recommended actions to take. Why was SAFO 18001 produced? More than one operator has had a boost pump failure and did not notice the problem until both engines shut down.

One statement made by the SAFO 18001 is "... there is a clear risk that a simple boost pump failure, if not managed properly, could result in a dual engine failure."

You may ask, how is it possible for a pilot to miss this obvious issue? It can be more subtle than you think. First, we need to describe the annunciators. In early King Air

90 models, only a red master warning flasher is installed. This light is located on the glareshield in front of the pilot's face and will flash to get the pilot's attention when any red annunciator illuminates. In this way the pilot will be alerted to a red annunciator light immediately. These early 90 models do not have a yellow master caution flasher. This makes it easy for a yellow annunciator to illuminate and not be noticed. Later 90 models do include a yellow master caution flasher.

The pilot operating handbook states that we should set the crossfeed to the auto position prior to takeoff and leave it there for the entire flight. If a boost pump fails, the crossfeed valve opens. Will we get an annunciator light? Hmmm, boost pump failed ... we should get a red fuel press light with a red master warning flasher. The crossfeed will automatically open and the yellow crossfeed light will illuminate. As a result of the crossfeed valve opening, the red fuel press light extinguishes. The red flasher remains flashing with no red fuel press light.

This happens fast. The pilot may cancel the red flashing warning light and only see the yellow crossfeed light illuminated. The pilot may think, "Ahh, it's just a yellow light, no big deal," and not give it a second thought. Ignored, the likelihood of a dual-engine flame-out is high. Don't be that guy – get the checklist out! The checklist will have the pilot move the crossfeed selector to closed. This will illuminate the fuel press light on the side of the failed boost pump. Now that the pilot understands that a boost pump has failed, proper crossfeeding of fuel can be managed for the rest of the flight.

An additional problem with the auto position selection of the crossfeed valve is the fact that the auto crossfeed can happen very fast. Due to the crossfeed valve opening so quickly when the boost pump fails, the red fuel press light may not illuminate at all. In turn, the red master warning flasher will not illuminate. In this situation, the yellow crossfeed light is the only light to illuminate.

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The early King Air 90 models do not have a yellow master caution flasher; now the stage is set for the pilot not to notice the crossfeed light and burn fuel from only one wing unknowingly. A dual-engine flame-out scenario is primed and ready to go. Quoting from the SAFO 18001, "If that happens, options become limited ... if crossfeed remains open, the HP fuel pump may instead only suction air through the empty crossfeed line." Forget about trying an engine restart with the crossfeed open, sucking air; it will likely fail.

As you can see, it is very important to scan not only the annunciator panel but also the fuel gauges at certain intervals during flight.

The pilot who does not monitor the fuel until it is dangerously low on one side now has a problem. The fuel is high on the side of the boost pump failure and low on the side of the operating boost pump. The pilot has discovered the hard way that you cannot crossfeed from the side with a dead boost pump. The dead boost pump can't push the fuel across to the opposite engine. The pilot is now in such a predicament that he will need to stop crossfeeding to prevent a dual-engine flame-out. The engine on the side with the operating boost pump will have no fuel remaining shortly and will have to be shut down. This leaves the pilot with one engine suction feeding but it is better than flaming out both engines.

SAFO 18001 recommended action:

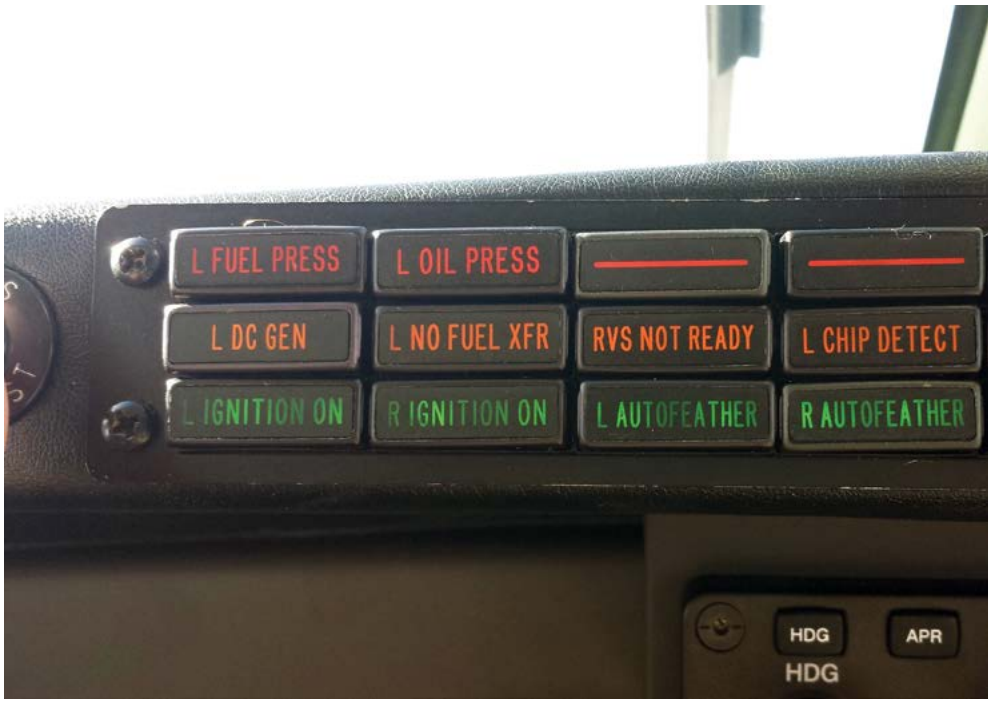
- In the event of a boost pump failure, if the pilot chooses to continue flight with the crossfeed valve open, adequate fuel quantity should be verified on the side with the operating boost pump, considering fuel burn on that side will be double with the crossfeed open.
- In the event of a boost pump failure, if crossfeed remains open and fuel is depleted on the side with the operating boost pump, a dual-engine flame-out will most likely occur.
- In the event of a boost pump failure, the crossfeed valve must be closed for the HP fuel pump to scavenge-feed fuel from the side of the inoperative boost pump.
- In the event of a boost pump failure, proper fuel monitoring and management are crucial to avoid fuel starvation, leading to engine failure and/or fuel imbalance beyond limitations.

Did the designers really need to include an auto crossfeed feature? In short, no. Without it, in normal operations, the crossfeed valve is closed. During a boost pump failure, the red fuel press light illuminates. This makes it clear which boost pump has failed, allowing us to crossfeed accordingly. We have 10 hours allowable for the high-pressure pump to suction feed during a boost pump failure. This is not a time-critical situation – no need to automatically open the crossfeed valve immediately. However, the Beechcraft checklist still calls for it to be in the auto position for the entire flight.

A competent, knowledgeable pilot should be aware of the status of the aircraft. The occasional scan of the engine instruments, fuel gauges and annunciators needs to be completed regularly. Following the Beechcraft procedures, with the crossfeed in the auto position

for flight, when a crossfeed light illuminates, the pilot should recognize the light, get the boost pump failure checklist out and follow it. It is that simple. Understanding the pitfalls of the automatic crossfeed system, completing recurrent training and following checklists will reduce the level of risk. KA

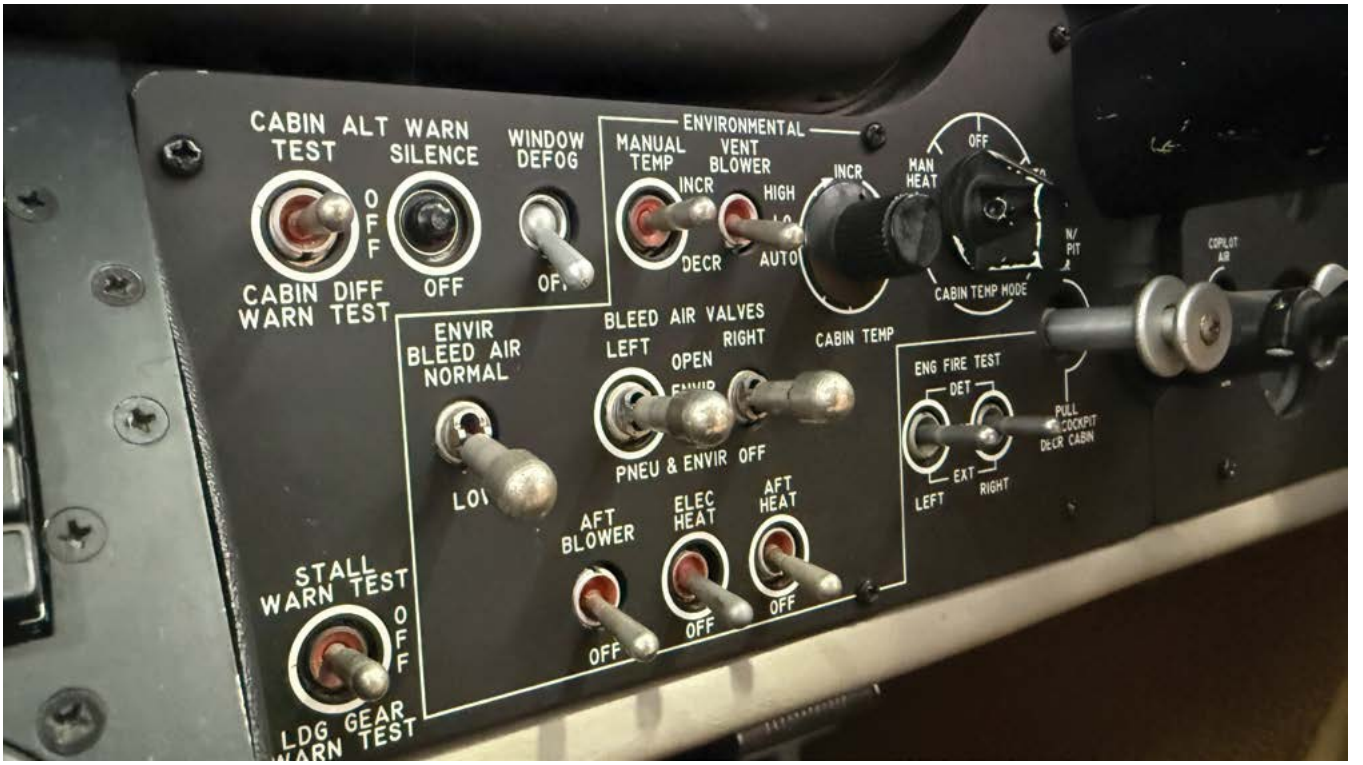
Pete Marx has more than 30 years of experience in the aviation industry, from flying as a captain and first officer on Beech 1900s, Jetstream 42s and Dash 8s for commuter airlines to flying cargo as a flight engineer and check airman in the Airbus 300 and DC-8 for DHL. He has been instructing in King Airs for the past 13 years and is currently an instructor at King Air Academy in Phoenix, Arizona.



DIRECT FROM THE DPE

Dusting Off Our Overlooked Switches

by Joe Casey | Photos by Clint Goff



I once flew with a CFI who pointed to a switch in the cockpit and said, "That's a 'dusty switch.'" I pondered that comment and then had to ask, "What's a dusty switch?" He told me that a dusty switch is "a switch that is hardly ever touched, or a switch that you should not touch on a regular basis." I grinned and thought some more. Since then, I have used the phrase "dusty switch" many times in training.

He was right, there are dusty switches in the cockpit. Some are dusty even though they should be touched more often and others are dusty because we've forgotten what they do and have allowed disuse to cloud our memory. The bottom line: Just because a switch is dusty does not mean it is not important. We must know what they do so we are prepared in case we do need them.

I recently had a long flight and decided to clean the cockpit by breaking out a container of disinfectant wipes. As I wiped each switch, I thought to myself, "I bet no one has touched that switch in years!" I decided to record which switches were truly "dusty switches" and share it with you.

Here's my list of King Air switches that I bet are dusty in your King Air, too.

Fire Extinguisher Test switch

Are you really testing the fire system in your King Air? I bet not. I rarely see pilots check this system and maybe that's not so bad. In my 25 years of flying King Airs, I've never heard of nor seen a fire in the trusty PT6 engine, on any airframe, let alone the King Air.

Could there be a fire in the engine compartment? Sure. But it is not a prevalent problem. In fact, in other

airframes that have the same engine type found on King Airs (Piper M600/700, TBM, etc.), the fire detection system has been removed – simply because it caused more maintenance benefit than emergency identification benefit.

Is it worth checking the engine fire detection system? Sure. You should probably test this system on an upcoming flight. But this system is certainly one of the least understood and least used.

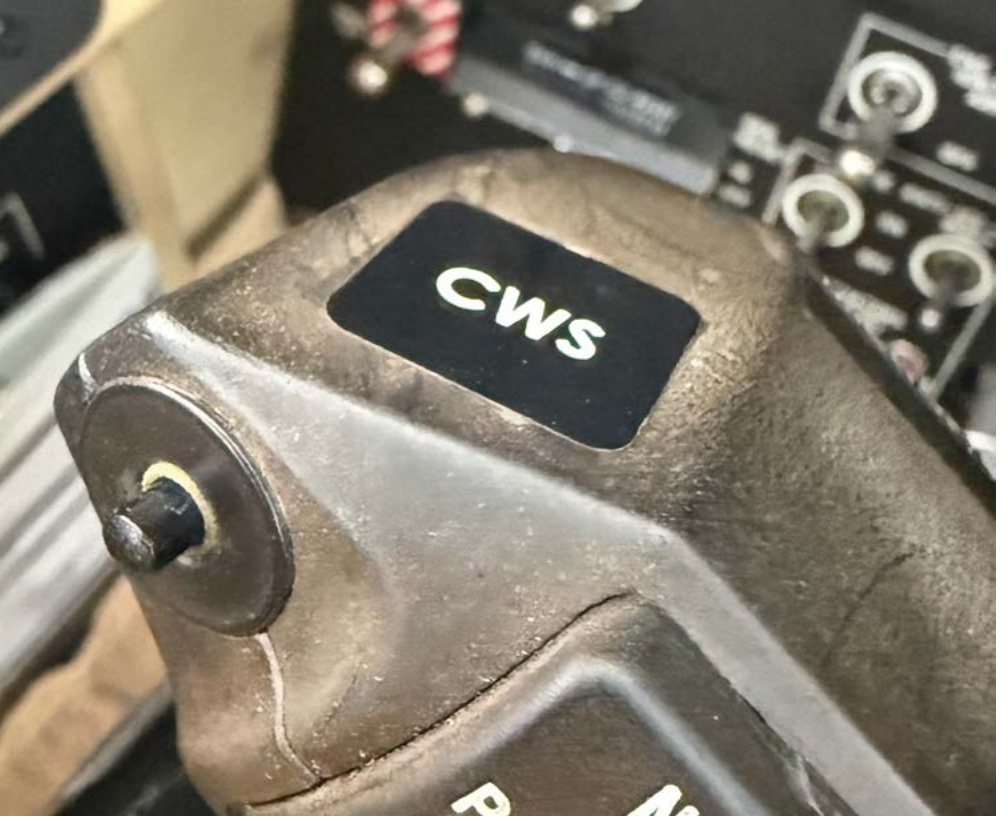
There are several different fire detection systems in the King Air fleet, but the most prevalent systems are those that have a DET and EXT test position on the switches. The DET checks the continuity of the detection loop and the EXT checks the continuity of the wiring to the squib and cartridge circuit.

When is the fire system tested unexpectedly? Mostly by DPEs on check rides! The fire system test switch is on the right side of the cockpit, within easy reach of a cunning DPE's fingers. On a takeoff, I'll occasionally turn ON the fire lights early on the takeoff roll, which makes a ton of visual noise. Red lights will come on the panel and the master caution lights will illuminate too. It should get your attention. Of course, the appropriate action early on that takeoff roll is to abort the takeoff when "any abnormal cockpit indications are present" prior to rotate speed.

This is a good time to remind yourself to conduct a takeoff brief, even if you are simply briefing only yourself. You should have a prepared plan for every takeoff that includes a plan for an engine failure before V1, after V1 and what the heading/course/altitude is to be flown. Even though engine failures are extremely rare in the King Air, they can be a dastardly affair if mishandled. A basic takeoff brief will remind you of those critical items that must be accomplished by memory, the action items that can save the day when the chips are down or when your DPE pulls a fast one on you.

Cabin/Cockpit Air knob

This knob is found on the copilot side of the airplane and is usually called the "rob knob." If the copilot pulls this



CWS (control wheel steering) button

knob, the air that was going to the cabin area is now diverted (partially) to the cockpit. Effectively, the copilot can limit the amount of air that goes to the back of the airplane. You can feel the rush of air near your feet if you pull this knob. I pull this knob if I want to get a really good idea of the temperature of the air going to the back of the cabin, and then I'll push it back in after checking.

But, what happens sometimes is that this knob is pulled on a previous flight, and the position of the knob is not noticed in subsequent flights when no one is sitting in the right front seat. The rob knob resides under the yoke and it is not easy to see unless you are intentional. This causes the air to be diverted to the front and it can cause your passengers to become cold.

This happened on a recent flight on a cold day where I pulled both "rob knobs" (there's one on the pilot side too) to divert the heat to the front on a deadhead leg (no passengers). Then, when I loaded up the passengers they were in the back of the airplane wrapped in blankets until one of them told me how cold it was in the back, noticing I was warm and comfy in the front. I pushed those knobs back in and solved the problem.

CWS button

Most pilots have never pushed this button. Or, if they have, they usually don't know what it does. CWS stands for control wheel steering, which is a poor name because you'd have no clue what this button does based on its name.

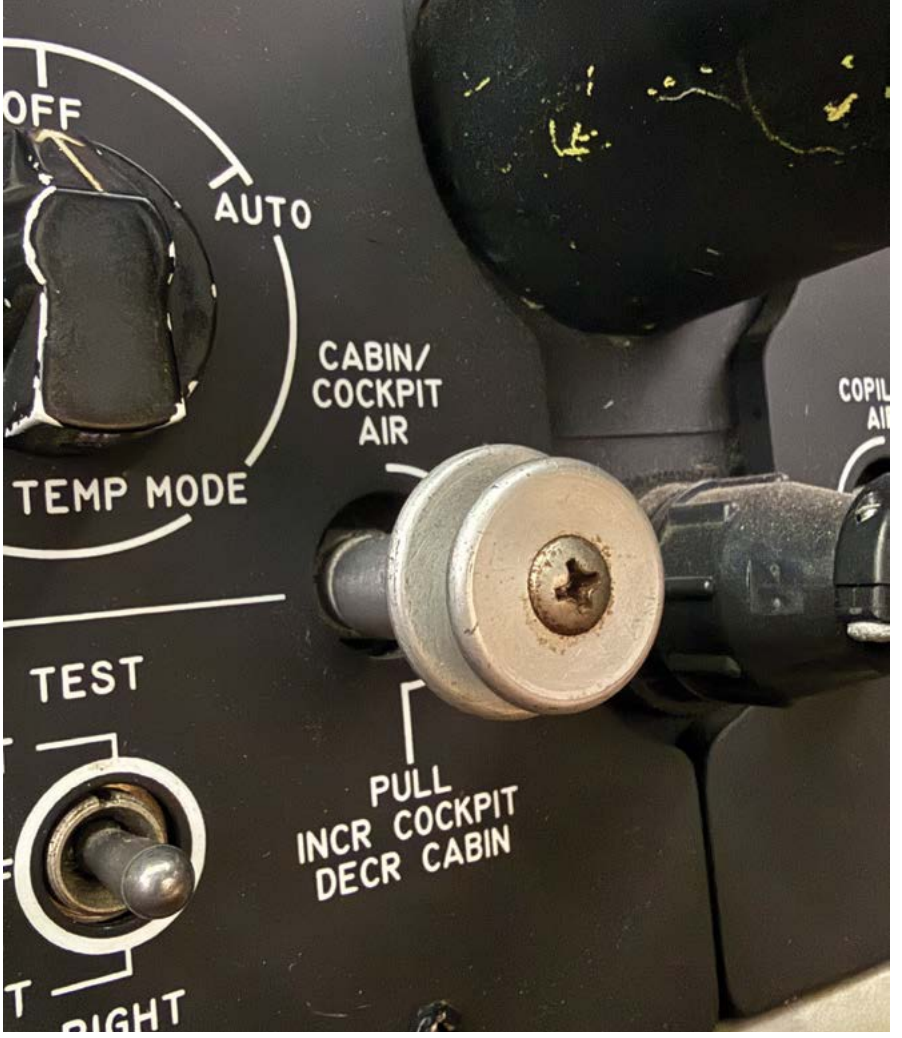
This button is related to the autopilot, and when pushed it will do two things:

- Release the pitch and roll trim servos, allowing the pilot to hand-fly the airplane. When the CWS switch is released, the pitch and roll servos are reengaged.
- Adjust the pitch mode of the autopilot to a new pitch reference.

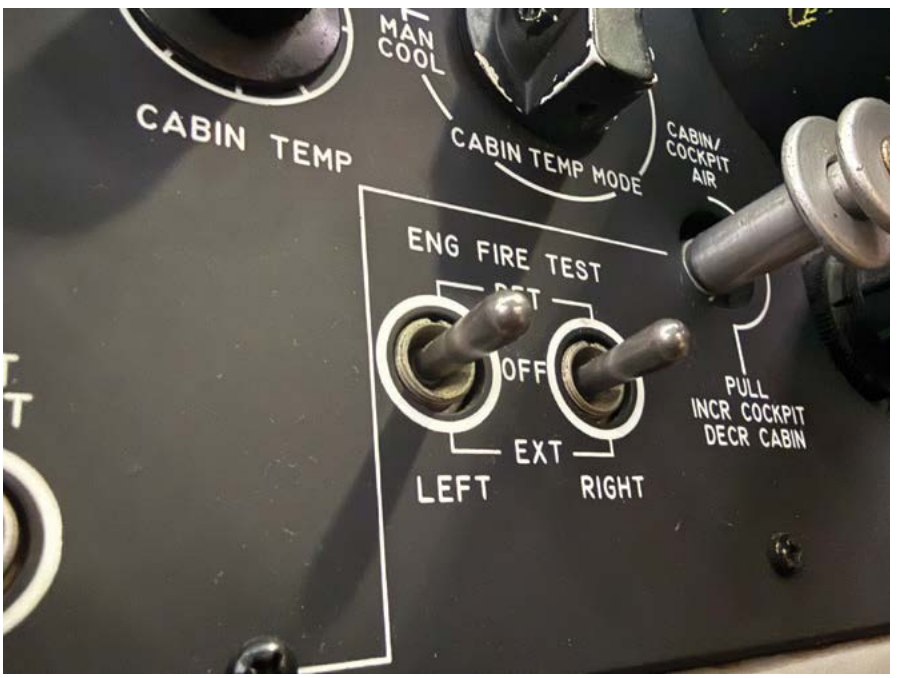
If you have selected ALT (altitude) mode, then you can push the CWS button, hold it and hand-fly the airplane to a new altitude. When you release the CWS button, the autopilot will reference that new altitude. If in V/S (vertical speed) mode, when you push the CWS button, it will allow you to fly the airplane to a different vertical speed and when you release the CWS button, that new V/S will be referenced by the autopilot. When in pitch mode – you guessed it – you can push the CWS, fly the airplane to a new pitch attitude and then release the CWS button to have the autopilot reference that new pitch attitude. It'll do the same if you are in airspeed mode. If the autopilot is ON, then a pitch mode is active and the CWS allows you to modify that pitch parameter while hand-flying.

When would you use this feature? If your autopilot is an older style (non-digital) and doesn't level off at the exact altitude, you can use the CWS to make small changes easily. When using the TOGA (TakeOff/GoAround), you are putting your autopilot into pitch mode (usually 7.5 degrees). If on climb out you desire a different pitch attitude than the prescribed pitch attitude, it is easy to use the CWS to make a small change.

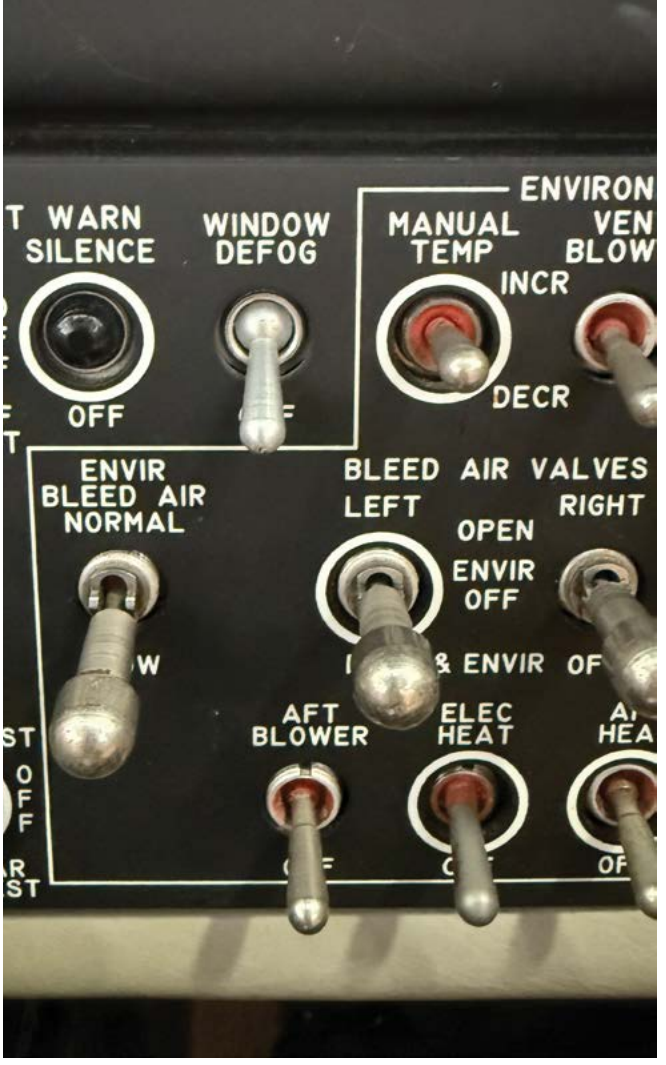
Basically, newbies to the King Air will not use the CWS. It's just



Cabin/Cockpit Air knob, or "rob knob"



Fire Extinguisher Test switch



Window Defog knob

too complicated and pilots migrate to just ignoring its features or were never taught the CWS in initial training. But you'll observe a seasoned veteran use the CWS in certain phases of flight, and using it puts the airplane in a better position. It is a nuanced button that is often dusty. Now that you know more, maybe you can give this button a try on a future flight. You might just find that it is helpful!

Window Defog knob

I remember flying an airplane from Florida to Colombia (a super-humid part of the world) and flying at high altitude to take advantage of the lower fuel burn. Of course, it was bitter cold at high altitude. Then, ATC delayed my descent and I ended up making a 3,000-foot descent to attempt to make the airport without turns.

During the descent, the windshield began to fog because it was cold soaked. It was not a little fog, but a lot of fog that completely blocked visibility out of the front and side. All the windows were fogged up in the super-moist tropical air of Colombia. As the descent progressed, I wondered if it was possible to land a King Air while wiping the window at the same time!

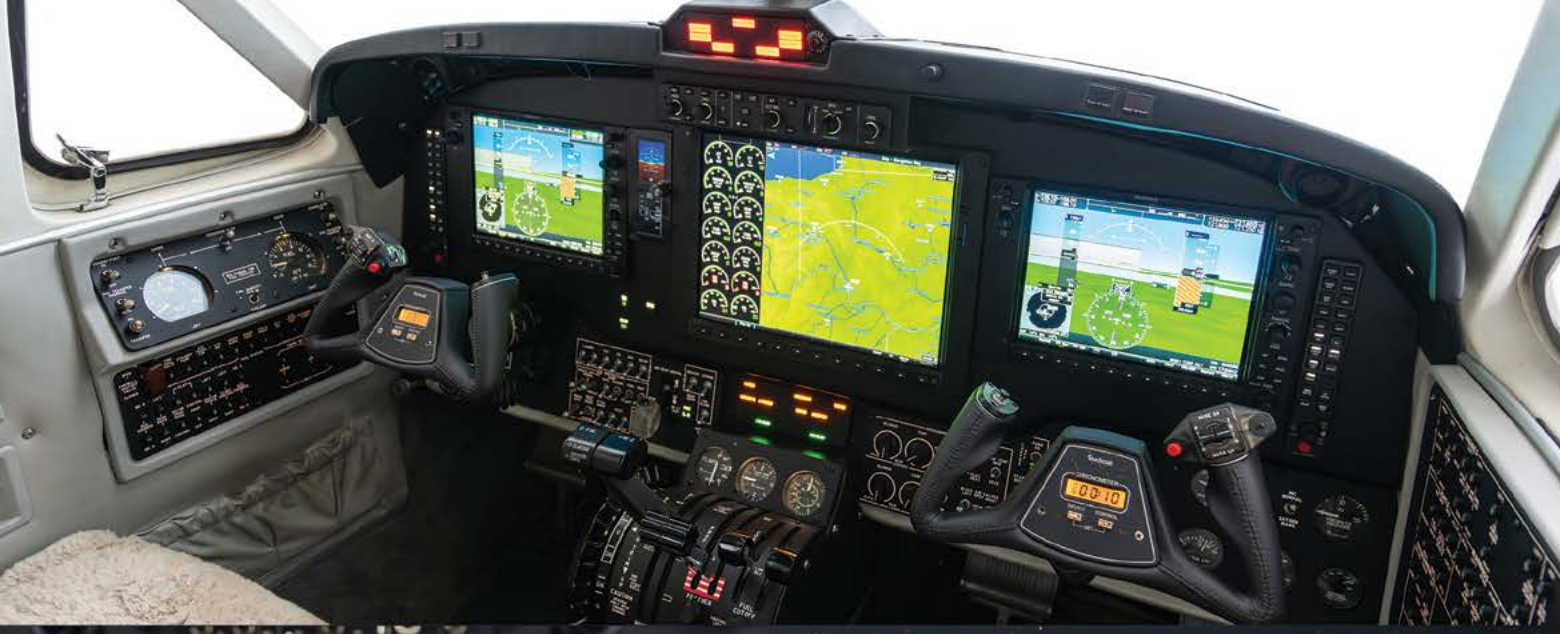
> "Some are dusty even though they should be touched more often and others are dusty because we've forgotten what they do and have allowed disuse to cloud our memory."

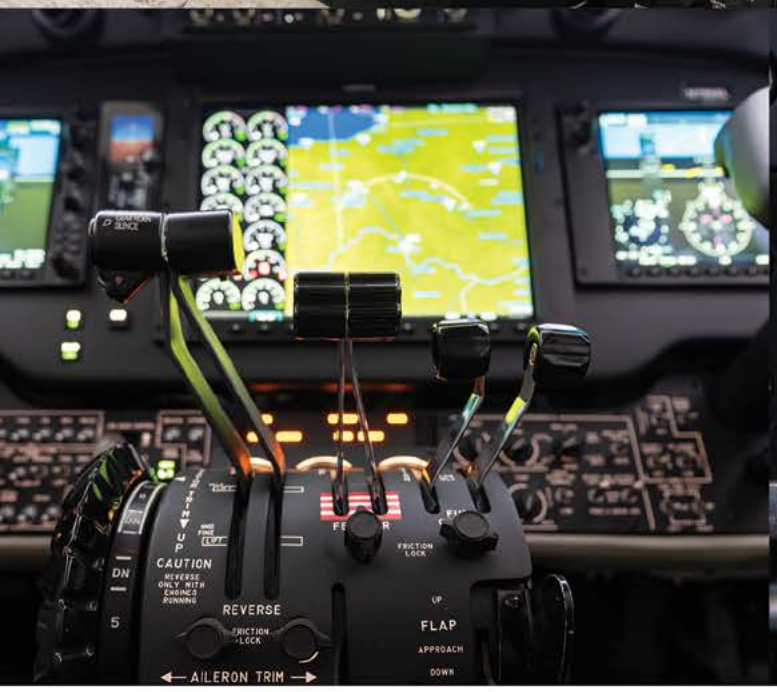
We wiped and wiped, turned on the windshield heat, and then my copilot had the brilliant idea to pull the Window Defog knob. Glorious, heated air began to blow on both the front and side windows, alleviating our problems. We put down our completely drenched napkins and were thankful that Beechcraft added this feature to the King Air.

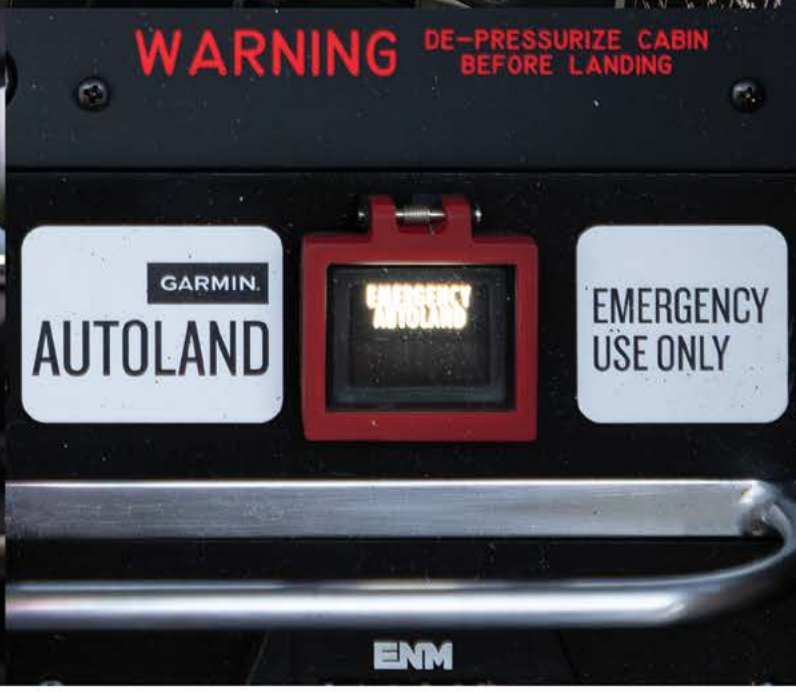
Usually, we don't see big problems with window fogging in the King Air, so we rarely use this switch. But when we get fogged windows, hopefully you'll remember it is available. It'll be the one that has dust on it from disuse.

There are many other dusty switches in a King Air, but this is a start. The next time you have a cross-country flight, I challenge you to pull out your pilot's operating handbook and review each and every switch in your cockpit. It just might be a good reminder of things forgotten from your initial training. It might also help your brain and hand go to the right switch at the right time during that tough flight when the chips are down. Then, get out your tub of Clorox wipes and clean your airplane. I'm sure there's dust on some of those switches! KA

Joe Casey is the owner of Casey Aviation, Inc., based at Angelina County Airport (KLFK) in eastern Texas. The company manages four King Air aircraft and provides flight training in many models of airplanes. He has 19,300 hours of total flight time, over 4,500 of which are in King Air airframes. He is a certified ATP-ME/SE commercial pilot with ASES, Rotorcraft-Helicopter/Instrument and Glider ratings. Casey is also a designated pilot examiner (DPE) with many authorizations from Sport Pilot through ATP, CFI-Initial and the BE-300 type rating issuing authority up to the ATP level and holds CFI, CFII, MEI, CFI-H, CFI-IH and CFI-G certificates. He has flown 83 North Atlantic crossings in King Air aircraft.







Check Out the Complete Guide to Garmin G1000 NXI In the King Air (2026 Edition)

Step into a smarter, more capable cockpit. The Garmin G1000 NXi delivers faster performance, sharper visuals, and enhanced situational awareness to the King Air, making every phase of flight more intuitive. From advanced safety features to streamlined workflows, this upgrade redefines expectations. Scan the QR code to explore the complete guide and see how the G1000 NXi can elevate your aircraft.

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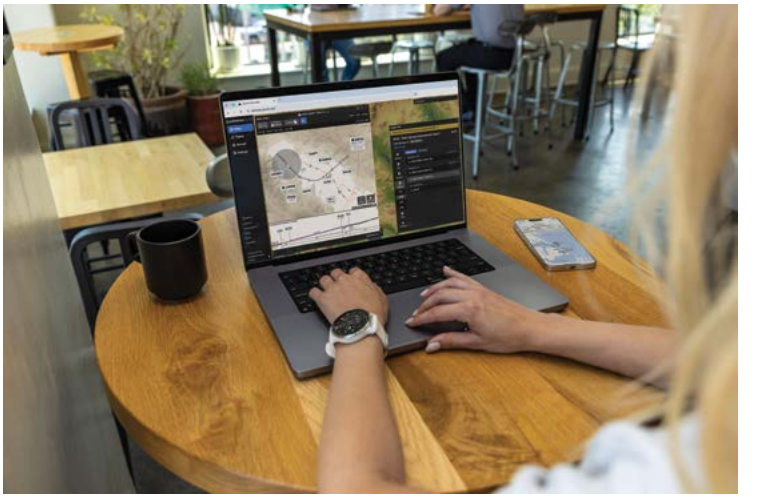
Garmin Brings SmartCharts to Garmin Pilot Web

Garmin's aviation charting solution SmartCharts is now available for Garmin Pilot Web, the avionics manufacturer's flight planning website that complements its mobile app. SmartCharts provides pilots with a simplified and intuitive experience by producing clear and relevant data to depict a chart tailored for their specific flight operation.

SmartCharts serves as the primary charting tool on a computer or mobile device and allows pilots to view simplified terminal procedures, including instrument approach procedures (IAP), departure procedures (DP) and standard terminal arrival routes (STAR). Integrated into the flight planning flow, SmartCharts allows pilots to seamlessly evaluate the impacts of weather and NOTAMs on each procedure and provides a straightforward presentation of the resultant adjustments to minima or equipment required before ever leaving the ground. Additionally, SmartCharts airport diagrams are available in the Garmin Pilot mobile app on iOS devices and will come to Garmin Pilot Web in the future.

"SmartCharts have completely changed how pilots plan and brief instrument flights and this capability now comes to Garmin Pilot Web," Carl Wolf, Garmin vice president Aviation Sales, Marketing, Programs & Support, said in a news release. "The decluttered terminal procedures allow pilots to focus on the most relevant and key information for their flight, ultimately helping to promote safety and situational awareness well in advance of stepping into the cockpit. Now, no matter how a pilot plans their flights, they can utilize our revolutionary SmartCharts."

Data-driven flight planning: SmartCharts uses digitized data from global sources to create a consistent, standardized and scalable charting solution. Garmin used that data to build the clearest possible picture of information needed to successfully fly charted procedures via a new charting user interface, which is now available in Garmin Pilot Web.



This interface, coupled with the digital data, allows SmartCharts procedures to automatically adjust and scale as the pilot zooms and pans within the chart, similar to Garmin's data-driven maps across its entire product line. This data also allows SmartCharts to highlight details and notes that could be easily overlooked and lost on traditional charts or may only be available in a briefing from disparate sources. Integrated into the flight planning flow in Garmin Pilot Web, these highlights include adjustments to minima – such as minima height adjustments due to NOTAMs, alternate minimums, etc. – to be automatically calculated, providing a clear picture of impacts and allowing formation of a strategic plan for the upcoming flight.

The SmartCharts user interface is consistent across both Garmin Pilot Web and the mobile app, creating a seamless experience for pilots, regardless of which tool they choose to flight plan with. When using Garmin Pilot Web, the user can view charts in a split screen or a full screen to take advantage of the additional screen real estate of the computer.

Simplified information: SmartCharts help optimize pilot workflow by providing only relevant data, important in the cockpit and when flight planning. Users can make selections – such as aircraft type, arrival/departure/approach transition fix, runway and more – to simplify the chart down to the information that they need to see, including information for their primary airport or as they evaluate choosing a planned alternate.

Starting with STARs and standard instrument departures (SIDs), the user selects their aircraft type, the route transition they are flying and the runway of intended use. This reduces depicted information to only show the routing, fixes and crossing restrictions pertinent to their expected procedure. Quick access buttons also reveal pertinent procedure details like briefing information, communications frequencies, graphical missed approach icons and more so pilots can easily find and decipher needed information as they build their preflight picture.

When viewing an approach procedure, approach minima are updated and presented to the pilot via easy selection buttons for aircraft category, approach type (e.g., ILS, LOC, LPV, LNAV, etc.) and other adjustments like local or other altimeter settings, inoperative airport lighting, flight director or HUD use and more. Those selections then present only one minima number to reference, allowing for easy evaluation of go/no-go decisions or the need for further contingency planning.

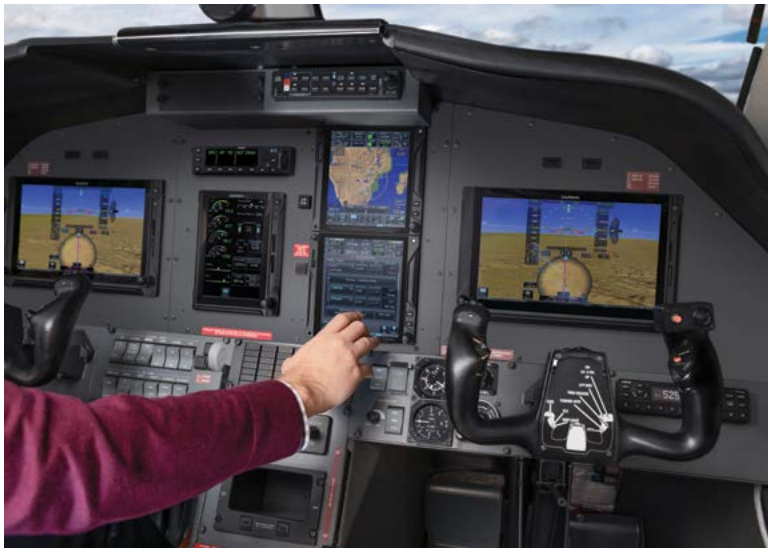
The popular Approach Vertical Profile View is also available in SmartCharts on Garmin Pilot Web. Pilots can enhance the planning process by seeing terrain and obstacles below their approach path to the runway without ever leaving the ground. SmartCharts can be accessed via the Airports and Flights tabs, similar to Garmin Pilot mobile.

Garmin Pilot Web was launched in 2025 to ensure Garmin Pilot users could use the popular flight planning tool on any device, including their computer. Flights planned on Garmin Pilot Web sync to mobile devices for seamless planning and flying. For users who prefer to plan their flights on a computer, adding SmartCharts to Garmin Pilot Web gives them the most consistent experience so they can plan with SmartCharts on their computer and fly with SmartCharts on their iOS mobile device. Visit *garmin.com/smartcharts* to learn more.

SmartCharts are available on Garmin Pilot Web and the Garmin Pilot mobile app with a Premium subscription in the United States and the Bahamas at launch. *Source: garmin.com*

Garmin Avionics Navigation Database Coverage Expands to Africa

Previously available to aircraft owners and operators in the Americas, Europe and South Pacific regions, the Garmin Navigation Database has expanded coverage to allow customers in Africa to incorporate the latest aviation navigation information into their Garmin avionics. Available for Garmin integrated flight decks, navigators, flight displays, portables and more, the new database for Africa can be purchased via a variety of cost-effective options including a new Transatlantic OnePak subscription for all compatible avionics in an aircraft.



The Garmin Navigation Database has expanded coverage to include Africa.

The Garmin Navigation Database for Africa provides foundational information needed for precise navigation throughout the departure, enroute, arrival and approach phases of flight. Coverage is available in more than 40 countries in Africa, including enroute and airspace data, instrument procedures, frequencies, airport information and more. Additionally, Garmin Pilot users in Africa can now leverage more VFR data in South Africa such as airport arrival and departure routes and visual reference points (VRP). Visit *flygarmin.com* for more information. *Source: garmin.com*

First King Air 360 To Enter Mongolian Market

The King Air 360 is making its entry into Mongolia with charter operator Hunnu Air placing the first order for the Beechcraft turboprop aircraft in the country. In a news release, Textron Aviation said delivery is expected at the end of 2027.

Hunnu Air will use the King Air 360 to enhance its tourism and travel offerings along with VIP commuter services within Mongolia. The addition complements Hunnu Air's recent orders of two passenger variants of the Cessna SkyCourier and a new Cessna Grand Caravan EX. These aircraft join Hunnu Air's existing fleet of Grand Caravan EX aircraft. *Source: txtav.com*

Textron Aviation Expands Flight Test Operations

Textron Aviation recently announced the completed expansion of its flight test hangar on the company's East Wichita Campus, increasing capacity to support growing global demand for the Cessna SkyCourier and continued development activity across its turboprop portfolio.

The 57,000-square-foot expansion adds six new hangar bays on the north side of the facility, significantly increasing capacity for flight test operations as activity continues to accelerate for the twin-engine, large utility SkyCourier. The expanded footprint will also support ongoing flight test and entry-into-service work for the Beechcraft Denali.

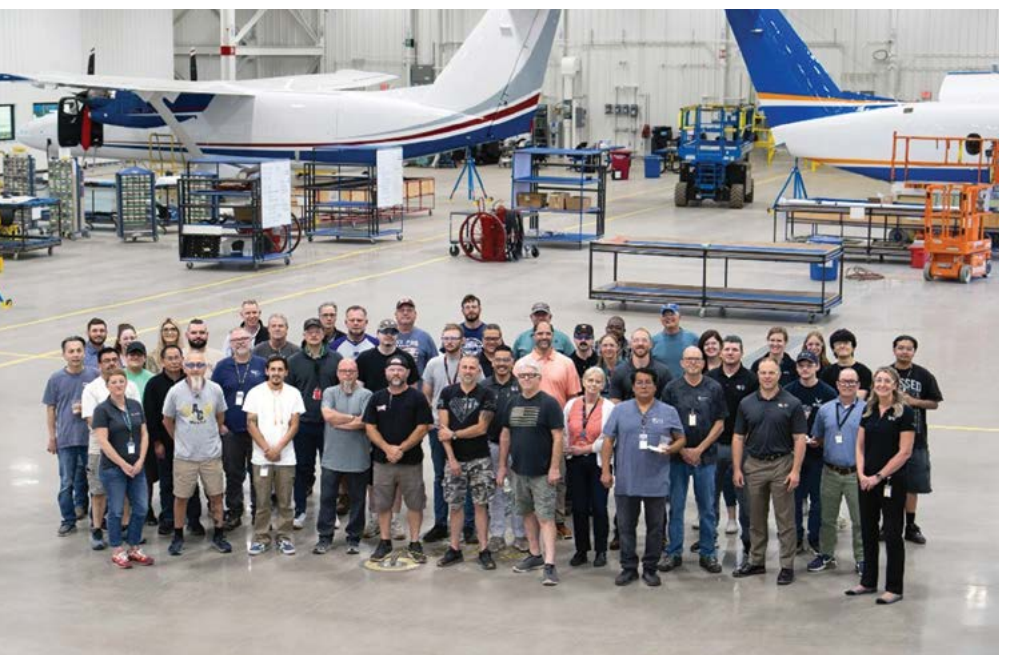
"As demand for the Cessna SkyCourier continues to grow across commercial, cargo and special missions markets, it's critical that our facilities and teams are positioned to support that momentum," Lannie O'Bannion, senior vice president, Sales & Marketing, said in a news release. "By investing in additional flight test capacity, we are strengthening our ability to efficiently support development today and as demand continues to expand."

Designed for versatility, the Cessna SkyCourier serves commercial passenger, cargo and special missions operators with multiple configurations and mission-ready performance. As the aircraft expands into defense and special missions applications, including its first military order, recent enhancements such as an in-flight operable door option further extend its operational flexibility across a broad range of missions.

From an operational standpoint, the expanded facility allows flight test teams to move more efficiently between aircraft preparation, data collection and evaluation, an important advantage as the SkyCourier supports an increasing range of missions and test requirements.

"With more space and flexibility, our teams can run multiple test profiles in parallel and turn aircraft more efficiently," said Brad White, senior vice president, Manufacturing Operations. "That capability is critical as the SkyCourier supports a growing range of real-world missions for operators around the globe."

The expanded facility also reflects Textron Aviation's ongoing commitment to responsible operations, incorporating energy-efficient LED lighting and high-efficiency systems designed to reduce energy consumption while supporting demanding flight test activity. *Source: txtav.com* KA



Textron Aviation recently expanded its East Wichita flight test hangar, increasing capacity to support growing global demand for the Cessna SkyCourier and continued development for its turboprop portfolio.

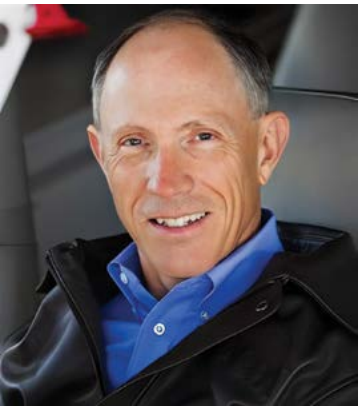
AVIATION ISSUES

2026 Neil Armstrong Outstanding Achievement Awardees Named

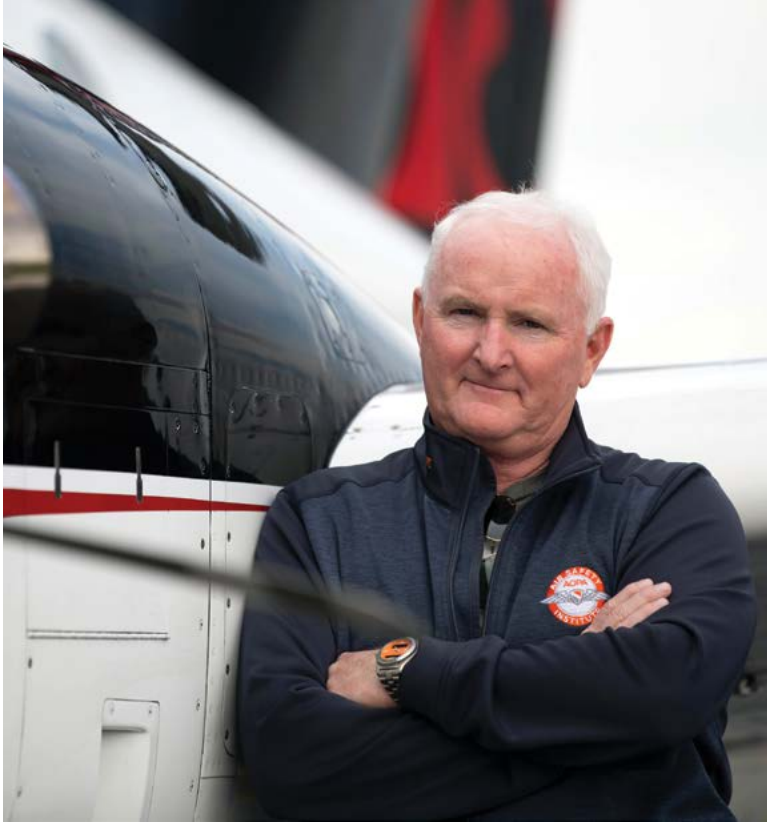
The National Aviation Hall of Fame announced recently that Mark R. Baker and Bruce Landsberg are co-recipients of the 2026 Neil Armstrong Outstanding Achievement Award. Distinguished leaders in general aviation, Baker and Landsberg have each made profound and lasting contributions to aviation safety, education and pilot advocacy, collectively elevating the culture of safety across the industry.

Baker, retired president and CEO of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, is a highly accomplished aviator with more than 10,000 hours of flight experience. He was profiled in *King Air* magazine's April 2020 issue alongside the 1980 Beechcraft King Air F90 he owned at the time. Baker has dedicated his career to expanding access to GA and strengthening the voice of pilots nationwide. He advanced pilot engagement and safety through his leadership of AOPA, the AOPA Foundation and the International Council of Aircraft Owners and Pilots Associations. His efforts to modernize industry outreach, promote airport and airspace protections and grow the aviation community have helped ensure a strong future for general aviation.

Landsberg, retired vice chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, has shaped the national culture of aviation safety through decades of distinguished service. During his tenure with the AOPA Air Safety Foundation and Air Safety Institute, Landsberg earned international recognition for advancing safety education, producing industry-leading training resources and delivering thousands of seminars and publications to pilots nationwide. With more than 7,500 hours of flight experience and a career spanning the U.S. Air Force, Cessna Aircraft Company, *Flying* magazine and Flight Safety International, he has been a steadfast advocate for data-driven safety innovation and pilot proficiency. He is also a recipient of the FAA's Wright Brothers Master Pilot award.



Bruce Landsberg



Mark Baker has owned more than 100 different aircraft including this 1980 King Air F90.

PHOTO CREDIT: AOPA

In announcing Baker and Landsberg as recipients, the NAHF said the two have set new standards for aviation leadership, strengthening pilot education, expanding safety awareness and promoting responsible, lifelong aviation citizenship. Their combined efforts have had a transformative impact on the GA community and exemplify the enduring legacy of the Armstrong Award.

Baker and Landsberg will be honored on Sept. 23, 2026, as part of the NAHF's 62nd annual enshrinement events in Washington, D.C. Aviation enthusiasts, industry leaders and returning enshrinees are expected to attend two days of events celebrating excellence in aviation. Events are open to the public with advance registration. *Source: nationalaviation.org*

AOPA Creates Mental Health Resource Hub

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association used May's Mental Health Awareness Month to deliver mental health education, training and resources to general aviation pilots and flight instructors. The monthlong initiative culminated with the content permanently stored on a

new mental health resource center at *aopa.org/training-and-safety/air-safety-institute/mental-health-resource-center.*

"Many pilots have been wary of seeking treatment for mental health concerns out of fear they would no longer be allowed to fly," said Katie Pribyl, AOPA acting co-president. "We've seen a high level of engagement with this initiative, and we believe it's because there are pilots out there who want to know their options, while also wanting the stigma to disappear."

Among the deliverables were the release of an interview with Federal Air Surgeon Dr. Susan Northrup and a new elective in the AOPA Air Safety Institute's electronic Flight Instructor Refresher Course.

Northrup, who leads the FAA Office of Aerospace Medicine, said her team continues to explore ways to help make the process smoother and allow pilots access to a wider range of medications while also highlighting important resources and reducing the amount of time some pilots wait for the FAA to review their medical application.

Northrup also discussed an upcoming amnesty program to encourage pilots to self-report past diagnoses and treatment but noted it may require pilots to self-ground while their case is evaluated, though it would not result in consequences for past falsification.

"Things are moving in the right direction, but like anything involving pilots and safety, it takes time," said Jill Baker, AOPA acting co-president. "Our goal this month is for pilots to understand the resources that are available today, and that AOPA has your back. All AOPA members have the benefit of our Pilot Information Center, and every year, our medical certification team helps thousands of pilots understand the process and then, if they require a special issuance, can help them through that process."

ASI's eFIRC has also released a new elective as part of the initiative, making it the only flight instructor refresher course that offers mental health content. Thousands of instructors complete a FIRC every two years to stay current as a CFI. *Source: aopa.org*

New FAA Mental Wellness Policy Supports Counseling

The National Business Aviation Association welcomed a recent Federal Aviation Administration aeromedical policy update encouraging pilots and air traffic controllers to seek counseling and mental health support early and without fear that receiving talk therapy would jeopardize their medical certification, marking an important shift in the agency's approach to mental wellness.

Rather than viewing participation in counseling or psychotherapy as a potential red flag, the revised policy explicitly encourages pilots and ATCs to seek help through counseling, psychotherapy and peer-support programs when appropriate.

Further, aviation medical examiners are now directed to focus on any underlying conditions and their severity when making certification decisions, rather than the presence of counseling. If the aviator is functioning well, the AME can issue. If the AME has significant concerns, they can defer the decision to the FAA.

"This is an important step forward in reducing stigma and encouraging early intervention, treatment and resolution," said Mark Larsen, NBAA director for safety and flight operations. "Mental health challenges can affect anyone and pilots and controllers should feel empowered to seek support when they need it."

The FAA has also issued new guidance for therapists that pilots and ATCs should share with their provider (found at *faa.gov/ame_guide*). It includes a suggested format to provide a summary outlining the patient's diagnosis, severity, resilience and ability to self-monitor, when requested by the FAA. NBAA recommends that pilots and ATCs bring this summary to their AME appointment.

"Having this summary for your AME at the outset is a proactive step toward 'preflighting your medical,'" Larsen said. "It could mark the difference between walking out of the appointment with your certificate versus delays to that process that could extend several months."

The policy update complements other recent FAA initiatives aimed at modernizing mental health certification pathways. That includes revised guidance issued last year for pilots with anxiety and depression, as well as ongoing revisions to the list of agency-approved medications to treat such conditions.

These changes follow recommendations made by the FAA's Mental Health & Aviation Medical Clearances Aviation Rulemaking Committee on which NBAA participated.

"This policy is certainly worth celebrating on its own, but it's also an important piece of a much larger effort by the FAA to modernize how it approaches mental health in aviation," added NBAA Flight Operations Specialist Laila Stein, who participated on the ARC with Larsen. "This talk therapy guidance is a significant step forward, but its real value becomes even clearer when connected to the FAA's broader framework for supporting mental health while maintaining safety."

Larsen noted the agency's continued efforts reflect growing recognition that encouraging treatment is safer than discouraging it.

"Reducing barriers to care benefits both individual aviators and the broader aviation system," he said. "We appreciate the FAA's continued progress in this area and look forward to working together on additional improvements that support both mental wellness and aviation safety." *Source: nbaa.org*

Oshkosh NOTAM Is Required Reading for AirVenture-bound Pilots

There are several important FAA-approved updates in the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2026 Notice (commonly referred to as the Oshkosh NOTAM), featuring arrival and departure procedures for the Experimental Aircraft Association's 73rd fly-in convention on July 20-26 at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. These changes are based on pilot feedback and FAA review of arrival procedure recommendations.

The document is in effect from noon CDT on Thursday, July 16, until noon CDT on Monday, July 27, and outlines procedures for the many types of aircraft that fly to Oshkosh for the event, as well as aircraft that land at nearby airports. The notice was designed by the FAA to assist pilots in their EAA AirVenture flight planning.

The ATC-assignable transition points approaching Oshkosh from the west that will ease holding and congestion will again be in effect in 2026. These points are at Endeavor Bridge, Puckaway Lake and Green Lake. They will be announced on the arrival ATIS when ATC activates them at times of highest traffic flows.

"The most essential information for any pilot flying to Oshkosh involves reading and thoroughly understanding the 2026 AirVenture Notice to ensure safe operations on arrival and departure," said Sean Elliott, EAA's vice president of advocacy and safety. "We urge all pilots to adequately prepare prior to their trip to Oshkosh and

consider such things as our AirVenture arrival flight review so they have the proficiency and confidence to fly safely."

Pilots can download a digital version of the notice at *eaa.org/notam* or order a free printed copy via that website or by calling EAA Membership Services at (800) 564-6322. *Source: eaa.org*

EAA WomenVenture Scheduled During AirVenture Oshkosh 2026

Celebrating women involved in aircraft design, building and testing will be highlighted at EAA WomenVenture during EAA AirVenture Oshkosh. The Experimental Aircraft Association's fly-in convention is July 20-26 at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, with WomenVenture flagship programming scheduled on Wednesday, July 22.

"This year, we wanted to focus on the 'Design, Build, Test' theme, as these women are at the forefront of new developments in the ever-expanding aviation industry," said Margaret Brill, vice president of the EAA Aviation Foundation, who coordinates WomenVenture.

Programming includes a group photo, a luncheon with a keynote speaker and an evening panel discussion featuring highly accomplished women in aircraft development. In addition to the July 22 activities, the EAA WomenVenture Center on the AirVenture grounds will be open all week, featuring 12 aviation organization exhibitors, daily forums and social gatherings on the covered patio.

Get more details at *eaa.org/womenventure*, including how to register for this year's free commemorative T-shirt, designed by EAA member Justine Boyer. *Source: eaa.org*

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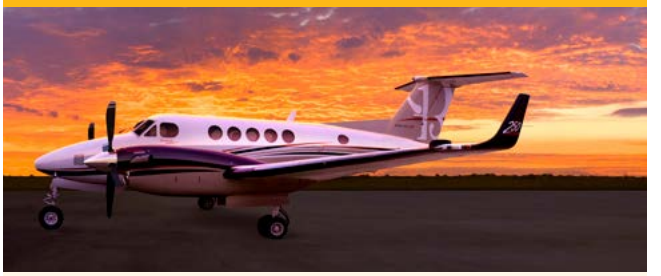
ADVERTISING INDEX

UPCOMING GENERAL AVIATION INDUSTRY EVENTS



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2026

- ***July 20-24:*** Farnborough International Airshow, Hampshire, England
- ***July 20-26:*** EAA AirVenture, Oshkosh, Wisconsin
- ***Aug. 4-6:*** Latin American Business Aviation Conference & Exhibition (LABACE), São Paulo, Brazil
- ***Sept. 19-20:*** National Championship Air Races, Roswell, New Mexico
- ***Oct. 8-10:*** Beech Party, Tullahoma, Tennessee
- ***Oct. 20-22:*** National Business Aviation Association Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (NBAA-BACE), Las Vegas, Nevada

2027

- ***Feb. 12-14:*** AOPA Fly-In at Buckeye Air Fair, Buckeye, Arizona
- ***Feb. 25-27:*** Women in Aviation International Conference, Savannah, Georgia
- ***March 23-26:*** Aircraft Electronics Association International Convention & Trade Show, Savannah, Georgia
- ***April 6-11:*** SUN 'n FUN Aerospace Expo, Lakeland, Florida
- ***April 14-17:*** AERO Friedrichshafen, Friedrichshafen, Germany

Let us know of additional events at
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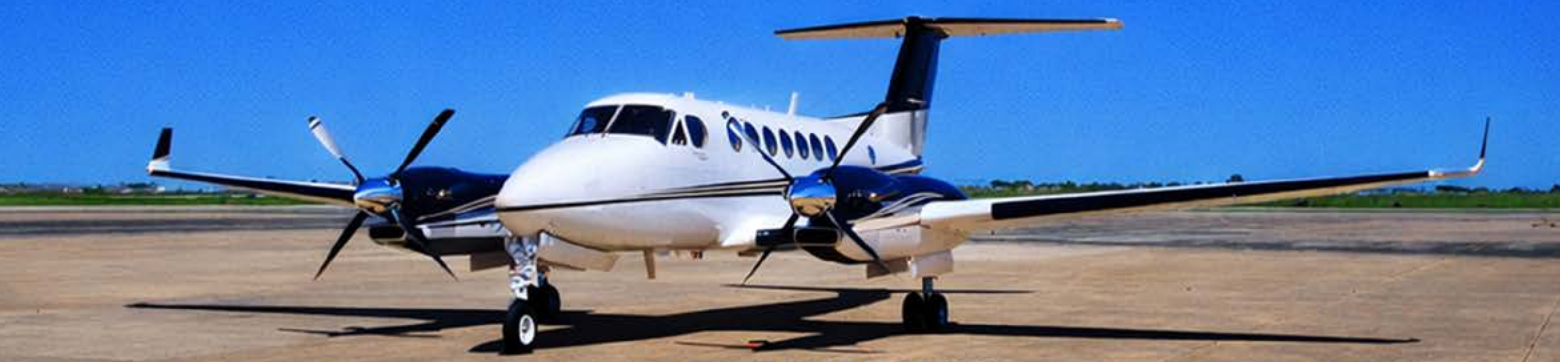

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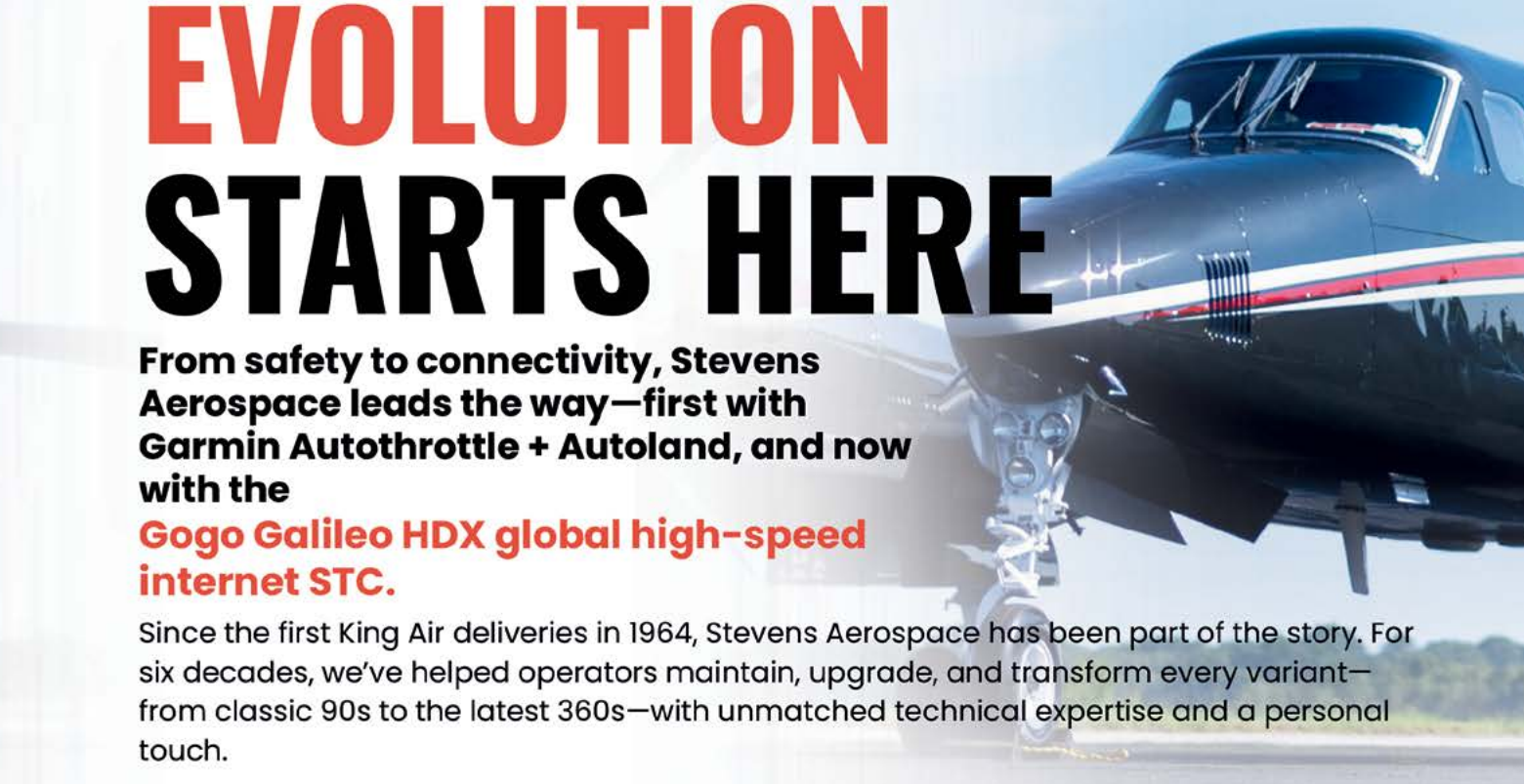

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