

# PIREPS

## PIREPS

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## Summer Aviation Events around Nebraska

By Mark Langrud

In August 1987, Marion Cole and his Super Decathlon came to Broken Bow for a free airshow. I do not remember much about Marion Cole or his Super Decathlon, but what I remember most about that day was that after the airshow, local pilots were offering airplane rides. My cousin Andrew somehow won a free ride, but for 4 cents a pound of body weight, anyone could go. I hopped on a scale and for \$3.84 (keep in mind I was 14), I got to join him. We waited in line and soon a Cessna 172 pulled up and Andrew got in the front seat next to the pilot and I got into the back seat. We took off on Runway 32 and flew a long lazy left-hand pattern. Upwind took us over the cedar canyons northwest of the airport. Crosswind took us over the Merna table. Downwind took us over Broken Bow. Everything looked so small: the railroad tracks, the town square, the house I grew up in. Base took us over the Custer County fairgrounds. Before I knew it, the flight was over, and it only lasted 10 minutes. But those 10 minutes sparked a lifetime of aviation and flying. And it all started with a free airshow at a quiet rural Nebraska airport.

There are plenty of Nebraska aviation events listed on the calendar to the left and at the NDOT Aeronautics aviation events webpage (<https://dot.nebraska.gov/aeronautics/upcoming-aviation-events>). Everyone is welcome at these events. You don't even have to be a pilot or have an airplane to attend. They provide great opportunities to meet other aviation enthusiasts, talk to pilots, or simply view an airplane up close. The Nebraska State Fly-In is at Gordon on June 7th. Mitchell is hosting the Old West Balloon Fest August 14th to 17th. EAA569 is starting up their monthly breakfast Fly Ins now at Wahoo on the 3rd Saturday of the month. There are Fly-Ins at Hastings, Pender, Genoa, Red Cloud, O'Neill, Dismal River Club, and Arthur this summer.

Anyone who would like to have an event listed, please reach out to Mark Langrud [mark.langrud@nebraska.gov](mailto:mark.langrud@nebraska.gov) or Tiffany Thompson [tiffany.thompson@nebraska.gov](mailto:tiffany.thompson@nebraska.gov) to get the event listed on our website and our social media page (Nebraska Airports on Facebook). ■

### Calendar of events

#### June

- **6/7** | State Fly-In at Gordon Municipal Airport (GRN) | 8am-2pm | Contact: Ken Costello, Gordon Airport Authority, State Fly-In Coordinator at 308-360-9087 or [ken.costello@blackhillscorp.com](mailto:ken.costello@blackhillscorp.com)
- **6/8** | Tekamah Fire & Rescue Fly-In Pancake Breakfast | Tekamah Municipal Airport (TQE) | 7am-12:00pm | Fly-Ins eat free. | Contact: Doug 402-480-3534
- **6/13-6/14** | Falls City Hot Air Balloon Festival | Brenner Field (FNB) | Friday 5-10pm, Saturday 3-10pm | <https://fallscitychamber.ticketspice.com/2025-falls-city-hot-air-balloon-festival>

com/2025-falls-city-hot-air-balloon-festival

- **6/15** | Father's Day Fly-In Breakfast | Harlan (IA) Municipal Airport (HNR) | 7:30-11am | free to all fly-ins; \$12/adults; \$6/10 & under | Contact: Scott Pigsley, Airport Manager 712-744-3366
- **6/21** | EAA 569 Fly-In Breakfast | Wahoo Municipal Airport (AHQ) | 8am-10am | suggested donation: \$10/adults; \$5/kids
- **6/28** | NEAAA Hamburger Fly-In | Hastings Municipal Airport (HSI) | 11:30am-1pm
- **6/29** | Pender Municipal Airport (OC4) Fly-In | 8-11am |

PIC eat free, contact John Miller 816-210-2081

#### July

- **7/19** | EAA 569 Fly-In Breakfast | Wahoo Municipal Airport (AHQ) | 8am-10am | suggested donation: \$10/adults; \$5/kids
- **7/26** | NEAAA Hamburger Fly-In | Hastings Municipal Airport (HSI) | 11:30am-1pm
- **7/27** | Genoa (97Y) Fly-In | 7-11am | Free breakfast to anyone who flies in | Contact: Richard Gaant (Airport Manager) at 402.270.5103

#### August

- **8/3** | Red Cloud Breakfast

Fly-In | Red Cloud Municipal Airport (7V7) | Free breakfast to pilots flying in | Contact: Jim Farmer 402-746-4132

- **8/14-17** | The Old West Balloon Fest | Mitchell Airfield, 60653 Mitchell South Rd, Mitchell, NE 69357 [theoldwestballoonfest.com](http://theoldwestballoonfest.com)
- **8/16** | EAA 569 Fly-In Breakfast | Wahoo Municipal Airport (AHQ) | 8am-10am | suggested donation: \$10/adults; \$5/kids
- **8/30** | NEAAA Hamburger Fly-In | Hastings Municipal Airport (HSI) | 11:30am-1pm

# University of Nebraska at Omaha Flight Team Coach Wins National Coach of the Year

University of Nebraska at Omaha Aviation Institute



Mr. Skip Bailey, Coach of the University of Nebraska at Omaha Flight Team, The Flying Mavs, was selected as the 2025 National Coach of the Year at the 2025 SAFECON for the National Intercollegiate Flying Association. Skip joined the UNO Flying Mavs in Fall 2018, first as Assistant Coach and, as of Fall 2023, as Head Coach and Faculty Advisor. During this tenure, the team has consistently qualified for National SAFECON, continuing a 16-year streak of national appearances and maintaining a position among the top teams in the country for the past six consecutive years. His coaching efforts have helped develop a generation of collegiate aviators, many of whom now serve as commercial pilots, instructors, military officers, and aviation leaders across the United States.

Before his career in collegiate aviation, Mr. Bailey served for over 25 years in the United States Air Force, flying various heavy aircraft in missions of significant national importance. His final military assignment was flying the E-4B "Nightwatch" aircraft out of Offutt Air Force Base, supporting the Secretary of Defense and the National Command Authority as part of the National Airborne Operations Center (NAOC) mission. This extraordinary background brings both depth and gravity to his leadership in aviation education. The following sections address the judging criteria for this award and provide a comprehensive justification for Mr. Bailey's nomination.

Skip Bailey is the embodiment of professionalism in both demeanor and conduct. Whether preparing students for rigorous competition, interfacing with university leadership, or representing UNO at national events, Skip maintains a calm, principled, and deliberate presence. His military background, including supporting the Secretary of Defense on the E-4B platform, required the highest standards of discretion, reliability, and discipline, which he continues to uphold in his civilian and academic leadership roles.

He instills the same expectations for behavior, accountability, and professionalism in his students. Whether on the ramp, in a briefing, or engaging with peers, team members are taught to operate with the utmost respect for protocols, procedures, and one another. Skip ensures that every member of the UNO Flight Team understands the privilege and responsibility of representing their institution and NIFA. His influence on team culture is unmistakable and widely respected throughout the region.

Scott Vlasek, Director of the Aviation Institute, said, "I am so proud of Skip and all that he continues to do for the Flying Mavs. When I transitioned from Head Coach to Director of the UNO Aviation Institute in 2023, there was no doubt that Skip was the right person to assume leadership of the team. His seamless transition into the Head Coach role reflects the respect he commands from students. He is a source of constant encouragement, mentoring students not only in competition strategy, but also in how to carry themselves as professionals in the aviation industry."

As an educator, Skip is both methodical and compassionate. His instructional philosophy blends technical precision with a deep understanding of human factors and learning psychology. He adapts his coaching to meet each student's learning style and experience level, ensuring that no one is left behind and every team member is positioned for success.

His coaching sessions incorporate scenario-based learning, flight safety principles, CRM techniques, and in-depth performance reviews modeled on military debriefings. Skip also makes time for informal mentorship, advising students on FAA certification pathways, career planning, time management, and professionalism. His instructional influence is reflected in the number of former team members who have become flight instructors, commercial pilots, and leaders in aviation safety. The Flying Mavs' longstanding history of SAFECON success has continued under Skip's leadership. For the past six years, during which Skip has served as assistant or head coach, the team has consistently finished among the Top 10 in the nation. This impressive achievement is a result of meticulous preparation, strategic event specialization, and a relentless commitment to continuous improvement.

During this period, individual and team placings have remained strong across multiple events, with particular growth in navigation, simulated flight, and CRM-based competitions. Under Skip's guidance, the team not only competes with excellence but also upholds the spirit of NIFA through cooperation, sportsmanship, and respect for all participants. His coaching philosophy has kept the Flying Mavs competitive at the highest levels while never compromising the educational and character-building values at the heart of collegiate aviation.

For additional questions or comments, please contact Scott Vlasek at [svlasek@unomaha.edu](mailto:svlasek@unomaha.edu),

402-554-3785, or Skip Bailey at [lbaileyjr@unomaha.edu](mailto:lbaileyjr@unomaha.edu), 402-554-6722. ■



# University of Nebraska at Omaha Aviation Institute Honors Student Excellence and Industry Leadership at 2025 Honors Convocation

Scott Vlasek, Director UNO Aviation Institute



OMAHA, NE—The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) Aviation Institute celebrated its annual Honors Convocation on April 23, 2025, at the Thompson Alumni Center. The event recognized outstanding student achievement and honored key figures who have made lasting contributions to aviation education and industry advancement.

The evening featured the presentation of the Otto F. Bauer Distinguished Service Award to Captain Brad Monda, Managing Director of Southwest Airlines' Destination 225° program. Captain Monda's visionary leadership in creating career pathways for aspiring pilots and his instrumental role in Southwest's partnership with UNO have transformed the journey from student to professional aviator.

Also highlighted was the Frank E. Sorenson Award for Pioneering Aviation Education, awarded to Dr. John Bartle, former Dean of the College of Public Affairs and Community Service. Dr. Bartle's leadership from 2012 to 2024 supported the dramatic growth of the Aviation Institute, helping it become one of the nation's premier collegiate aviation programs.

For the second year, the Institute was invited to submit a grant application to Southwest Airlines as a University Partner in the Destination 225° program. The Southwest Airlines Destination 225° grant aims to support Destination 225° partner universities by reducing the financial burden on students. Universities can enhance affordability, improve educational outcomes, and foster a conducive learning environment through this program. The Institute submitted a request for student scholarships. Six students received the Southwest Airlines Student Scholarships. These scholarships mark a significant investment in future pilots and aviation leaders:

- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| • Tyler Thieman   | • Adeline Peetz  |
| • Caden McDermott | • Samuel Kennedy |
| • Trevor Denker   | • Alex Duman     |

The Convocation recognized 19 additional recipients in addition to the Southwest Airlines Scholarship. These awards help support students in their academic and professional aviation pursuits.

## 2025 Scholarship Recipients

- Aviation Student of the Year – Kyndall Vargas
- Durham Undergraduate Scholarship – Ella Stamp
- Chris A. Hawks Memorial Scholarship – Jacob Ginn
- David L. LaMar Memorial Scholarship – Cullen Leitner, Nicholas Hinkel
- Chambers Family Aviation Scholarship – Nicholas Hinkel
- Robert E. and Rosita C. Wolsmann Scholarship – Samantha Stojanvo
- Don Smithey Scholarship – Natalia Meyer
- Densel K. and Melba J. Acheson Scholarship – Kymberli Rodriguez
- Russell C. Ross Memorial Aviation Scholarship – Landon Scott
- Robert Azer Memorial Scholarship – Lana Huetson
- Jamie Barrett Memorial Scholarship – Fatuma Abdullahi, Shay Sinnard
- Larry M. Smith Memorial Scholarship – Cullen Leitner
- Nebraska Aviation Council Scholarship – Chloe Schrick
- Arlene V. Steier Memorial Scholarship – Maria Juan
- Bruce Tuttle Memorial Scholarship – John Arthur
- Jet Linx Aviation Institute Golf Classic Scholarship – Mercedes Silva

The 2025 Honors Convocation reflects the University's mission to foster academic excellence and meaningful industry engagement, empowering students to soar as the next generation of aviation leaders.

As Director Scott Vlasek remarked in closing, "Tonight we celebrate not only our students' accomplishments but the spirit of innovation and mentorship that powers our Institute. May the sky never be their limit, but only their starting point."

For more information about the UNO Aviation Institute, visit [aviation.unomaha.edu](http://aviation.unomaha.edu) or contact Scott Vlasek at [svlasek@unomaha.edu](mailto:svlasek@unomaha.edu). ■



## The Nebraska Aviation Council announced the 2024 inductees into the Nebraska Aviation Hall of Fame

The Nebraska Aviation Council announced the 2024 inductees into the Nebraska Aviation Hall of Fame at the Aviation Symposium banquet in January 2025. For more information, go to <https://nebraskaaviationcouncil.org/hall-of-fame>. The deadline for 2025 nominations is September 15th.

### Glen Bredthauer, Ord



On June 23rd of 1952 Glen was born to Eugene and Alma (Simonson) Bredthauer of Ord, Nebraska. He grew up on the family farm south of Ord. In the summers his dad would help with the spray planes at the airport. Glen's journey into aviation began through guitar lessons. His guitar teacher and family friend suggested they go out to the airport and take the ground school that was being offered. And so began his aviation journey. He started flying in the spring of 1975, soloed on April 21, 1975 and earned his private pilot certificate on January 8, 1976. In September of 1985 he became a CFI. Glen began working on his A&P in 1974/1975 earning his I.A. in 1998. Glen has flown 70 different models of airplanes and has 11,000 hours of his over 20 thousand hours are in Super Cubs. He has owned

several aviation businesses through the years, spent 41 season doing aerial spraying in Nebraska and surrounding states and spent 25 plus years doing Aerial Predator Control flights in Nebraska and western states. Throughout all those years Glen has taught countless students to fly – and mentored many for decades after their first flight. Glen is active and a leader in all aspects of the aviation community though various aviation organizations such as EAA, the Nebraska Antique Airplane Association, Hastings Airport Association and many others. His greatest joy is creating lasting bonds in the aviation community through his service to aviation and to others.

### Michael Larson, Stromsburg



Michael Larson grew up on a farm near Stromsburg, Nebraska and soon learned he had a passion for education and flying. It was in 1969 that he learned to fly at Duncan Aviation in Lincoln, NE.

Michael has made major contributions to aviation in Nebraska as both a pilot and as an educator. He worked fifteen years for the Nebraska Aeronautics Department as a state pilot, aerospace education coordinator for Nebraska schools, and the editor of the state aviation publication, PIREPS.

Being a lifelong learner, Michael returned to school in 1992 and earned both a



master's and doctorate degree in Aerospace Education. This led him to becoming a Professor at the University of Nebraska Omaha, where he taught for the Aviation Institute, directed the professional pilot training program, and served as the Flying Mavericks flight team advisor.

Michael has flown many varied aircraft from small tailwheel airplanes to float planes to jets. His career also varied from flying charter, corporate, air ambulance and airline operations, to bush flying and fire spotting in Alaska. He has many hours of personal pleasure flying and perhaps some of his happiest times are spent in the air.

Michael's entire career has focused on sharing his love of flying with students, future pilots, and those pursuing their aviation careers. He has supported others to reach their aviation goals and aspirations and has promoted aviation through education and example. Michael has always considered himself a Nebraska farm boy, who was lucky enough to find a career that he loved and gave him a great deal of satisfaction and pure joy.

Michael's contributions to aviation are truly extraordinary, and he embodies the spirit and values that the Nebraska Aviation Hall of Fame seeks to honor.

### **Ira Emmett McCabe, Lexington**



Ira Emmett McCabe was born in Chariton, Iowa 22 September 1894 and moved to Lexington, Nebraska at an early age. Known as a precocious tinker in high school, he developed an interest in flying machines and in 1911 took the path of most early aviation experimenters and began building man carrying gliders.

In high school, McCabe and his friend Agy Brix built their first glider—called the No. 1—in April 1911. Glider No. 1 had a span of 24 feet and weighed 150 pounds and was the first of McCabe's joined wing designs.

Although McCabe claims he never saw an airplane, his elliptical wing biplane was designed to circumvent the existing patent controversy between the Wright Brothers and Glenn Curtiss over control systems. He filed for a patent for his unique design in 1913—and was awarded Patent No. 1,227,464 in 1917. McCabe's success with his gliders paved the way for his first powered aircraft. In August of 1913 with \$10,000 and 5 stockholders, the McCabe Aviation Company was formed in Lexington, Nebraska for the stated purpose of building and maintenance of aircraft and flight instruction.

Throughout McCabe's experimentation, his designs retained the joined wing tips and all flying-stabilator assembly in which the fin and rudder moved up/down in conjunction with the stabilizer. This was a precursor of the all flying stabilator of military jet aircraft of the 1950's.

In late summer of 1919 McCabe and Brix modified their fifth powered version now called the "Baby" with detachable wings and floats, in attempt to interest the U.S. Navy for use as a reconnaissance scout aboard submarines. The U.S.N. expressed no interest and McCabe dismantled the "Baby" and put it in storage in Chicago. It remained there until 1971 when it was donated to the Dawson County Museum, Lexington, Nebraska.

Ira Emmett McCabe passed away 13 February 1957, after a career managing his own company, Mercoid Controls. ■

# Harlan County Lake Float Plane Gathering

By Tiffany Thompson

If you read the May issue of PIREPS, you already know that EAA Chapter 569 hosted an exciting and educational weekend at Harlan County Lake, centered around the fascinating world of seaplanes—also known as float planes. The weekend brought together aviation enthusiasts from around the region to learn, share stories, and enjoy lakeside camaraderie.

## Friday Evening: A Sweet Start

The gathering began on Friday, May 2, as members of EAA Chapter 569 and a few guests arrived at the lake and settled in for the weekend. That evening, the group gathered at a scenic picnic shelter overlooking the water for a classic marshmallow roast. S'mores were made, stories were swapped, and the conversation naturally turned to the weekend's highlight—the anticipated arrival of a seaplane the next morning.

## Saturday: A Day of Floatplane Excitement

Saturday, May 3 began with a peaceful morning and the smell of fresh donuts at the picnic shelter overlooking the lake. Members and guests gathered early to enjoy breakfast together and eagerly await the arrival of the much-anticipated floatplane. Coffee in hand, eyes scanned the horizon, and before long, excitement filled the air as a Husky on floats, piloted by Larry Bartlet, appeared over the water.

Saturday, May 3, greeted us with perfect weather and even better company. The day's main attraction was the arrival of Larry Bartlet, who flew in a Husky on floats, performing a few graceful touch-and-go landings before taxiing up to Patterson Harbor Marina. Larry, and his aircraft, quickly became the center of attention, drawing curious visitors from nearby Alma and Republican City who were eager to get a closer look at the seaplane in action.

Larry made a couple of smooth touch-and-go landings before taxiing to Patterson Harbor Marina, where both he and the aircraft quickly became the talk of the lake. Visitors from nearby Alma and Republican City came by to catch a closer look at the seaplane, adding to the buzz and energy of the day.

Without mooring buoys available, the staff at Patterson Harbor came to the rescue, using a tractor to secure the aircraft along the beach. They also provided a golf cart to help shuttle our members across rougher terrain, ensuring everyone could comfortably enjoy the experience. Their hospitality was top-notch and deeply appreciated.

As the group gathered for lunch back at the picnic shelter, another unexpected treat rolled in, several classic cars from the Hastings Melon Roasters Car Club offering a touch of nostalgia and even more photo-worthy moments.

The combination of seaplane excitement, community camaraderie, and a dash of vintage flair made for a truly memorable day at the lake.

## Saturday Evening: Sharing Stories and Sea Ratings

That evening, the festivities continued at the North Shore Event Center on the opposite side of the lake. Olivia Hughes gave a captivating presentation about her journey earning her seaplane rating in Alaska, followed by a multi-engine sea rating in Florida. Her talk was inspiring and informative, and it sparked plenty of questions and conversation from the group.

Afterward, a smaller group gathered for a relaxed dinner at the North Shore Marina's restaurant, wrapping up a full day of flying, learning, and lakeside friendship. Later in the evening, an even smaller group made their way to the Beach Bar at Patterson Harbor, where they reflected on the weekend's experiences and shared a few entertaining stories before calling it a night.

With spirits high and memories made, everyone turned in, ready for the journey home the following day.

## Wrapping Up: A Heartfelt Thank You

Before I close the logbook on this unforgettable weekend, and on behalf of EAA Chapter 569, I would like to extend a special thank you to Cristi Higgins, whose vision and determination brought the Harlan County Lake Float Plane Gathering to life. It was Cristi's idea to host this unique event, and she took on the challenge of organizing every detail. Her dedication made the weekend not only possible but truly memorable.

We are also incredibly grateful to the staff at Patterson Harbor Marina and the North Shore Marina for their warm hospitality and outstanding support. Their willingness to go above and beyond—from providing camping, lodging, and dining accommodations, to assisting with aircraft beach anchoring and shuttling guests across rough terrain—was noticed and deeply appreciated.

We hope everyone who attended had a wonderful time and came away with a greater appreciation for both seaplanes and Harlan County Lake, Nebraska's only seaplane base. ■

# *Gordon Municipal Airport*



**Saturday, June 7, 2025**

**Nebraska State Fly-In 8:00AM – 2:00 PM**

*Some of the activities being planned are:*

**Aerial Show by the Red Star Pilots Association, a Drone Demonstration,  
National Guard Fly-Over, Vendor & Business Reps,  
Pilot Competitions, Entertainment, Crafts for Children, and ...**

**FOOD!**

**Including a FREE BREAKFAST!**

**For more information, please email:**

**Ken Costello, Gordon Airport Authority, State Fly-In Coordinator**  
**[ken.costello@blackhillscorp.com](mailto:ken.costello@blackhillscorp.com) 308-360-9087**



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Airport location is: 1882 U.S. Highway 20, Gordon, Nebraska 69343