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## McMahon-Wrinkle Airport & Industrial Park



### Recent Airport Activity



*What an amazing year we've had!*

The last ten months have been a whirlwind of activity here at the Big Spring Airport. We have over a dozen new pilots on the field, our hangars are at capacity, we have several new businesses and more inquiries than we can count. Things are more than prosperous for us right now. Which brings me to a very simple thought, that seems even more fitting this time of year. We have SO much to be thankful for here in our little town! It's no surprise that the oilfield is booming right now, and we all know that times like these don't last forever. So even with the increase in traffic, the area housing crunch, and the much longer lines at grocery stores and restaurants, the boom means business in Big Spring! When the oil-

field is booming—so is everything else! We have finally got our rail spur back in use, and the businesses are lining up to take full advantage of it at here at the industrial park. There's money flowing into our local area economy and while other places around the country are being hit hard by the recession, we see very little of those ripples out here in West Texas. We have had a wonderful amount of rainfall, and some beautiful weather to boot. We have a community full of caring people that are trying to better our little town in many ways. And we have these big, open skies begging to be explored. If you haven't noticed, we are surrounded by blessings. May you each enjoy a happy, healthy rest of 2012. See you next year!

### Recent Landings & Aircraft Photos



## Pilot's Briefing

### **VFR Over-The-Top** *By Wayne Dawson*

One sunny day many years ago, I landed my Aeronca on a gravel bar near the Bering Sea in Alaska to fish for Silver salmon. The fishing was great and I barely noticed the wind change. Along with it came the coastal fog. At the last possible moment I tossed my fishing gear and a nice salmon into the plane and took off, turning inland I climbed out of the fog and into clear skies. Well the fog followed along and I soon realized that the mile wide river I had to cross and my home field were fog covered too. Being a VFR pilot in a VFR airplane I was not going to make it home. After considering my limited options, I diverted to a gold mine strip in the Kilbuck Mountains, which at a higher elevation remained clear. My friends at the mine were pleased to see me arrive with a fresh salmon for dinner. The next day the fog lifted at home and I completed the flight. VFR over-the-top must not be confused with VFR-on-top. VFR-on-top is an IFR clearance which allows the pilot to fly VFR altitudes. VFR over-the-top is strictly a VFR operation in which the pilot maintains VFR cloud clearance requirements while operating on top of an undercast layer. This

situation might occur when the departure airport and destination airports are reporting clear conditions, but a low overcast layer is present in between. In this scenario the pilot could conduct a VFR departure, fly over the top of the undercast in VFR conditions, then complete a VFR descent and landing at his destination. VFR cloud clearances would be maintained at all times, and an IFR clearance would not be required for any part of the flight. In some circumstances VFR over-the-top can be an option. However, before committing to a flight under these conditions you might rethink your plans and then rethink them again. I was lucky that day the fog rolled in off the Bering Sea. I had an alternate destination that remained VFR and the fuel to get there. If you elect to go VFR over-the-top, be certain weather conditions at your destination will remain VFR while you are en route. As a VFR pilot don't risk becoming trapped on top with no place to go.

*Wayne Dawson holds a Commercial Pilot license with Single and Multiengine Land; Instrument Airplane; Glider ratings as well as a Ground Instructor, Advanced Instrument license. He currently flies an RV7A which he completed building in 2007 and hangs here at Big Spring Mc Mahon-Wrinkle Airport.*

## Pilot's Safety Meeting!

### **Mark your calendar, and plan to attend!!**

The Next Pilot Safety Meeting is at 7:00 pm, immediately following the 5:30 pm Airport Board Meeting on November 15th. Don't miss it! **We will be having a presentation by the Air Evac Lifeteam, and a selection of soups to curb the chilly weather! If you are able to attend, please do so. These meetings are instrumental to the safety and success of all our aviation community.**

Please RSVP! Call Kelly at 432-264-2362 or email: [kgrant@mybigspring.com](mailto:kgrant@mybigspring.com)

## Airport Director's Update

These are exciting times at the airport. New pilots, new airplanes, lots of flying, some work on runways completed, new short line railroad, and more to come. WAAS (GPS) approaches for Runways 6/24 have been approved by FAA for implementation in May, 2013. New fuel tank farm, terminal apron upgrade, and Rwy 17/35 "joint seal" go out for bids in a few days. New T-Hangars are being planned for the West side of the airport possibly for this fiscal year. With the good comes the bad. We had two aircraft incidents in the last few weeks—a wheels-up landing, and a collapsed nose wheel landing. No one was injured in either case, but the results could have been dramatically different. Words of wisdom: stay vigilant at all times; maintain situational awareness; make sure your aircraft is airworthy. Just keep it safe; we like having you around... Jim Little, Airport Director

## ...Memory Tickler

**Q: Describe an instance when ATC does not provide separation for an aircraft operating on an IFR clearance.**

*A: ATC does not provide separation for an aircraft operating on an IFR clearance with "VFR-On-Top" authorization instead of a specific assigned altitude.*

*Courtesy of Wayne Dawson*

### ***GIVE US THE SCOOP!***

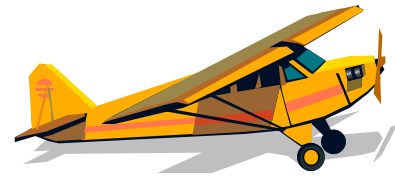
*If you would like to make comments or suggestions regarding this newsletter, please call 432-264-2362 or send an email to: [kgrant@mybigspring.com](mailto:kgrant@mybigspring.com)*

*We'd love to hear from you!*

## Instructor's Corner

The US Flight Academy has had an extremely busy year! Here's a list of the most recently graduated pilots from the Big Spring Airport:

09/01/2012	Manas Rachagarla	India	Private Pilot
09/08/2012	Michael Crossland	Midland, TX	Private Pilot
09/08/2012	Hardy Wilkerson	Big Spring, TX	Private Pilot
09/09/2012	Pramod Kancharia	India	Private Pilot
09/12/2012	Nirek Guduru	India	Private Pilot
09/12/2012	Sri Deenamsetty	India	Private Pilot
09/20/2012	Tim Almaganbetov	Russia	Private Pilot
09/20/2012	Prithvi Bharadwaj	India	Private Pilot
09/21/2012	Sumakar Vabhineni	India	Private Pilot
09/21/2012	Samuel Cobb	Big Spring, TX	Private Pilot
10/07/2012	Vinodh Vedulla	India	Private Pilot
10/08/2012	Subhash Rajulapudi	India	Private Pilot
10/08/2012	Siva Sure	India	Private Pilot
10/09/2012	Swapna Ancha	India	Private Pilot
10/09/2012	Banujith Nalam	India	Private Pilot
10/16/2012	Karteek Singhampalli	India	Private Pilot
10/20/2012	Lokesh Pallapothu	India	Student Pilot



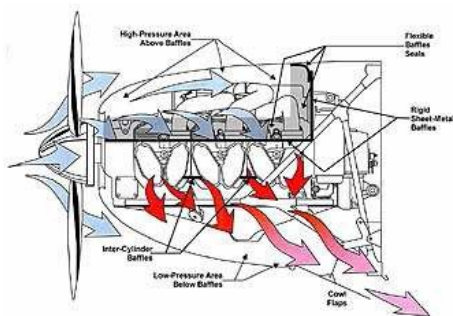
## ...In the Cockpit



## Mechanic's Tool Box

**Baffles - why do we care?** *By Rodney Patridge—A&P, Pilot*

Modern piston aircraft use a system for engine cooling called “pressure cooling” Pressure cooling uses ram air entering the top of the engine (high-pressure area) then passing around the outside of the cylinders into the bottom of the engine compartment (low-pressure area). The air then exits out the bottom of the cowling through the bottom opening or the cowl flaps.



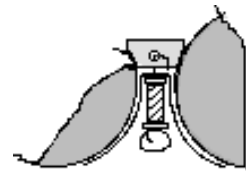
Baffles are made of rigid, sheet-metal and flexible seals that, together with the engine cowling, divide the engine compartment into two chambers: high-pressure area above and low-pressure area below and behind the engine.

The typical difference in upper and low pressure is about 1/4 psi. Because of the small difference in pressure any small leaks in the baffles and seals will have a large affect of the cooling of the engine. Missing, broken, or improperly positioned baffles or seals will cause the engine cooling to be degraded by letting the air in from the upper to lower areas without flowing over the cylinders.

The most troublesome part and most overlooked portion of the cooling system are the baffle seals. These seals are used to seal between the sheet-metal baffles and the cowling. These are important because the engine rocks in its mounts under cowling. To do the job the seals need to be turned up and into the high-pressure area to seal against the

cowling. If the seal is allowed to be turned towards the low-pressure area (easy to do when installing the cowling) the seals will be blown away from the cowling in-flight and the air will leak past the baffle and not keep the engine cool.

Another place for troubles is the inter-cylinder baffles. These are oddly-shaped pieces of sheet-metal mounted between and below cylinders. They are used to force the down-flowing cooling air around the bottom of the cylinders. Often these are held in place by spring loaded clips or safety wire. Sometimes these are left out when engines are rebuilt or fall out during operations.



Next time you have the cowling off please inspect your baffles and seals. Let's keep those engines cool and running strong.

## WORDS OF WISDOM

*In our dreams we are able to fly...  
and that is a remembering of how  
we were meant to be.*

*~ Madeleine L'Engle*



## **McMahon-Wrinkle Airport & Industrial Park**

3200 Rickabaugh Dr. West  
Big Spring, TX 79720  
432-264-2362  
432-264-2367 Fax

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We're on the web!

[www.mybigspring.com/pages/airport](http://www.mybigspring.com/pages/airport)

**Pilot Safety Meeting: Thursday, November 15th – 7:00 pm**

**Presentation by the Air Evac Lifeteam!!!**

**We will have some cold weather comfort food on hand too!**

**YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT!**

### **Terminal Hours of Operation**

Monday through Friday  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### ***Fixed Base Operator:***

*Lone Star Aviation*  
Phone: (432) 264-7124  
Fax: (432) 264-7406  
Call Out: (432) 935-1238

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The Big Spring McMahon-Wrinkle Airport, owned and operated by the City of Big Spring, is a general aviation airport. The airport, which occupies approximately 2,200 acres of land, operates two runways: Runway 17/35, which measures 8,802 feet in length and 100 feet in width; and Runway 06/24, measuring 4,601 feet in length and 75 feet in width. Aviation activities that occur at the airport on a regular basis include agricultural spraying, corporate use, flight instruction, and recreational flying. The airport has hosted annual fly-ins and air shows, and maintains the Hangar 25 Air Museum. In 2007, the airport hosted the Hang Gliding World Championships. The Big Spring Air Terminal is over 4,000 sq. ft. with a conference room, passenger waiting area, courtesy car and airpark office. The Pilot's Lounge includes weather monitoring and flight planning capability, wireless internet connection and concessions.