



# NEWS In the Sky

March 2018

([www.opa.link](http://www.opa.link))

March 1st, 2018 - Social 6:30 p.m.  
7:00 Dinner Meeting

## Speaker: Col. Charles B. DeBellevue, Retired - Viet Nam Ace

DeBellevue became the first Air Force Weapon Systems Officer (WSO), and the only "backseater", to become a flying ace. He was credited with six MiG kills, the most earned by any US aviator during the Vietnam War and is a recipient of the Air Force Cross, 2 silver stars, 2 Legion of Merits, and 5 Distinguished Flying Crosses. He is the only backseater who was given the Ace honor. He and pilot Capt. Steve Ritchie scored the first of four Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-21 kills they achieved together on May 10, 1972. DeBellevue, Ritchie, and Capt. Jeffrey Feinstein became the only USAF "aces" during the Vietnam War. DeBellevue and Ritchie normally flew a McDonnell Douglas F-4D Phantom. It was like a big truck, big, ungangly, but really fast. It was one of only eight equipped with a top-secret APX-80 electronic set, code name "Combat Tree". It was displayed on a scope in the WSO's cockpit and it gave the Phantoms the ability to identify and locate MiGs when they were still beyond visual range. He logged 550 combat hours while flying 220 combat missions, 96 of which were over North Vietnam. He has over 3000 flying hours.

Although he did not pass pilot training before his combat service, he re-applied after being removed from combat after his 6th kill and earned his pilot wings. He served as Assistant Operations Officer in Alaska; 5th AF Deputy Chief of Staff at Yokota AB, Japan; Commander of the 432nd Combat Support Group at Misawa AB, Japan; and Commander of the 95th AB Wing at Edwards AFB, CA. He retired from active duty as a full Colonel as the last flying Ace, while serving as Commander of AF ROTC Detachment 440 at the University of Missouri in 1998 after 30 years of military service.



April 5th, 2018 - 6:30 p.m.  
at the Oklahoma History Center in OKC

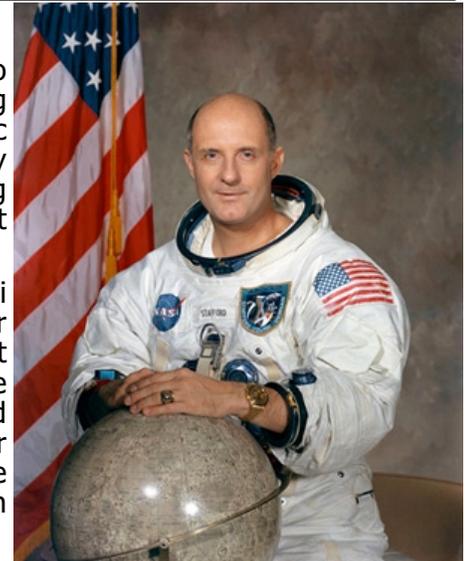
Please contact Roger Walton for dinner reservations so we have enough food for everyone. [dinner@opa.link](mailto:dinner@opa.link) 405-219-5149

## Speaker: Lt. General Thomas P. Stafford - Astronaut

A native Oklahoman, born in Weatherford, General Stafford's mother came to Oklahoma in a covered wagon and lived to see her only son go to the moon, watching on color TV. The April meeting of the Oklahoma Pilots Association will be a historic one, co-hosted by the Oklahoma Historical Society and held at the Oklahoma History Center, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Dr., in Oklahoma City. General Tom Stafford will be speaking just a few paces away from the actual Gemini 6 capsule he piloted to the first rendezvous in space in 1965, proving the viability of a manned mission to the moon.

Just five months later, he and Eugene "Gene" Cernan returned to space on the Gemini 9 mission, for the second spacewalk by an American. This challenging feat had a near disastrous outcome which almost took the life of General Stafford's fellow astronaut and close friend. Just 3 years later, these two men returned to space together on the Apollo 10 mission – the second manned mission to the moon – where they descended to just a few miles above the lunar surface. As the first to fly the lunar module in lunar orbit, one of their primary purposes for that mission was to search out a site for the first moon landing on Apollo 11. On their return to earth, Stafford, Cernan, and John Young reached the highest speed ever attained by humans: 28,547 miles per hour.

General Stafford has flown over 120 different types of fixed wing and rotary aircraft and 3 types of spacecraft. Much of his post-NASA career as a three-star Air Force General involved high level classified information, which is only recently becoming declassified. This means many of his greatest accomplishments can now be publicly discussed, including his work on stealth fighter and bomber technology for the F117A and the B-2, among others. April 5th will be your opportunity to hear General Stafford give a firsthand account of some of mankind's most impressive adventures, including these stories and others. **See page 2 for more information!**





## OPA President Matt Cole



Oklahoma Pilots Association is a member-controlled not-for-profit organization for all pilots and aircraft owners. OPA strives to serve the needs of general aviation pilots statewide, promoting aviation, education and safety in personal and business flying.

Membership consists of student pilots through airline transport pilots, both civil and military and is open to all pilots and aircraft owners. Annual membership dues are currently \$35.

OPA holds monthly dinner meetings at the C. E. Page Building on Wiley Post Airport in Oklahoma City. Distinguished guest speakers present educational and safety related programs at the monthly dinner meetings.

OPA hosts monthly Fly Aways for lunch or dinner and weekend Fly Aways to interesting destinations.

OPA, through its charitable non-profit corporation, accepts money or property donated to fund the Vic Jackson Memorial Scholarship Fund which is awarded annually to a college student with career aspirations in the field of aviation. Your contributions of money or property are tax deductible.

OPA Newsletter Staff  
Editors: Ben & June Roy  
Typesetting & Layout: Ben Roy  
Circulation: Wyvema Startz

Members' contributions of articles and other information relative to aviation are encouraged.

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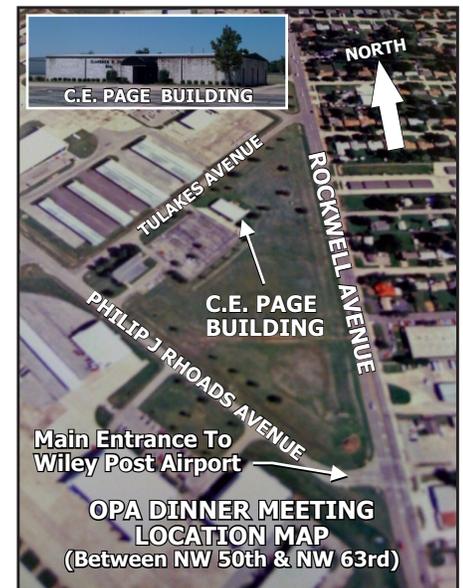
Ben Roy  
June Roy  
Steve Haynes

We are very quickly approaching our highly anticipated April social event being held at the Oklahoma History Center. Tickets will be on sale very soon. Expect tickets to cost around \$40 a piece and once they go on sale, will be available up until 10 days prior to the event. Tickets will include a sit-down dinner and a once in a lifetime opportunity to listen to Lieutenant General Thomas P. Stafford, a famous Oklahoma astronaut, spin yarns about his experiences when he was a young man flying in the US Air Force and flying for NASA in outer space. Don't miss this awesome event and once tickets go on sale, they will be limited, so get them while they last!! Hope to see everyone there and don't forget about our exciting March social event where Col. Charles B. DeBellevue, former fighter pilot, will be regaling us with his high-speed fighter jet experiences.

**SAVE THE DATE: The Oklahoma Pilots Association will be hosting a night with General Thomas P. Stafford on April 5th, 2018 at the Oklahoma History Center. This event will serve as the OPA's April dinner meeting. General Stafford will share his experiences with our membership from his time as a Air Force Test Pilot and a NASA Astronaut. Tickets will be \$40 per person, including dinner, and will be available after our March Board Meeting. There is limited seating available, so tickets will also be limited. Be sure to buy tickets early to avoid disappointment. Tickets will not be available at the door because we must give the caterer a headcount well in advance of this special event.**

Please note that the April Dinner Meeting will not be held at our regular location, but will be at the Oklahoma History Center for our special event with Astronaut, General Thomas P. Stafford!

The Oklahoma Pilots Association (OPA) meets the 1st Thursday of each month at the Clarence E. Page Building, located on Wiley Post Airport. From N. Rockwell, enter the airport at the traffic light (Phillip J. Rhoads Ave.), take the first right, and drive back to the light gray brick building.



**Highlights from the February Dinner Meeting**

We welcomed John Seddle back to Oklahoma after 30 years and Eric Wayne. OSU Flyin' Aggies President Dillon Lain, and member, Miles Turce, were joined by OSU graduate, McKenzie Oden who now has her CFII license, and Blake Anthamatten, also from OSU. Emory Lobley, an OCC student, obtained his Private license. Bill Pappadopoulos recognized Mike Rangel with a plaque for his 20 years of service to OPA, and presented Matt Cole with the OPA President's Award. Roger Walton said our February Fly Away was scheduled to Café Garcia in Enid and then a tour of the MiG display.



Joey Sager told us about our April 5th OPA Dinner Meeting, scheduled at the Oklahoma History Center with General Tom Stafford as the very special speaker. Joey mentioned that in addition to the things people know about Stafford's career as an astronaut, there is much more to learn from him. Most of his contributions to the Space Program were after he retired as an astronaut, that are now unclassified, so he can talk about them.



During one early spacewalk, there was a major problem and he had to face the horrible reality that he might have to leave one of his best friends out in space. This is a presentation that you won't want to miss!

Matt Cole introduced our speaker, Aaron Varland, from the FAAST (Federal Aviation Administration Safety Team). Aaron mentioned that in 2015 the flight time dropped because gas was so expensive, but Oklahoma stayed pretty good. Aviation is the second highest employer in Oklahoma. He said the main part of his job is computing information from aviation crashes to see trends: what happened, and how we can prevent them. Accidents can happen anywhere, but there are more around OKC and Tulsa, due to higher traffic in those areas. Aaron said the leading cause of accidents in Oklahoma and nationwide is loss of control on landing. Fuel problems is the second highest and include lack of maintenance on the system and the fuel amount not being good. Some causes can't be determined because there is not enough plane left to evaluate the problem.



**Summary from Aaron's Presentation:**

**How can this be avoided?**

Pre flight is key, Actually check the fuel level, Don't forget fuel reserves, Systems knowledge, Transition training, Check list, Check List, CHECK LIST!!, Sterile cockpit, Actually perform the GUMPS check, Get a weather briefing and know your limits, Check your ego, go around!

**What can I do in general?**

Pre flight briefing and inspection, Set personal minimums, Self evaluate: Am I current and Proficient?, Education/Training



## Highlights from the February Dinner Meeting Continued

After one crash where the pilot thought the first power line he hit was the second of the two in the location, the plane caught fire. The pilot pulled himself out and walked a mile for help with two broken ankles. He said that when a light sport plane and a 12-foot steel fence meet, the fence will always win. Some of the fuel problems included one who didn't set the alarm to change tanks, changing fuel tanks, but forgetting to turn on the fuel pump, and some new owners of Vikings. Vikings have three fuel tanks, one on each side and one in the middle. But the middle one can't be used for take offs or landings. One person bumped a switch and turned off auto control of rudders. Other problems included gear up after distraction. One pilot was arguing with the mechanic, didn't pay attention to the crosswind. Then there is the ego problem; "I can make that, watch this." Most people he talked to said the thought of going around never crossed their minds.

One pilot he talked to said the manufacturer said the amount of gas in his tank should last two hours and he ran out in one hour and 45 minutes. He didn't consider things like taking off in the wind uses more fuel, or the touch and go at three airports. One said he didn't know what happened to cause the crash. Aaron checked and he was out of gas. When asked how much gas he had in there, he said he didn't know, but he had enough to get there. Aaron said you should stick check your fuel or at the very least, open your tank and see how much is in there. You always need at least 45 minutes of fuel in reserve.

He said that being involved in safety training, including WINGS is a good way to avoid these problems. The WINGS website is better than 2 – 3 years ago. It is not a "grit your teeth and get through it" any more. And he said to actually USE your checklists, before take off and before landing. Look at everything and watch out for expectation bias. You tend to see what you expect to see. Get weather briefings and know your limits. That can seem like a waste in this state, but do it anyway. Your limits can change in day, weeks or months. They aren't the same as they were two years ago. Check your ego and go around. Someone in the audience said, "Unless you're out of gas." To which Aaron said, "Yes, unless you're out of gas". Matt thanked Aaron and presented him with a one-year membership in OPA.



## More Photographs from the February Dinner Meeting



**OPA Unclassified Ads are available to OPA members wishing to purchase or sell aviation related items at no charge for the ad. Ads are published in the newsletter as space permits and there are size restrictions. Send your requests to Ben and June Roy, "News in the Sky" Editors, at [broysprint01@earthlink.net](mailto:broysprint01@earthlink.net).**

### OPA Unclassified Ad

OPA member, full-time pilot & instructor, part-time aviation consultant, & classic airplane nut seeking underutilized office space in order to further my consultancy services. A simple cubicle with room for a desk & coffee-maker will suffice. Willing to pay a reasonable monthly rate and/or help with utilities. A location near the airport, or in an FBO would be ideal. I am equidistant to Wiley Post, Guthrie, and Sundance. Traditional office locations would work too, but since the First National Bldg. sold, the easy pickings are getting slim.

Doug Clark 316-204-2642 (Wichita area code from my days at FlightSafety) References available.



**OPA January 13th Fly Away - Enid, OK Cancelled Due to Weather  
Alternate - Abuelo's Mexican Restaurant**



Thanks to Gerald Luton  
for the photos and to  
Brian Hancock  
for the article

As has become an all too familiar occurrence, our February Flyaway was canceled due to low ceilings and potential icing conditions. Instead we met at an alternate location; Abuleo's Mexican Restaurant on Memorial Road. Eight members showed up at the alternate location and discussed flying (of course), future flyaways, as well as Angela Drabek's new Cessna 172. She shared pictures of her Cessna with us. Participants included Angela, Wyvema Startz, Brian Hancock, Alan and Sonie Liebler, Gerald Luton and Roger and Jan Walton.



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**OPA Fly Away March 10th - Enid, OK  
Lunch at Café Garcia - Tour MIG Display  
Wheels down 11:00 a.m.**



For our March flyaway on the 10th, we will once again try to fly to Enid, OK (KWDG) to eat lunch at Cafe Garcia and then tour the MIG Display that is featured at the ML Becker Learning Center. Please plan to join us. We hope to see you there.

Café Garcia is known for it's California style Mexican food and a really great complimentary salsa bar with eight kinds of salsa. It is located at 324 S. Grand Street in Enid. The phone number is 580-237-4775. This is another popular OPA destination! If you didn't get your fill of Mexican food last month, be sure to make this one.

Usually we need a head count (for the restaurant & for ground transportation when needed), so if you plan to go along, please email Roger Walton at [flyaway@opa.link](mailto:flyaway@opa.link) with the number in your group (or text or call: (405) 219-5149). We'll meet you on the ramp. If you have a seat available or need a ride please contact one of the following:

Brian Hancock: (405) 757-5706 - [Hancock73660@gmail.com](mailto:Hancock73660@gmail.com), or Bill Pappadopoulos: (405) 417-7876, or Roger Walton: (405) 219-5149 - [flyaway@opa.link](mailto:flyaway@opa.link), or Danny Davis: (405) 990-5201 - [abadavis@sbcglobal.net](mailto:abadavis@sbcglobal.net)



**Fly Away Committee**

Please contact any committee member with questions about Fly Aways or suggestions for future OPA Fly Aways.

- Danny Davis - 405-990-5201  
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**2018 OPA Calendar**

- March 1st-** Dinner Meeting 6:30 p.m.  
Page Building, Wiley Post Airport
  - March 10th** - Fly Away - Enid, OK  
Café Garcia - Tour MIG Display  
Wheels Down - 11:00 a.m.
  - March 15th** - OPA Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.  
Page Building, Wiley Post Airport
  - April 5th** - Dinner Meeting 6:30 p.m.  
Oklahoma History Center - OKC
  - April 14th** - Fly Away - Weatherford, OK  
Stafford Museum - Lunch at Lucille's  
Wheels Down - 11:00 a.m.
  - April 19th** - OPA Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.  
Page Building, Wiley Post Airport
  - April 21st** - OPA Fly Away - Stillwater, OK  
OSU Flyin' Aggies - 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
  - May 3rd-** Dinner Meeting 6:30 p.m.  
Page Building, Wiley Post Airport
  - May 12th** - Fly Away - Springfield, Missouri  
Lambert's Restaurant - Wheels Down - 11:00 a.m.
  - May 17th** - OPA Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.  
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- Saturday after 3rd Monday - Owasso Pancake  
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- 4th Saturday - Enid Fly-In Breakfast - Woodring  
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