



# OX5 AVIATION PIONEERS TEXAS WING NEWSLETTER

George Vose, Editor / Secretary  
PO Box 908, Alpine, Texas 79831  
March, 2016 No. 68

## From the Editor / Secretary George Vose



Enclosed with this March 2016 Newsletter is a brochure of the National OX5 Aviation Pioneers. Please look it over. It was designed to bring new members into our great organization, and it includes a short membership application. Every Texas Wing member must know someone who meets our revised membership qualifications. To join the OX5 it is no longer necessary to have flown, owned, or maintained an OX5 powered airplane before 1940. The qualifications now are: The affirmation that he/she will work toward the perpetuation of the OX5 Aviation Pioneers and the history of aviation.

The new member's application and payment of \$30 annual dues will bring him/her aboard to receive an attractive wall certificate, the National and Texas newsletters, and all OX5 privileges. Each of you: PLEASE HELP THE TEXAS OX5 WING TO INSTALL AT LEAST ONE NEW MEMBER.

Texas Wing President Colton Woodward, in his message on this page, tells some interesting things about his activities.

All the Best, George Vose

Email: [gvose@yahoo.com](mailto:gvose@yahoo.com)

## From the Texas Wing President Colton Woodward



George Vose has informed me that several members have asked about me, and what I do.

I grew up working on my family's ranches in west Texas. Two of the ranches are nearly 100 miles apart and have many miles of fence lines and watering holes to be checked. This is where my father's "brand new" 1946 PA-12 comes in handy. However, I was not able to fly the tail wheel Piper until I received my private license. I began my flight training with George Vose when I was only ten years old. I would ride in his C-172 back seat and listen while my brother, Cade, was the student up front. Next, when it was my time to fly, of course I would try to out-do Cade's flying - despite having to use two pillows behind me and one under me to reach the pedals. Of course I had the advantage of having watched

and listened to the same lessons from the back seat. Occasionally George would let us observe him do his wildlife tracking. I recall that we tracked deer, elk and even a black bear.

George has now passed this activity to Cade who monitors wildlife for several universities and Texas state agencies using radio telemetry and low level visual counting. His activities have increased to the need for another pilot. I received my instrument rating this past June and am now working on my commercial license. To help pay for my flight training I operate heavy equipment for a construction company and manage a small crew. I graduated from TCU in 2013 where I majored in ranch management and business.

As your Wing President I look forward to serving you and seeing all of you at our next meeting.

Sincerely, Colton Woodward

Email: [woodwardcolton@yahoo.com](mailto:woodwardcolton@yahoo.com)

**OFFICERS, 2015-2016** ----- Colton Woodward, President      Cade Woodward, Vice President      George Vose, Secretary  
Michelle Lawrence, Treasurer      Hazel Fehmel, Historian

**GOVERNORS** Robert Clark (2016)      Barbara Kraemer (2016)      Jack Nelson (2016)      Cade Woodward (2017)  
Mike Lawrence (2017)      "Susie" Brouse (2017)      John McCrory (2017)  
[Gov. Term expiration dates in parentheses]

## This Issue's "Mystery Airplane"



The OX5 powered biplane on the left, introduced in 1928 by the Arkansas Aircraft Company in Littlerock, was which of the following? A, B, C, or D?

- A. Command-Aire 3C3
- B. Travel Air 2000
- C. Waco 9
- D. Pheasant H-10

(Answer with information, Page 4)

***NOTE::** We are always interested in the inclusion of stories and pictures from members with some aviation history or current activities, Send them on. They will be scanned and returned unblemished.  
Editor: George Vose, PO Box 908, Alpine, Texas 79831.*

Texas OX5 Wing Member [David Sanderson](#) read with interest John McCrory's article in the December 2015 Newsletter that reviewed Tinian island's World War II history. (From Tinian, the two atomic bombs were deployed that ended World War II). David was recently employed in the Mariana Islands and has viewed Tinian as it is today - after its 70-year abandonment.

(David is a rated Airline Transport Pilot, an FAA mechanic IA-rated, and maintains helicopters in Alaska and many other places).

### The Northern Mariana Islands and Tinian today

From David Sanderson OX5 #22519

In April, 2013, the Alaska Volcano Observatory contacted Pathfinder Aviation to help install volcano monitoring stations on Pagan Island (pronounced Pah-gan) in the Northern Marianas, about 300 miles north of Guam. I was to be their helicopter mechanic. Pathfinder Aviation had leased a Bell 206 L3 Long Ranger Helicopter from Arrow Aviation in Lafayette, Louisiana, where I traveled to inspect it, and began its disassembly for shipment to the Pacific. This included removing the landing gear, the main rotor hub and blade assembly, mast from the transmission, and the vertical fin so the fuselage would fit into a 40-foot shipping container. Once the helicopter was secured in the container, it was trucked from Lafayette to Long Beach, California. From there it was placed on a container ship and set sail for the two-week voyage to Guam.



I arrived in Guam about the same time as the helicopter and began the process of retrieving it from customs and began to look for an adequate place with an overhead hoist to allow for reassembly. After an all-day search we finally located a suitable place at Freedom Air at the Guam International Airport. There, the shipping container was released from customs and delivered.

We began reassembly in the luxury of a large hangar out of the tropical heat, after which it was fueled and taken for a test flight. Next, all support gear was loaded into a Cessna 206 and flown to the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan

International Airport in Saipan. The rest of us followed in a 1.5-hour flight in the helicopter.

Once in Saipan, all support gear was loaded onto a freighter that set sail to Pagan Island, another 200 miles north. Again, we refueled the helicopter, cleared customs, and headed out, using dead reckoning, and soon flew off the chart. (There are no charts past Saipan). We picked a 002-degree heading and flew for two hours, following the island chain until we could see the smoking volcano on Pagan Island.

Upon arrival at our destination, Pagan Island, we were met by the Alaska Volcano Observatory coordinator and put to work immediately. There being no dock on Pagan Island, we were to spend two full days of sling-loading by helicopter all of the scientific equipment, camp supplies, bottled water and helicopter fuel.

Pagan is a remote island, and we found the accommodations to be greatly lacking. We were each given a mountain tent and nothing else – no sleeping bags, pads or pillows, and it was pitch black before we got the tents set up.

Waking after a fitful first night, I discovered that I had been using “cow pies” left by feral cattle for a pillow. The cattle also served as our main food source for the duration of our stay. Other memorable critters were the masses of blow flies. They were relentless - on the food, in your ears and biting your ankles. The only reprieve was to jump into the water.



The entire Pagan Island population is approximately ten native Chamoros. All of them were put to work as laborers and camp cooks. The human population on Pagan was outnumbered by the chicken population, estimated to be about sixty, and they soon became another food source. I had my own pet chicken, “Chicken George”, who followed me all over the island, not knowing he might become a dinner. (He was spared).

We remained on the island for approximately one month, setting up six volcano monitoring stations.



Camp site and pilot on Pagan Island, (volcano smoke in back ground).



Remains of a WWII Japanese Zero on Pagan Island.

At the conclusion of our work on Pagan Island we returned to Saipan. I had some spare time and was able to hop a 15-minute Cessna flight to Tinian Airport on Tinian Island. Knowing the significance of the history of this island during WWII, I hired a local driver to view the war-time B-29 runways on the north end of the island. The highlight there was seeing the bomb pits (below left and center) where the atomic bombs, Little Boy and Fat Man, were loaded to be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The pits have been cleared of debris and protective shelters constructed. The U. S. SeaBee-constructed WWII runways (below right) have almost disappeared.

Just another chapter in the life of a roving copter grease monkey. David Sanderson



## Leland Snow, self-taught airplane designer-builder-flier Another bit of Texas aviation history

Quite a few years ago one of George Vose’s student pilots, Dale Gleason, on a training cross-country flight, landed at Olney, Texas. While looking for someone to endorse his log book, he was cordially received by Leland Snow who was producing ag-planes on the Olney Airport.

A side note: In 2012 former Hartlee Field student pilot Dale Gleason (mentioned above) retired from United Air Lines as captain, flying the Boeing “Triple-7”.

(Continued, next page)

We have delved a bit into Leland Snow's aviation history

In Harlingen, Texas, in 1961, Leland Snow began designing an airplane for the purpose of aerial application on crops. Born in 1930 in Olney, by age 23 and after graduating from Texas A&M University, Snow had built, test-flown and received FAA certification on the ag-plane he called the "S-1". For the next four years his job was aerial application in the Rio Grande Valley, using his S-1. In 1957 he moved back to Olney, his home town, set up a shop on the airport and began manufacturing the S-2A and the S-2B.

In 1965 Snow sold his company to Rockwell-Standard and was appointed Vice President of the aero Commander Division during which time the S-2R was developed and named the "Thrush". The first model was built at the Olney Plant before it was closed and moved to Georgia in 1970. Snow later resigned from Rockwell and devoted the following two years designing the Air-Tractor, which later became the AT-301, the first turbine model.

On February 20, 2011, at age 80, Leland Snow died while jogging near his home. On his desk were his plans and notes for the next day's engineering meeting.

Snow is remembered as a quiet, generous and kind-hearted man. His Air Tractors can be found working over fields and forests across the U. S. and around the world in Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Spain, Eastern Europe, Saudi Arabia and South Korea.



Young Leland at his Olney, Texas plant



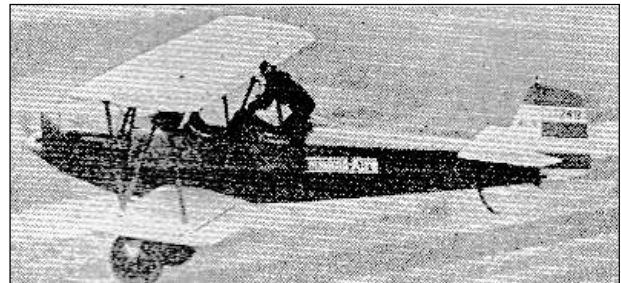
Radial engine Air Tractor spreading defoliant

**Answer The "Mystery Airplane" Page 2**

The "Mystery Airplane" on page 1 perhaps was a puzzle for those who did not fly in the 1930s-1940s. Did all those old biplanes look alike? No, they had similar profiles but all were very different. The Mystery Airplane on page 2 is an .....

**OX5 COMMAND-AIRE 3C3 .**

The Command-Aire 3C3 was introduced by the Arkansas Aircraft Co. of Little Rock in January 1928. It proved to be inherently stable in flight. The company decided to demonstrate this by having their test pilot, "Ike" Vermilya, ride a-straddle outside the cockpit, a real "hands off". The Command-Aire was designed in late 1927 by Albert Voellmecke, formerly with the German Ernst Heinkel Airplane Works. The OX5 engine was completely cowled-in with removable metal panels. All control actuation was by push-pull tubes and bell cranks – no wires, cables, or pulleys were used. Upper and lower wings were of equal span of 32' 6" with a wing area of 303 Ss. ft. Gross wgt 2200 lbs, max speed 100, cruise 85, land 36, ceiling 9,500 ft. Price at factory \$3,350.



"Hands off", a-stride the Command-Aire fuselage 3C3

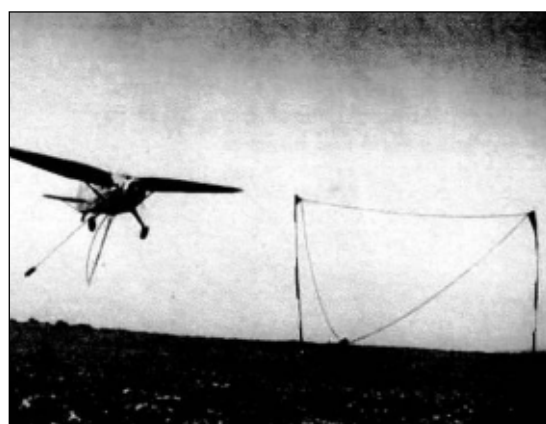
## A sample of what the National web page can do.

Have you clicked on the National OX5 web page lately? If not, give it a try at [www.ox5.org](http://www.ox5.org). The site is managed by Dennis Yerkey of Pittsburgh and it offers many thousands of useful and interesting topics. This newsletter editor was interested in learning more about the rural airmail pick-up system he had often observed back in the early 1950s in State College, Pennsylvania. The local saying about State College (Penn State's locale) was, "equally inaccessible from all parts of Pennsylvania".

Early each forenoon and early each evening George Vose would watch an All American Aviation Stinson Reliant dive to a waiting mailbag roped between two posts, snatch it, reel it in and fly on its way to the mailing center in Pittsburgh. Recall that in those days, all first class mail did not travel by air as it does now. Indeed, it cost six cents to buy an airmail stamp to avoid the long letter haul on slow trains. The pick-up airmail system served small communities in the Ohio Valley, West Virginia, Delaware, New York and much of Pennsylvania.



Pick-up routes radiating from Pittsburgh and Philadelphia..



Stinson Reliant about to pick-up mail sack

The original company name was "All American Aviation" until it became "All American Airlines". Eventually the big American Airlines filed a protest for name similarity. So All American became "Allegheny Airlines" and eventually "USAir" until it merged with American Airlines in 2013.

The original All-American Airlines was ambitious and persistent, and even visualized the pick-up of human passengers to be transferred to gliders. (Incidentally this editor attended an air show in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania where a brave volunteer was snatched in the same manner that mail sacks were snatched – fortunately the reeling-in mechanism worked OK that day). At the time, the airline's ideas seemed implausible, but the knowledge gained from their early tests became very useful during World War II when CG-4 glider pick-ups used the very same methods.

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### **From the National OX5 NEWS, December 2015: "Pay your 2016 dues \$30"**

OX5 members have received the December 2015 issue of the National OX5 NEWS. An item in it reminds us that the 2016 dues are due. A few of us can remember when, (a long time ago), the National OX5 dues were \$5.00. Times have changed, but our National dues are still less than many other aviation organizations. (George Vose says, "I know – I am a member of five National organizations (OX5, AOPA, EAA, AAA, CAF) and my OX5 dues are the lowest of all of them").

Please mail your \$30 check to: [OX5 Aviation Pioneers, PO Box 769, Troy, Ohio 45375](mailto:OX5AviationPioneers@ox5.org)

## John McCrory's article postponed this issue

*Ed Note: This year, 2016, is the 100th anniversary of General Pershing's Army expedition into Mexico from Columbus New Mexico in an attempt to capture Pancho Villa. Villa and his rebel group had earlier raided Columbus, burning buildings and killing more than twenty civilians and military personnel.*

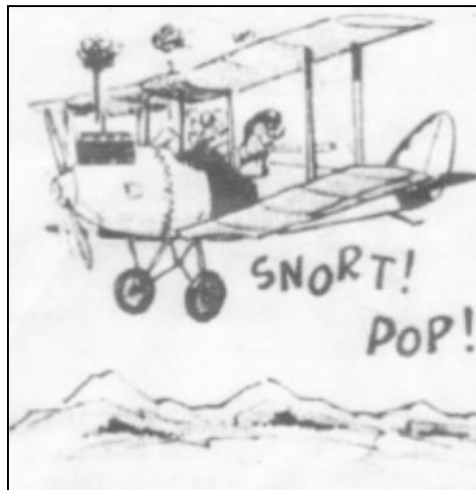
John McCrory, our Marfa contributor, planned to prepare an article for this issue covering the expedition and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historical event to be presented in Columbus in March. The expedition into Mexico was the first trial of the OX5 Curtiss Jenny for military use.

John has explained that he needs more time to contact knowledgeable persons who can provide needed information to complete his story,

Thirteen of John McCrory's articles have been included in this newsletter, beginning in December, 2012. Below are the dates and newsletter titles with a mention of their contents. To view any of these newsletters on the National web page, click on [www.ox5.org](http://www.ox5.org), then click on Newsletters / Texas. All Texas Wing Newsletters from 2008 to the present can be viewed (and copied) from the National OX5 web page,

John McCrory's newsletter articles published since December 12, 2012.

Dec 2012	Aviation in Texas (Engines prior to the OX5)
Mar 2013	Military Aviation in Texas (At Fort Sam Houston)
Jun 2013	Aviation in Texas (First Texas aero squadron in Texas)
Sep 2013	Military aviation in Texas (Flight training in Curtiss Jennys)
Dec 2013	Military aviation in Texas a century ago (Signal Corps Aviation Service)
Mar 2014	Military aviation in Texas a century ago (1st Aero Squadron permanent Site)
Jun 2014	Military Aviation in Texas a century ago (Early flights in the Mexico expedition)
Sep 2014	Military aviation in Texas a century ago (The close of the Mexico expedition)
Dec 2014	Katherine Stinson, American aviation pioneer
Mar 2015	More on early aircraft engines
Jun 2015	More on WWII missions flown with CG-4 gliders
Sep 2015	Lubbock had two Army Air Force bases
Dec 2015	A B-29 story of west Texas (Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki)



**When the fuel tank fills with air, just look  
for a nice place to put 'er down**