



NEWS In the Sky

May 2021

(www.opa.aero)

May 6th, 2021 - Social Hour 6:30 p.m.
Dinner Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Speaker: Max L. Ary, Executive Director Stafford Air and Space Museum

Ary is considered one of this country's leading authorities in the history of manned space flight. Prior to coming to the Stafford Museum, Ary founded the internationally acclaimed Kansas Cosmosphere & Space Center, where he served as its President/CEO for nearly three decades. After leaving the Cosmosphere in 2002, Ary was named as the Executive Director of the Omniplex Science Center (now known as Science Museum Oklahoma) in Oklahoma City. He is credited for being involved with the development and design of nearly a dozen space and aviation museums throughout the world, including his work with General Tom Stafford in the creation of the Stafford Museum in the early 1990's. Ary has served as a technical advisor on numerous space-related movies, including the Academy Award winning production "Apollo 13" and the Emmy Award-winning TV miniseries, "From the Earth to the Moon." He has made numerous appearances on the "Today Show," "Good Morning America," "CBS Morning News," the History Channel, and the Discovery Channel, to provide expert commentary regarding spaceflight happenings. He has led numerous projects to save thousands of priceless and historic space artifacts from destruction, including the expedition to find and recover the "Liberty Bell-7" Mercury spacecraft from more than 16,000 feet below the Atlantic Ocean, and the complete restoration of the actual Apollo 13 Command Module "Odyssey." He has served as a space education technical advisor to more than 50 museums and institutions around the world, including NASA, the Smithsonian Institution, Disney, and the Russian and South Korean governments. For his work, Ary has been awarded numerous national and international awards, including the Triebech Trophy for Aerospace Design, the National Non-Profit Young Executive of the Year, and he is one of the only Americans ever awarded the "Gagarin Medal" by the Russian Federation of Cosmonautics. In 1994, he was named to the "Kansas Aviation Hall of Fame."



If you plan to attend, please RSVP as soon as possible so we can get a count to the caterer. You can RSVP by sending an email to dinner@opa.aero

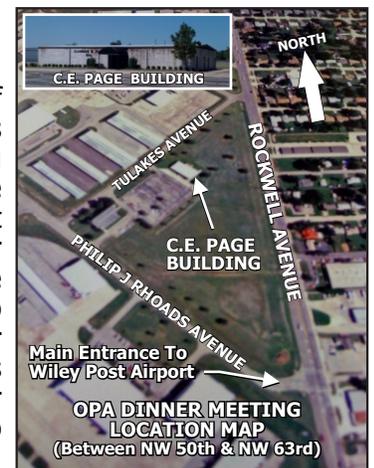
Notice: Our Monthly Dinner Meeting cost increased from \$13 to \$15. The Board of Directors made this decision due to having to find a new caterer and the increase in cost OPA has to pay for the service. We have used this caterer in this year and hope you have enjoyed the food.

June 3rd, 2021 - Social Hour 6:30 p.m.
Dinner Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

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.

Speaker: Grayson Ardies, Director State Aeronautical Commission

Grayson Ardies has been the Oklahoma State Director of Aeronautics (OAC) since November 2020. The OAC's mission is to promote aviation and aerospace, which includes fostering the growth of the aerospace industry and ensuring that the needs of commerce and communities across Oklahoma are met by the 108 public airports that comprise the state's air transportation system. Ardies' emphasis is on promoting the aerospace industry, one of the state's largest industries and top employers; critical planning and development for the state's air transportation system; making the state's 49 regional business airports the best possible economic centers in their communities; and encouraging public-private partnerships to promote the aerospace industry. (Continued on Page 2)





Clarence E. Page Building
5810 Tulakes Avenue
Wiley Post Airport
Bethany, Oklahoma 73008

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
Circulation: Mike Rangel

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

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OPA Dinner Meeting June 3rd, 2021



**Speaker:
Grayson Ardies,
Director State
Aeronautical
Commission**

**Biography continued
from Page 1**

Ardies began working for the Commission in 2009 as an intern. Rising through the ranks, he became the lone 5010 airport inspector as an

Aviation Program Manager, conducting airport and pavement inspections at Oklahoma's public-use, general aviation airports to provide each community with a foundation for the federal and state capital planning process. In 2016 he became Manager of the Airport Division to oversee the development of the Commission's Five-year Airport Construction Program which directs approximately \$25 million of federal, state, and local funding per year. He was responsible for airport inspections, airspace zoning reviews in accordance with the State's Aircraft Pilot and Passenger Protection Act, the state's anemometer tower marking law, and providing assistance to airports with their development, operation, and technical documents. Ardies served as Deputy Director from January 2019 through October 2020; and was unanimously selected by the seven-member Commission to fill the State Director of Aeronautics position, beginning November 2020.

He has led many statewide agency initiatives, including a three-year effort working with the state legislature regarding the protection of military training airspace. He also managed a two-year project that conducted an Aerospace and Aviation Economic Impact Study which established the industry as the second largest economic engine in the state. Under his leadership the Commission developed a unique P3 (public/private) partnership at Carlton Landing Airport on Lake Eufaula; and guided the difficult, but necessary, five-year effort to close Lake Murray State Park Airport.

Ardies was awarded the honorable 2020 State Aviation Distinguished Service Award from the National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO). The award, which was established in 1989, honors State Aviation personnel who have excelled in their service and dedication to aviation progress and development in their state. Ardies was also listed in the Power 15 List in Aviation and Aeronautics in Oklahoma by the Journal Record in 2020.

Director Ardies graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a degree in Aviation Management with double minors in Business Administration and Air Traffic Control. As part of his education through the aviation program, he also received a commercial pilot's license with single and multi-engine instrument ratings and is a certified flight instructor.

Highlights from the April Dinner Meeting

After we pledged our allegiance to the American flag, OPA President Greg Finley welcomed everyone. A new 99 was visiting and new member, Beth and Carl Dittner attended their first meeting. Carl was in the Air Force, flew 19 years for airlines, had a 3rd career as a US Air Marshal, and piloted Conair flights. Fly Away Chair, Lee Holmes said that the Tulsa trip was good, with a great museum. The May OPA Fly Away will be to Pete's Place in Krebs, OK. Hinton Airport will host a Fly In on May 8th for Movies and Burger in a Hanger. The 1st movie will be at 10:00 with a free lunch from Noon to 1:00. They will have low lead fuel for \$3.15. While it's not an OPA event, it should be fun if you are free.

Greg introduced our speaker, Col. Kevin Coyle, Vice Commander of the 552nd Air Control Wing at Tinker. He assists in overseeing Air Combat Command's fleet of E-3 Airborne Warning and Control system aircraft and battle management for deployments worldwide. Coyle said he felt a little strange talking to a group of pilots since he is not a pilot. He introduced his friend, and the best pilot in the squadron, Col. Terrance "Hitch" Allen. Hitch is the Airborne Air Control (ACC) Squadron Commander.

Coyle told us for E-3 flying Hitch is the guy. For E-3 missions, he is the guy. We were the first group to see a new movie about the 552nd Air Control Wing. They made the movie for the 5000 airmen who don't know the history of the group. He emphasized that their first mission is to train the airmen. He said they bring planes together and ATC keeps them apart. They have a 24-hour maintenance group. AWACS work ranges from combat to humanitarian flights. A mission doesn't just happen on its own; 98.6% of the work happens before the fighting takes place. They partner closely with Canada. They have a lot of reserve airmen, including civilians. They can use their combat radar to search for drug growers or areas in airport that need the runway filled. They are currently updating their cockpits and communications. (Thanks to Coyle and Tinker for the AWACS photos below!)



Highlights from the April Dinner Meeting

One of the things that Hitch shared is that you can't reach all the controls from either pilot's chair. An engineer behind him moves the throttles. He said it was hard to lose that control after flying other planes. He was used to planning his own missions and went from doing everything himself to having an engineer doing the walk arounds and emergency check list. Hitch still does his own walk around too. Coyle sits further back in the plane and makes sure they are following the commander's intent on the battlefield and does real time reorchestration of rapidly developing plans.

They told us they maintain situational awareness so the one who has to go into enemy airspace has the information they need. That includes the trust that AWAC has them covered. With all the equipment, they now have 3 people doing jobs that one had to do before and more than they could do before. They said that with refueling they can fly for a very long time; but the problem is the crapper – when it gets full you need to land. We learned that their group includes the best female airmen ever. They can fly up to their 2nd trimester and now have flight suits for pregnant women. Coyle has seen a lot of benefit from this and added that women in combat are very capable, not soft. He said that inclusion diversity is a good thing and hasn't seen anything to keep them from being able to complete a mission. Hitch took a selfie with our group to try to win a selfie contest they were having. We haven't heard if he won the contest. Coyle said he believed it should be the winner. OPA thanks Coyle, Hitch, and Tinker AFB for a great presentation. They shared a lot more with us than we could fit in the newsletter.



Highlights from the April Dinner Meeting



Someone thought the centerpiece made a nice Easter hat!



Highlights from the April Dinner Meeting





**OPA May 15th Fly Away - McAlester Regional Airport
Pete's Place - Krebs, Oklahoma
Wheels Down: 11:00 a.m.**



Please make sure to mark your calendars and get your planes ready for our May Fly Away to McAlester Regional Airport (KMLC), where we will enjoy some Italian style family cuisine at Pete's Place. You need to be really hungry, because you will not be able to eat all the food they serve. If you would like to start looking at the menu and get more information on lunch, you can visit Pete's Place at <https://www.petes.org> Also, you can start your flight planning by visiting <http://airnav.com/airport/KMLC> This has always been one of our best attended OPA Fly Aways.



McAlester 2016



Pete's Place 2019

Pete's Place 2014



News Update from the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission

NEW RUNWAY AT SOUTH GRAND LAKE REGIONAL AIRPORT OPENS

KETCHUM, Okla. (April 9, 2021) — The South Grand Lake Regional Airport (SGLRA) in Ketchum, OK, hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Friday, April 9, in honor of the airport's new and expanded 5,200-foot runway.

The \$4.58 million project began construction in 2019 and consisted of widening the runway from 60 ft to 75 ft, a new asphalt runway surface, and the installation visual guidance systems and LED runway edge lights. The project, included in the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission's Five-Year Airport Construction Program, provides better safety to the users of the airport while continuing to improve the economic impact for the greater Grand Lake Area.

"The runway expansion at South Grand Lake Regional Airport is another sign Oklahoma is open for business," Gov. Kevin Stitt said. "Air access to a community can be a deciding factor for many companies seeking a new or additional location. The Aeronautics Commission has directed federal funds and provided grants across the state, including \$229K in state dollars for this project, and the airport raised an incredible \$229K match, to ensure the needs of commerce and communities are met throughout Oklahoma's air transportation facilities. Continuing to develop our airport system is critical to becoming a Top Ten state."

Those who attended the ribbon cutting received a first-class ticket to the unveiling of the future of both the South Grand Lake Regional Airport and the Ketchum community. In addition to the ribbon cutting, attendees enjoyed a flyover performance by several vintage warbird military aircraft and heard from dignitaries including Sen. James Inhofe, Speaker Charles McCall, Secretary of Transportation Tim Gatz, Secretary of Commerce Scott Mueller, Sen. Micheal Bergstrom, Rep. Rusty Cornwell and State Director of Aeronautics Grayson Ardies.

OPA President Greg Finley

Since the beginning of powered flight, we have pushed our limits to go faster, farther, and higher than before. In the early years, perhaps, safety was not as prevalent as it is today; but I would suggest that safety concerns have moved to the forefront of aviation; and rightfully so.

I would like to consider myself a "safe" pilot. I make sure to keep my head out of the cockpit, particularly on the ground, and I listen carefully to radio calls and repeat them back; verifying if there is a misunderstanding. I pay close attention to the weather, and constantly look out for other aircraft both on the ground and in flight. While out on the ramp area I continue to watch out for hazards and moving aircraft. If other aircraft are running, I will use earplugs or simply put on my headset in order to protect my hearing. In fact, I am even watchful during my pre-flight inspection. For example, I have made a habit to hold the ailerons in place with one hand while checking for proper slack in the push rods so that a wind gust does not move the aileron and pinch or cut off my fingers. Yep, I considered myself a safe pilot – and person!

Recently, my employer asked me to take on more responsibility and become the Safety Director. The job acclimation and extensive training I have been undergoing has opened my eyes to a whole new level of "being safe". Mostly, it is simply recognizing potential hazards and putting practices in place to, hopefully, prevent an accident or incident from occurring. This got me thinking about the FAA Safety Team (FAASTeam) and the Wings Program.

Taken from their website, these programs are designed to lower the Nation's aviation accident rate by conveying safety principles and practices through training, outreach, and education; while establishing partnerships, and encouraging the continual growth of a positive safety culture within the aviation community. Additionally, they make safer skies and save more lives by having fewer accidents. This is done, in part, by our participation in seminars and proficiency flights. If you are not enrolled in the Wings Program with the FAASTeam; I would like to encourage you to do so. You can learn more about this program by visiting their website at faasafety.gov and search for the Wings Program.

If you have any questions about this article or have suggestions for a future article you can contact me at president@opa.aero



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**May 1st Fly In
Hutchinson, KS Regional Airport
8 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

The OPA April Fly Away to Hutchinson did not happen, but the Hutchinson Airport is having their own Fly In on May 1st.

While at the airport you can visit the CIRRUS Service Center. The Hutchinson Airport Steakhouse will be open and comes highly recommended. www.Hutchinsonairportsteakhouse.com for menu

The Cosmosphere will also be open. You will need a ride if you plan to go. This incredible museum is affiliated with the Smithsonian and is worth a visit.

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All scheduled items are subject to change as necessary for the health and safety of our members and guests.

2021 OPA Calendar

May 1st - Hutchinson, KS Fly In 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
 Cirrus Service Center - Airport Steakhouse & Cosmosphere will be open

May 6th - OPA Dinner Meeting 6:30 p.m.
 Page Building, Wiley Post Airport

May 15th OPA Fly Away - McAlister, OK
 Pete's Place in Krebs
 Wheels Down - 11:00

May 20th - OPA Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.
 Page Building, Wiley Post Airport

June 3rd - OPA Dinner Meeting 6:30 p.m.
 Page Building, Wiley Post Airport

June - OPA 19th OPA Fly Away
 Chickasha Fly In - Young Eagles - Airshow

June 17th - OPA Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.
 Page Building, Wiley Post Airport

July 1st - OPA Dinner Meeting 6:30 p.m.
 Page Building, Wiley Post Airport

July OPA Fly Away - To Be Announced

July 15th - OPA Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.
 Page Building, Wiley Post Airport

Make dinner reservations at
dinner@opa.aero
\$15 per Dinner due to increased cost

Monthly Oklahoma Fly-Ins
CHECK THE OPA CALENDAR PAGE
ON THE WEBSITE FOR UPDATES

1st Saturday - Ponca City Aviation Booster Fly-In
 Breakfast - Call Don Nuzum 580-767-0470

1st Saturday - Pauls Valley Lunch Fly In
 Call 405-268-3925 (Breakfast in Summer)

3rd Saturday - Enid Fly-In Breakfast - Woodring







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ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

The OPA General Aviation Newsletter is published monthly. Articles for the newsletter are sought from members, trade organizations, etc. Stories and articles can include flying trips, rebuilding and restoration experiences, special tips, activities, etc.

Material for publication will be accepted up to the deadline which is the 15th of each month, space permitting. The editorial staff reserves the right to accept, refuse, or edit any material submitted. Publication of articles and opinions in the OPA Newsletter is not an endorsement by the Association, nor does the Association assume any responsibility for the accuracy of the information contained in the Newsletter. Permission is granted to reprint, provided credit is given to The Oklahoma Pilots Association Newsletter. **For circulation issues including newsletters not received or email and address changes contact Roger Walton 405-219-5149 or email mem@opa.aero.**

