



# NEWS In the Sky

November 2021

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

November 4, 2021 - Social Hour 6:30 p.m.  
Dinner Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

## Speaker: Bob Ford - Author & Vietnam War Helicopter Pilot

From July 1965 to July 1968, Bob Ford was an army helicopter pilot in Vietnam. After the first six weeks, he became an aircraft commander and took over the command of a helicopter detachment at Hue, forty miles from the DMZ – the farthest northern helicopter unit in Vietnam. During his tour he flew over 1,000 combat missions. At the start of the TET offensive in February 1968, he and his other pilots manned the perimeter in the MACV compound during a ground attack for 3 straight days and nights. After being evacuated, Ford flew 70 missions into the battle, all in weather of ¼ to ½ mile visibility with a 200-foot ceiling.

Ford made his commitment to flying helicopters while in college at OU. He completed ROTC training and received a commission in the US Army in 1966. He volunteered for army helicopter flight school, and within one year was flying combat in Vietnam. When he completed his tour in Vietnam, he became an instructor pilot at Fort Wolters in Mineral Wells, TX. After discharge in 1969, he moved to Okeene, OK to head the Okeene Division of Shawnee Milling Co., which he still actively manages. Ford was inducted into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame in November 2018.



If you plan to attend, please RSVP as soon as possible, but no later than noon the Tuesday before the Thursday Dinner Meeting, so we can get a count to the caterer (\$15 each). You can RSVP by sending an email to [dinner@opa.aero](mailto:dinner@opa.aero)



December 2, 2021 - Social Hour 6:30 p.m.  
Dinner Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

## Christmas Dinner Meeting Entertainment - "World On A String Quartet"



We will enjoy a great Christmas Dinner provided by Dave Ackley's Catering, (Glad to have you back Dave!) great companionship, and entertainment.

Serving Central Oklahoma for 15 years, "World On A String Quartet" provides classical, pop, rock and jazz string music for public and private events.

In addition to providing music for 150+ weddings and events each year, members have performed with Michael Bubl , Joshua Bell, Trans-Siberian Orchestra, Drive Band, Oklahoma Opry Band, 2Cellos, Byron Berline, the Pat Patrick Band, the OKC Philharmonic, Tulsa Symphony, Fort Smith Symphony and at Carnegie Hall



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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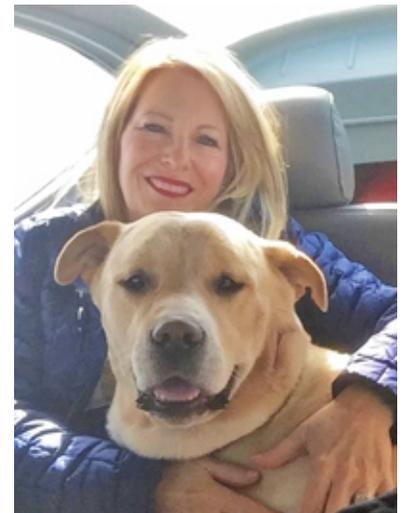
Bill Pappadopoulos

College Student Board Member - Mason Mateson

### EX-OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS

Ben Roy  
June Roy

## Previews of the Pets N Paws photos Thanks to David Steed for the great "Paws" photos



We are looking for new advertisements for our newsletter. If you can help us find new advertisers, please contact our editors, Ben or June Roy 405-615-2071

## OPA President Greg Finley



Lately, I have debated within myself about what topic I should write about this month. During the same time, I have had at least three different people ask me how I got into flying or what it was that made me want to be a pilot. Voila', problem solved! This month I am going to share a personal story about my early flying experiences.

Although it seems as though I have always been interested in airplanes; I believe the Apollo 11 mission was a defining point in my aviation endeavors. The excitement of the moon launching was just two short months before my fourth birthday. I remember running in and out of the front door of our Fort Pierce, FL, home as I took turns watching the television and waiting on the rocket to launch. I distinctly remember seeing the rocket shoot through the air up to space as I lay in our front yard nearly 100 miles away. Although I do not remember asking my mom, she has told me, over the years, that I asked how someone could be an astronaut. She told me only pilots could be astronauts. Apparently, I told her that I wanted to be a pilot so I could be an astronaut.

When I was five years old, my two older brothers and I flew on Delta Airlines from Orlando, FL, to Sacramento, CA, to visit our grandmother. During that flight, I spent quite a bit of time in the cockpit talking to the pilots. Yes, people could visit the airline cockpit in those years. We even had real China dishes and metal silverware. Oddly enough, I remember being served liver and onions with mashed potatoes and carrots. I still remember the view from that perspective, and I "earned" my little plastic wings. I did not fly again until I was 16 years old. A family friend, only known as "Hall," took me flying in a Cessna 150. After explaining a few things to me, Hall let me work the pedals as we taxied to the runway of Dunn Airpark (X21) and eventually took-off with his light touch on the controls. We departed to the East as we flew just North of Kennedy Space Center and NASA. I then turned to the North and followed the coastline up towards Daytona Beach and then returned to the airpark. I knew I was hooked but the family budget and my involvement in high school sports and a part-time job did not allow much opportunity for any lessons.

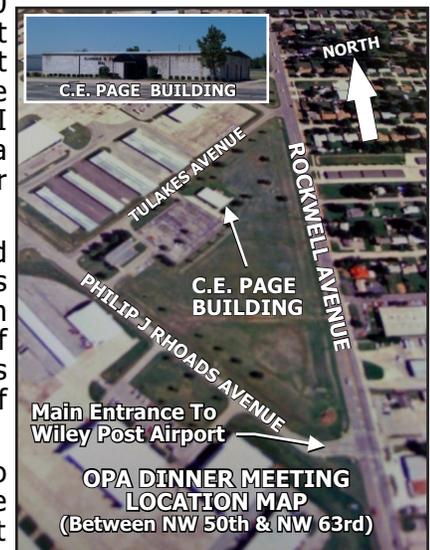
I was not able to begin my formal flight training until several years later. I had already spent about half of my career in the military, married with two children. We were stationed on Okinawa, Japan, where there was the neighboring Kadena Air Base (RODN) and their flight club. I joined and began my flight training in a T-41, which was the military designator for a Cessna-172F. Although most of the training was in certain areas over and around the coastline of Okinawa, a good portion was to the surrounding islands when it was time for conducting my cross-country flights. I affectionately called it my own little island-hopping campaign named after the World War II military strategy to control various islands and gain bases in the Pacific Theater as we moved closer to invading mainland Japan. Ironically, my first solo flights occurred 50 years to the month after the Battle for Okinawa. I remember I always had a life raft in the back seat as most of my flights were over water to other islands such as, Yuron (RORY), Okierabu (RJKB), Amami (RJKA), and Kerama (RKJP).

Just as my private pilot training came to an end so did my seven-year hitch on Okinawa. Three days before my family and I moved from Okinawa to the San Diego, CA, area I started my check-ride. The oral portion was complete; and we were ready to fly with one small exception. We were in Typhoon Condition-2 and the winds were 100 MPH gusting to about 130 MPH. Although they were almost straight down the runway, it did not seem the ideal conditions for a private pilot check-ride. The Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE) and I decided to wait it out and see what happened. After waiting the remainder of that day and most of the morning the next day, I decided to discontinue so I could go home and help my family pack our luggage. Even though the winds only calmed a little, it was apparently okay for a Boeing 747 to take off and we were on our way to our next duty station.

The next few years were adapting to a new home and work, small deployments here and there and another move from the West Coast to the East Coast. I realized my career was approaching its end and I decided to start studying to retake my private pilot written exam as it had been longer than two years since my last test results. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 occurred and two things happened very quickly. All flight schools closed for an undetermined amount of time, and my military deployments kept me out of the country for the better part of the next three years.

Eventually, my wife and I both retired and moved to Oklahoma. In 2010, I was able to restart my flight training during which time I dual-enrolled in Tulsa Community College and Oklahoma State University; so, I was able to not only obtain my private pilot certificate but complete the FAA Part 141 programs with my single-engine and multi-engine commercial certificate with an instrument rating. I also earned both my complex and high-performance endorsements. Currently, I am studying to take my written test and start training to be an instructor. Although COVID had put a short delay in some additional training, I have managed to get 10 hours towards my commercial add-on in helicopters.

I would like to hear some of your stories about how you became a pilot. If you would like to share them with me, or if you have any questions, please email me at [president@opa.aero](mailto:president@opa.aero)



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 October Dinner Meeting Thanks to David Steed for the great "Paws" photos

All who attended the October meeting enjoyed an entertaining and "warm and fuzzy" presentation by David Steed (not Sneed, like in the September newsletter - oops, sorry). After the pledge to the flag, we acknowledged the recent passing of Regina Jackson, mother of Vic Jackson, for whom our OPA Scholarship is named. We heard that Lee would be seeing about 400 of his best friends at the Reclaw, TX Fly-In, but that he hasn't met about 380 of them yet. The OPA Fly Away for November is to the Oklahoma Antique Airplane Association Fly-In on November 6th at the Pauls Valley Municipal Airport from 10 to 3. OPA President Greg Finley told us that he has joined a flight club and can now actually fly to fly-aways. He asked that we RSVP if we can, but it's ok to just show up. Guide someone you know who might qualify for the OPA Scholarship to the website and encourage them to apply. It allows the recipient to further their flight training with less personal expense. Mason Mateson was this year's recipient and is now serving on the OPA Board as our College Student Board Member. We had two new private pilots in attendance and one who passed their ramp check. I was not able to catch the names.

We were asked that anyone who flew in the military and still has a flight suit that they will still fit, please wear them to the November meeting. Our November speaker, Bob Ford, a Viet Nam War helicopter pilot, requested that participation. Editors June and Ben Roy were welcomed back to the meetings and thanked for the hard work of continuing to publish the newsletter each month with all the medical problems they have endured the past two years. Greg said it was like herding cats trying to get what we needed for the newsletter when we couldn't attend. (Editors' Note: That is true, but we could never have accomplished it without the help of so many OPA members, especially board members. We can't thank all of you enough.)

Mike Grimes led the election of OPA Officers and Board Members, entertaining nominations from the floor. He noted that we have a couple of open board slots. The slate of nominees presented by the nominating committee was elected by acclamation. Because the costs for OPA have increased, the membership dues will increase to \$45 effective January 1st.



### Highlights from the October Dinner Meeting

Thanks to Mike Grimes for the Photos

Eric Lang introduced our speaker, David Steed, not an executive, just a pilot who wanted to fly with a purpose. He said he didn't come to the meeting to ask for money, but just to try to get more pilots involved. "Pilot N Paws is an online meeting place for pilots and other volunteers who help to transport rescue animals by air. The mission of the site is to provide a user-friendly communication venue between those that rescue, shelter, and foster animals; and pilots and plane owners willing to assist with the transportation of these animals." He did mention that you might need someone to fly with you, especially when the animal is bigger than you are. He said his wife flies more with him since he started this. He told us some very interesting stories, but since "a picture is worth a thousand words" and David shared his great ones with us, please enjoy them. David also thanked us for buying their anniversary dinner. Thanks for a great presentation and welcome to OPA!



Pictures from the October Dinner Meeting





September 25th - OPA Fly Away - El Reno, OK  
El Reno Fly-In & Community Day  
Thanks to Angela Drabek and Scott Hasson for the pictures



More photos on Page 8



September 25th - OPA Fly Away  
El Reno Fly-In & Community Day  
Thanks to Angela and Scott for the pictures



November 6th - OPA Fly Away  
OAAA Fly-In & Car Show  
Pauls Valley Municipal Airport



OKLAHOMA ANTIQUE AIRPLANE ASSOCIATION  
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FLY-IN AND  
Car Show  
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### Approximate Ad Size    Monthly Rate

Business Card 2"x 3 1/2"	\$30
One-Eighth Page 2 1/2" x 3 3/4"	\$40
One-Quarter Page 3 3/4" x 4 3/4"	\$70
One-Half Page 4 3/4" x 7 1/2"	\$120
Full Page 7 1/2" x 9 1/2"	\$240

Call Ben Roy, 405-802-9657  
 or June Roy 405- 615-2071



**Looking for a Location for a Special Event or a Meeting?**

**Try the Page Building at Wiley Post Airport!**

**For Page Building rental rates contact: Steve Schroeder: 405-691-8629 (home phone) sandsschroeder@cox.net or QB Governor Jim Sutton 405-760-1988 (mobile phone).**

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**All scheduled items are subject to change as necessary.**

### 2021 OPA Calendar

- November 4 - OPA Dinner Meeting** 6:30 pm  
Page Building, Wiley Post Airport
- November 6 - OPA Fly Away** - Pauls Valley, OK  
OK Antique Assn Fly-In & Car Show
- November 18 - OPA Board Meeting** 6:30 pm  
Page Building, Wiley Post Airport
- December 2 - OPA Dinner Meeting** 6:00 pm  
Planes, Bikes and Cars & OPA Elections  
Page Building, Wiley Post Airport
- December 15 - OPA Board Meeting** 6:30 pm  
Page Building, Wiley Post Airport
- December- OPA Fly Away** - To Be Announced

### 2022 OPA Calendar

- January 7 - OPA Dinner Meeting** 6:30 pm  
Page Building, Wiley Post Airport
- January 15 - OPA Fly Away** - Ponca City, OK  
Enrique's Mexican Restaurant
- January 20 - OPA Board Meeting** 6:30 pm  
Page Building, Wiley Post Airport

**Make dinner meeting reservations at [dinner@opa.aero](mailto:dinner@opa.aero)**  
**\$15 per Dinner due to increased cost.**  
**If no RSVP, \$20 at the door if food is available.**

### Monthly Oklahoma Fly-Ins

- 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  
Airport (WDG) **April through October**
- 3rd Saturday - Goldsby Airport breakfast  
Donations benefit youth aviation

### Upcoming Events

- November 6 - Pauls Valley Antique Fly-In & Car Show

**Please Print - Information Will Be Used For Membership Directory and Newsletter Database**

Oklahoma Pilots Association Membership Application  New Membership  Renewal  Update

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Referred By \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ **Name tag** Yes No  
 Spouse \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ **Name tag** Yes No  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Receive by Mail   
 Phone (Residence) \_\_\_\_\_ (Business) \_\_\_\_\_ (FAX) \_\_\_\_\_

Pilot information: Are you a Aircraft Owner? Yes — No — Type \_\_\_\_\_ N# \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER: Approximate Hours \_\_\_\_\_  
 Private \_\_\_ Commercial \_\_\_ Instrument \_\_\_  
 ATP \_\_\_ CFI \_\_\_ CFII \_\_\_\_\_

Please make dues check payable to:  
 Oklahoma Pilots Association  
 Mail to: 5810 Tulakes Ave.,  
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 Bethany, OK 73008

All material for newsletter publication should be sent to:  
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 C/o Ben Roy  
 11749 SW. 54th  
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**ANNUAL DUES ARE \$35**  
**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](mailto:mem@opa.aero).**

