September 7, 2023

NAAA eNewsletter

Dwayne O'Brien Fighting Louisiana Fires by Air

Several wildfires have recently started in various areas of Louisiana, including the Bell City, LA wildfire. NAAA Vice President and Operator Dwayne O'Brien of O'Brien Flying Service in Iowa, LA voluntarily stepped in to protect his employees and customer's land located on the several hundred acres that were burning. The fire is now under control. As the threat for wildfires continues to grow across the U.S., it is an opportunity for ag pilots to help with aerial firefighting for their local communities. Watch video from the local TV station in Louisiana of O'Brien scouting the fire **here**.

Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship Deadline Extended to Sept. 15

Two $3,000 scholarships are available to eligible NAAA Operator and Pilot members for turbine transition training through the newly created Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship. The new NAAA scholarship program is funded by a generous educational grant from Jim Mills of Turbines Inc., who established the scholarship in memory of Charles Stokes *(pictured at right)*. It is administered by NAAA.

The new turbine transition scholarship will be awarded starting this year. Here's what you need to know about the 2023 Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship.

Key Details

Purpose: The Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship was created to provide training funds to agricultural pilots with a minimum of 150 hours of ag time for use at a turbine transition course or program. The scholarship must be used for turbine flight training at a qualified flight school or turbine training facility.

Amount: The 2023 Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship Program will award up to two one-year, $3,000 scholarships to deserving, qualified ag pilots participating in a flight training program focused on turbine transition training. All funds are in U.S. dollars.

Eligibility: Applicants must:

- Have a minimum of 150 hours of ag time.
- Be a Pilot, Affiliated Operator or Operator member of NAAA.
- Be sponsored by an NAAA Operator member in the Operator dues category who will write a letter of recommendation on their behalf. *(Operator applicants may not sponsor themselves; another NAAA Operator member would need to sponsor them.)*

How to Apply: Applicants must apply using NAAA's online application process. A link to the online application is available **here**.

Deadline Extended To: Sept. 15, 2023

Restrictions:

- Applicants may only apply for one NAAA pilot-training scholarship a year—*either* the Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship *or* the NAAA "Ag Wings of Tomorrow" Scholarship, *but not both in the same year*.
- NAAA Operator members may only sponsor one Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship annually. They can sponsor an NAAA "Ag Wings of Tomorrow" Scholarship applicant in the same year, but the applicants can't be the same person applying for both scholarships.

Go Deeper

Learn more about the application process for the 2023 Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship **here**.

Listen to Industry In-Depth Conversations on the new Ag Airwaves Podcast

Ag Airwaves, a new podcast about the ongoings of the aerial application industry, was recently launched. **Ag Airwaves** is a collaboration between Air Tractor and podcast host Graham Lavender, the publisher of AgAir Update. Listen to in-depth conversations with ag pilots and operators, industry experts, and more. Learn from their experience and insights and get to know more about the people working with and for you in the industry.

Listen to the first couple of episodes featuring Jim Hirsch, President of Air Tractor and Andrew D. Moore, CEO of NAAA. You can listen on your **desktop** or download the podcast from **Apple, Spotify or Google Podcasts**.

Rick Boardman Brings Home Grand Champion Win at National STOL Series

Congratulations to 2015 NAAA President and aerial application operator Rick Boardman of R&M Flying Service in Henderson, NE for his Grand Championship win at the Music City STOL Series in the Sport Class over Labor Day weekend. Rick flew a 2015 Carbon Cub SS in the competition.

Short Takeoff and Landing (STOL) aircraft are aircraft built to get in and out of an area in the shortest amount of time possible. Some aircraft are designed from the ground up to be a STOL airplane, and others have just been modified to make them more capable as STOL aircraft. They can operate on and off airport, on grass, snow, ice or any other runway in harsh conditions or operate off prepared strips.

The Sport Class is made up of the following aircraft types: CSport Cub S2; Zenith 701 & 750; Rans S-7LS; Super Legend; T-Craft (1,320 lbs); Bearhawk LSA; Carbon Cub SS; Dakota Super 18-LT; Legend (ELSA); Rans (ELSA); Just Aircraft Highlander & SuperSTOL, PA-11 / J3, AL-3. Other FAA certificated ASEL as determined by a maximum gross weight up to 1,320 lbs.

Congratulations, Rick!

Last Call for 2023 NAAA Award Nominations Due Sept. 8

Use NAAA's online awards form to submit a 2023 Award nomination!

Nine recipients received NAAA Awards in 2022. Who will be among this year's awardees? Nominations are due by Sept. 8.

Do you have a rising pilot within your ranks? Do you admire certain NAAA members for their outstanding service to the industry or their community? The aerial application industry is filled with exceptional people who go above and beyond the call of duty, often with little fanfare. Make someone's day or year by nominating them for a 2023 NAAA Award.

NAAA's online submission form is the fastest and simplest way to nominate someone in just a few clicks, but a printable PDF version of the awards nomination form is also available. The following submission methods are available **here**.

- **2023 NAAA Awards Nomination Online Submission Form** (recommended)
- **2023 Award Nomination Form** (print version)

Completed entries using the PDF form may be emailed to NAAA at **information@agaviation.org**.

There are nine NAAA Award categories and one NAAREF Award. The nomination deadline is Sept. 8, but early nominations are encouraged. The longer you wait, the busier you'll get this summer.

NAAA Award Categories

Agrinaut Award: Honors an agricultural aircraft operator, operating organization or allied member company that has made an outstanding contribution in the field of ag aircraft operations. The achievement cited shall have contributed to the "state-of-the-art" for the benefit of the agricultural aircraft industry as a whole.

Allied Industry Individual Award: Recognizes an NAAA member or staff and/or an allied industry individual who has significantly contributed their efforts for the benefit of the allied industry and the aerial application industry. *(Presented by the NAAA Allied Industry Committee.)*

Delta Air Lines "Puffer" Award: Recognizes an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the design of agricultural aircraft and/or related equipment.

Evans-Christopher Operation S.A.F.E. Award: Recognizes individuals or entities that have made outstanding contributions to the Operation S.A.F.E. program. *(Presented by NAAREF.)*

John Robert Horne Memorial Award: Honors a pilot with five or fewer years of experience in the agricultural aviation industry who has an exemplary safety record and has contributed to safety in ag aviation. ***This award no longer has carryover nominations from year to year; a new nomination must be submitted every year.***

Larsen-Miller Community Service Award: Recognizes outstanding contributions by a member to his or her community.

Opal and Bill Binnion Memorial Award: Acknowledges those who contribute to NAAA in its efforts to educate the public about aerial application.

Richard "Dick" Reade Memorial Award: Recognizes outstanding contributions by an allied industry member and their company.

William O. Marsh Safety Award: Recognizes significant achievements in safety, safety education or an outstanding operational safety program.

Zoren and Joan O'Brien Memorial Outstanding Service Award: Awards outstanding service to the commercial agricultural aviation industry or to its association.

The 2023 NAAA Award recipients will be honored at the Excellence in Ag Aviation Banquet Dec. 7 in Palm Springs, California.

NAAA Membership Renewal Open for 2024

Thank you for your support of NAAA as a 2023 member. We request your continued support by **renewing your NAAA membership** for 2024. While you have been busy aiding farmers to produce a safe, affordable, and abundant supply of food, fiber, and bioenergy, NAAA has been busy making sure low altitude airspace is safe for your aerial application business to operate, as well as ensuring that you have the pesticide products you need to do your job.

Several of NAAA's accomplishments this year, on your behalf, include:

- NAAA launched **C-PAASS**, for aerial applicators that take additional steps to augment their professionalism through education and testing who may be recognized and rewarded by their insurance providers, pesticide manufacturers, and customers.
- Since 2017, NAAA has submitted a total of 267 comments to the EPA to keep aerial applications on pesticide labels with great success enabling you to keep a deep inventory of pesticide tools without unnecessary and burdensome restrictions.
- Due to NAAA's advocacy work, the House passed FAA Reauthorization bill directing FAA to broaden protections ensuring the safety of manned aircraft from drones operating beyond visual line of site in addition to those drones operating under Part 107 and those above 55 pounds.
- NAAA is actively advocating Congress for Farm Bill inclusion of exempting NPDES Permits for pesticide applicators and other key unnecessary, burdensome and duplicative regulatory relief provisions, in addition to continuing substantive USDA research for developing safer, more efficient aerial application technologies.
- NAAA's *"Aerial Application: Above All Forms of Crop Care"* ad campaign and accompanying **web search tool** identifying member businesses is widely circulated to hundreds of thousands of potential aerial application users.

You will also continue to receive ongoing benefits, such as legal consultation on federal aviation laws, discounts for attending or exhibiting at the Ag Aviation Expo, staying connected to members through the print and online NAAA Membership Directory and receiving Association publications and eNewsletters, social media briefings and substantive web content at **AgAviation.org**.

Please make it a priority to renew your NAAA membership---the payoff far exceeds what you will spend in dues in the form of effective advocacy that reduces regulation and taxes affecting your aerial application business and trade association membership dues are tax deductible.

Extended Wire Safety Course Will be Held Thursday, Dec. 7 at Ag Aviation Expo

On Thursday, Dec. 7, in Palm Springs, for the second year NAAA is hosting a **Flying in the Wire and Obstruction Environment Course**, acclaimed by professional airplane and helicopter operators world-wide. This year's course will be a full-day, eight-hour course compared to last year's half-day course. The instructors give low-altitude aviators the essential skills needed to safely operate an aircraft in wire and obstruction environments. This course is for both aircraft and helicopter pilots. Learn how to identify signs of wires and why ag aviators hit wires they already knew were there. This course may very well save your life – wire strike accidents continue to harm the ag aviation industry. In 2022, there were eleven wire strike accidents, one of which was fatal. So far in the 2023 season, there have been eleven wire strike accidents, five of which were fatal.

Register **here** for only $150 per person.

The course will be taught by Utilities / Aviation Specialists Inc. (UAS), a unique group of aviation safety practitioners who provide safety auditing, specialized training, installation of safety management systems, and technical aviation consulting. They provide mission-specific expertise in specialized applications which require skill sets above those found in most routine transport operations. *Sponsored by Old Republic Aerospace & AssuredPartners Aerospace.*

Register & Book Your Travel to Palm Springs, CA for the Ag Aviation Expo

The 2023 Ag Aviation Expo will be here before you know it from Dec. 4-7, so it's time to start thinking about registration and your travel to Palm Springs. **Attendee registration** and **booth sales** are open! You'll hear from **Burt Rutan**, Aerospace entrepreneur and Virgin Galactic spacecraft designer, at the Monday Kickoff Breakfast. At Tuesday's **General Session**, you'll hear from Ed Messina, Director of EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs, Terry Kippley, President of the Council of Producers and Distributors of Agrotechnology, and a panel discussion on Turning Safely.

If you're looking to grow your business, find a job or sell a product or service in the aerial application industry, the 2023 Ag Aviation Expo is the place for you! Our expo has everything from a world-class trade show floor featuring aircraft and helicopters to education sessions, expert speakers and many networking opportunities!

Palm Springs International Airport (PSP) offers 12 airlines flying nonstop from 32 destinations and connecting from more than 500 destinations worldwide. As you search your airfare options into Palm Springs for the Ag Aviation Expo, visit NAAA's **Transportation Discount** webpage and explore tickets on Delta and United Airlines.

If you'd like to fly into another airport and drive to Palm Springs, below are driving times from several airports. *Contact your **hotel** for parking details.* Book your hotel room **online**.

- Los Angeles – 2 hours
- San Diego – 2 hours 15 minutes
- Anaheim – 1 hour 45 minutes
- Phoenix, Arizona – 4 hours
- Las Vegas, Nevada – 4 hours

Low Time Pilot Registration

If you are an ag pilot with less than five years of experience or are interested in becoming an ag pilot, we are offering a special price to attend the NAAA Ag Aviation Expo for pilots like you. Further details are available **here**.

Details for the 2023 Ag Aviation Expo

- **Dates:** Dec. 4-7, 2023
- **Location:** Palm Springs Convention Center and Renaissance (the two facilities are attached)
- **Kickoff Breakfast Speaker:** **Burt Rutan**, Aerospace Legend
- **General Session Speakers:** **Ed Messina & Terry Kippley & Turn Smart Safety Session**
- **Schedule of Events:** See the current, tentative schedule **here**.
- **Hotel:** **Details here**.
- **Attendee Registration:** Now Open **here**.
- **Exhibitor Booth Sales:** Booth Sales Open **here**.
- **Sponsorship Opportunities:** View the sponsorships opportunities **here**. We have sponsorships available for all budget sizes. Please email **Lindsay** if you would like to secure a sponsorship from last year or be contacted about 2023 opportunities!
- **Auction Donations:** Thank you to Pratt & Whitney Canada for donating a PT6-34AG to this year's NAAA Live Auction. Please consider **making a donation** for the Live and Silent Auction. The earlier you inform us of your auction donation, the more advertising you will receive on the NAAA website and in NAAA publications. Support the aerial application industry by donating an item today. Email **Lauren** with your donation details.

NAAA & NAAREF Board Meetings Oct. 6-7 in Dayton, OH

The October 2023 NAAA & NAAREF Board and Committee meetings will take place in Dayton, Ohio. Click **here** to view a schedule. Please note: All board books will now be provided electronically. Board and Committee members will receive a link and directions to download the electronic board book approximately one week before the meetings. The board book can be downloaded to your computer, tablet or you can print your committee items.

All meetings are open to NAAA members. If you are not a board or committee member but you're interested in attending, please contact **Lauren Henretty** for more details.

Hotel Details
The Marriott at the University of Dayton
1414 South Patterson Blvd.
Dayton, OH 45409

Rate: $159/night plus tax
Reservations: Book online **here** or call 1-888-236-2427 and mention National Agricultural Aviation Association Board Meeting. If you have issues booking a hotel room, please email **Lauren Henretty** with your arrival and departure dates.
Room Block Closes: Sept. 12, 2023. *We cannot guarantee rates and room availability after this date.*
Dayton, OH Information: Further information on Dayton can be found online at **www.daytoncvb.com**.

Austin Scrogin Memorial Scholarship Established for Delta State's Aerial Applicator Pilot Training Program

Austin Scrogin, 26, **passed away this summer doing what he loved—ag flying**. His parents, Chris and Kimberly Scrogin, have established a memorial scholarship to attend Delta State's Aerial Applicator Pilot Training Program as they wish to carry on the dreams of their son by helping others who aspire to be ag pilots.

As stated by the family, "Austin was so happy in the pilot seat. He loved what he did and looked forward to each day. He has loved flying since watching his daddy fly. As a co-pilot, he couldn't wait to take over and fly his dad around. He started at the flying service as part of the ground crew to management of farmers, but his goal was to get in the plane. That's where he was the happiest."

Austin and Chris partnered with Delta State University in the Advanced Turbine Training Program. Austin was boldly active in helping Delta State's Aerial Applicator Pilot Training program to develop ag pilots by assisting in the educational process and soliciting for the program.

He was a passionate young man and devoted to the industry. To contribute to the memorial scholarship click **here** or by mail to: DSU Foundation, DSU Box 3141 Cleveland, MS 38733.

All Drones Must Operate in Accordance with Remote ID Rule by September 16, 2023

The 2021 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) final rule requiring remote identification (RID) of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) goes into effect for all UAS September 16, 2023. The rule requires drones to be equipped with technology that will determine its location and the time it is operating in specific locations. NAAA has been active for years in advocating that drones a half a pound or greater be tracked and identified long before the FAA issued its rule. With only a few exceptions, RID is required for all drones over 0.55 pounds operating outside of an enclosed structure. Under this RID rule, drones will be required to broadcast a signal that includes, among other information, the UAS' ID serial number, latitude/longitude, altitude, velocity, emergency status and time mark. The identification of the owner/operator of the serial numbered UAS will only be available to law enforcement and regulatory agencies. The broadcast signal must be compatible with personal wireless devices such as tablets or phones using Wi-Fi or Bluetooth. The signal strength is required to be optimized to allow reception by as many devices as possible.

To learn more about the RID and other drone operational requirements click **here**. A helpful video is also available **here**. Included in this rule is a prohibition against most UAS using ADS-B Out. This is to prevent the ADS-B system from becoming overwhelmed. NAAA continues to encourage UAS to incorporate ADS-B In, which would enhance safety by informing the UAS operator when an ADS-B Out equipped manned aircraft is in the area and obligate them to give the right-of-way to the manned aircraft as required by Part 107. The implementation of the RID is another tool that NAAA has urged the FAA to adopt to ensure the safety of low-altitude manned aircraft safety. Now, in the event a near miss or errant drone operation is observed a manned pilot can notify the FAA of the time and location of the incident to address a potential safety violation. Other ways to address errant drone operations may be found **here**.

EPA Releases Amended WOTUS Definition in Aftermath of Supreme Court's Narrowing Ruling Last Spring

The Environmental Protection Agency released its latest Waters of the United States rule (WOTUS) earlier this week following the Supreme Court's May ruling in the *Sackett v. EPA* case which overturned portions of President Biden's controversial rule.

The Clean Water Act of 1972 authorizes EPA to regulate the nation's navigable waterways. Under the previous WOTUS rule issued by President Biden at the end of 2022, that included bodies of water with a "significant nexus" to navigable waterways. The Supreme Court ruled that definition was too broad, insisting EPA could only regulate bodies of water with a direct connection to navigable waters. The new EPA guidelines remove the significant nexus test from being considered when determining which waters are federally protected. It also clarifies interstate wetlands do not automatically qualify as interstate waters subject to the Clean Water Act. Language regarding federally protected "additional waters" has also been revised to comply with the high court.

The Supreme Court case in particular dealt with the Sackett family in Priest Lake, Idaho, who were told by the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers officials 16 years ago that their residential lot was on a protected wetland and hence they could not build a residence there. They were threatened with daily fines unless they applied for a federal permit. Instead, the Sacketts sued the government. A previous decision by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the government, but the Supreme Court's 2023 spring decision reverses the lower court, and unanimously ruled that "The wetlands on the Sacketts' property are distinguishable from any possibly covered waters." The court was split 5-4 on the court's new "test," which stated that only wetlands with a continuous surface connection to a body of water are covered by the law.

NAAA was part of an effort to prevent the administration from developing its WOTUS definition until after the Supreme Court's decision on the Sackett case. The updated definition by EPA released this week following the Supreme Court's spring decision will mitigate the area of waters that require NPDES pesticide general permits under the CWA—a duplicative and unnecessary regulation due to FIFRA rules and regulations already testing for the safety of pesticides to water and many other environmental criteria before being approved for use.

As BVLOS Petitions Mount, NAAA Steadfast on FAA Certification of Detect and Avoid Performance

NAAA recently **commented** on a **Petition for Exemption** to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The petitioner, Amazon Prime Air, is seeking to amend its existing exemptions (**18601B** and **18602B**) to utilize their proprietary detect and avoid (DAA) system in lieu of visual observers (VOs) to conduct beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) Part 135 package delivery operations with their MK27-2 uncrewed aircraft system (UAS).

The petitioner claims that their DAA system *"provides equivalent levels of safety to those required by the see-and-avoid provisions in **14 CFR § 91.113** and significantly enhances safety by exceeding the average expected human visual performance of the operator in command (OIC) and [VOs]."*

As in **other recent comments**, NAAA reminded the FAA of the unique nature and concerns of crewed Part 137 operations, including the safety threat of aircraft flying BVLOS. Regarding this petition specifically, NAAA questioned whether the proprietary DAA system was

tested to perform in the vicinity of aerial applicators. While NAAA supports the adoption and implementation of DAA technology, the Association maintains that unbiased, transparent FAA certification of any such technology is the only way to ensure a safe national airspace for all crewed operations.

Emergency AD Issued for Bell 407 Tail Rotor Blades

On August 18, 2023, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued **Emergency Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2023-17-51** for all Bell Textron Canada Limited Model 407 helicopters. This AD was prompted by a report of a disbonded area in a tail rotor (T/R) blade due to missing adhesive between the upper skin and core. This condition, if not addressed, could result in severe vibration, failure of the T/R blade, and subsequent loss of T/R control.

An investigation by Bell Textron Canada Limited identified 43 T/R blades that could be affected due to an error in the manufacturing process. On August 14, 2023, the company issued **Bell Alert Service Bulletin (ASB) 407-23-132** which identifies affected T/R blade serial numbers, specifies inspection procedures and directs T/R replacement as required. On August 17, 2023, Transport Canada issued **Emergency AD CF-2023-63** which mandates compliance with the above ASB for certain serial numbered aircraft within 10 flight hours or 14 days, whichever occurs first.

The FAA's AD incorporates the entirety of the Transport Canada AD by reference with two changes. First, the FAA's AD applies to all Model 407 helicopters. Second, the FAA's AD specifically requires tap inspecting each affected T/R blade for skin to core voids.

Joe Curless of Curless Flying Service Delivers Positive Message to Illinois Farm Bureau's eNewsletter about the Benefits of Cover Crops and Aerial Application

Joe Curless of Curless Flying Service in Astoria, IL was recently interviewed by the **Illinois Farm Bureau Partners** publication about how aerial applicators practice soil and water stewardship from the air. In the interview, Curless provides background about how his father, Harley Curless, found his way into aerial application and how their operation aerially applies cover crops as a key conservation tool for farmers.

"The cover crop helps keep my soil in place and keeps my nutrients – which are expensive – in the soil," Curless says. "That way, my crops can utilize them, and they stay out of the watershed."

One of the most promising conservation practices aerial applicators can assist farmers with is cover crops. Cover crops are grasses, legumes, small grains and other low-maintenance crops planted specifically to improve soil health and biodiversity. By sowing the seeds aerially with a preharvest cover crop application, cover crops control erosion, retain and recycle soil nutrients, build organic matter to improve soil health, improve water quality and moisture availability, and break disease and insect cycles. They can also be a key source of nutrients for pollinators.

According to the **article**, a recent satellite-based survey by the University of Illinois shows farmers in the Midwest planted cover crops on 140 million acres in 2021 – or 7.2% of the region's crop acres – up fourfold from a decade earlier.

As the market for cover crops has grown, so has ag pilots' interest in the burgeoning niche. Cover crops can allow aerial applicators to extend their flying season by three to four weeks in August and September.

Grant Lane Celebration of Life Set for October 14, 2023

Lane Aviation, Inc. has announced that a celebration of life will take place on October 14, 2023 for Grant Lane, who passed away last month. More details will be posted **here**.

Grant Erling Lane, a prominent agricultural aviator, passed away at his home in Richmond, Texas on July 12, 2023 surrounded by his wife and children. Born May 3, 1954 in Rosenberg, Texas, he was 69 years old.

Grant's passion to fly began at the age of 4. Despite initial nausea on ascent, he begged to be in any airplane that came to Lane Airport, established in 1945 by his father and uncle. He outgrew that nausea, and ultimately learned to fly well before his 16th birthday and soloed in 5 different airplanes for his pilot's license. His driver's license was secondary.

Grant attended elementary and secondary schools in the Lamar Consolidated School District, graduating in 1972 from Lamar High School. He went on to graduate from Central Texas College in 1974 then in 1975 earned his Bachelor of Science in Aeronautics from American Technological University in Killeen, TX. ATU would later become Texas A&M University – Central Texas. Grant was always an Aggie at heart, this just made it official. During the school year he was a flight instructor and spent his summers "crop dusting". To say he loved flying was an understatement.

Upon graduation, Grant returned home to a permanent role in the family business; Lane Aviation. Under the careful guidance of his father, George, and assuming greater responsibilities over time, Grant bought the company from his father in the 1990's. Already a well established ag aviation company, Lane Aviation, under Grant's direction, became the most prominent international dealer of Air Tractors –

the leading ag aviation manufacturer of aircraft for crop production and fighting fires. The importance of Grant's involvement with Air Tractor's expansion in South America cannot be overstated.

No matter the heights of success Grant reached, he was supported, not envied. Due to his character, his acclaim was never derided. His success was built on hard work, trust, integrity, and relationships; always following through on service after the sale was made. He was never too busy to listen to an engine, knew the aircraft inside and out, and could talk a client through a repair with his eyes closed. Always happy to help, Grant was ever grateful for his customers and fully understood that they were key to Lane Aviation's growth in the industry.

Grant had in excess of 30,000 hours piloting many types of aircraft. Traveled the world for agriculture aviation but always came home to Richmond/Rosenberg. Because of the importance of Lane Aviation and Grant's involvement in the community throughout the years, a bright yellow and blue Air Tractor is memorialized in the Rosenberg Mural at Hwy 90 and TX 36. Grant earned his Carrier Certification by landing an AT-502B on the USS Lexington in 1996. He also received numerous industry awards. Privately he felt raising 5 successful, independent, loving children was quite the achievement. Professionally what he became most proud of was the focus for the last decade at Lane Aviation; his successor, Logan Lane. Grant sought to maintain, through Logan, his son, the continuity and service Lane Aviation customers had come to expect. He was decisively confident in handing the reins of the company over to the capable hands of his son.

A thorough deliberate man, who never wavered from the full pre-flight checklist, calm in any situation, Grant was a pilot that soothed anxious passengers by his presence and would always find the smoothest route possible. He was a quiet giant, with a warm smile and firm handshake; a mighty (but humble) man who made big ideas look easy. One who stood by his word, who had life-long friendships, and always had your back. Grant leaves a legacy of principles, not just tangibles. He lived with grace, a modern man with old-fashioned values. He planned ahead, adapting to the times and always working to stay ahead of the curve. He embraced new technologies yet did business with a handshake. He walked his talk and looked people in the eyes. These distinctions made him an ag industry icon and was affectionately referred to as The Legend. He faced cancer and his death with the same strengths. "It is what it is," he often said. His family, friends, and associates across the industry and throughout the world are mourning the loss.

Grant was preceded in death by his parents George Curry Lane, Jr. (1920-2003) and Mary Judith Tinius Lane (1923-2015). He is survived by his wife: Susan Manning Lane; his children: Scarlet Lane Kelly (Michael), Logan Grant Lane (Samantha), Lane Herfort Thompson (Sarah), Elise Thompson Stanton (Justin), Will Aaron Thompson (Laura); and grandchildren: Jane and Lucy (Scarlet's), Piper (Lane's), Ella (Elise's), and Ben and June (Will's). He is also survived by older brother Mark Ernest Lane.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory of Grant E. Lane to the **National Agricultural Aviation Association Research & Education Foundation (NAAREF) or the Professional Aerial Applicator Support System (PAASS) Program** at 1440 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, or your local blood bank.

Important Call for GPS Data to Protect Manned Ag Aircraft from Drones

In 2022, an FAA advisory committee weighted with drone interests from Amazon, Google and other unmanned corporate interests suggested that the agency promulgate rules that drones operating beyond visual line of sight be permitted to:

- Increase their weight to 1,320 pounds
- Not equip with ADS-B identification technology
- Not give the right of way to manned aircraft when operating in rural, low-altitude airspace because they claimed there are no other users of this airspace.

As an ag aviator, you know these requests to be patently unsafe and based on false premises. As such, we call on you to help us collect information on ag aircraft's use of the low-altitude airspace. NAAA is working with and supports Mississippi State University's (MSU) Raspet Flight Research Laboratory and its continuing research on safe operational distances between low-altitude, manned aircraft and drones. The study's objectives are to:

1. Identify Ag Aircraft Operational Trends
2. Develop Ag Aircraft Operational Model
3. Validate Model through Observation/Collection of Empirical Data
4. Inform/Educate UAS Operators
5. Promote Safety in all Low-Altitude Ag Environments

Your voluntary participation in this study is critical to achieving these objectives. NAAA encourages you to donate your GPS flight log data to participate in this timely research. Logs from any year(s) are welcome and will be washed of any identifying information prior to use.
Many of you have previously contributed during the first stage of data collection from 2017 to 2020 when NAAA members donated 49,180 flight logs from 20 states. The second stage of the study began in 2021 and seeks to additionally include aircraft make and model info. These details are important, as the airspace modeling will be impacted by aircraft types differently, such as fixed-wing versus helicopter operations.

More GPS flight log data is needed to continue this study. Because of the diverse growing areas and unique geographical challenges experienced by aerial applicators, it is imperative that as many states and regions as possible are represented. This will ultimately help facilitate the safe integration of unmanned aircraft into these different airspaces.

As a reminder, NAAA and Raspet have agreed that all submitted information will remain confidential, and all GPS flight logs will be

stripped of any personally identifying information before any research is conducted using the data.

There are several methods available to submit your data:

1. Request a secure upload link for larger uploads OR email directly to Madison Dixon, Research Director.
   Email: mdixon@raspet.msstate.edu
2. Mail a flash drive or other storage device to the address below. (The device will be immediately mailed back once data is received if a return address is provided):

   Address:
   Attn: Madison Dixon
   Raspet Flight Research Lab – Bldg. 2
   114 Airport Rd.
   Starkville, MS 39759