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# THE *Voice*

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## **NATA SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE: VICTORIA THOMAS**



Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, or UAVs, are a rapidly growing area of aviation.

They are gaining popularity for use in business and fun for hobbyists. With this growth in popularity, concerns have been raised about the safety of UAVs integration with manned aircraft, like spray planes, and aerial applicators. Interference with aircraft and pilots is a very large concern. Pilots can take steps to protect themselves and their aircraft from the hazard's UAVs pose. The FAA is also addressing the concern with regulations concerning UAVs. UAVs' technology is an emerging asset to the agricultural industry, but it must be met with proper protocol to ensure safety in the air.

The primary concern with UAVs is the interference they pose to spray planes and pilots. According to the FAA, an UAV can weight up to 55 pounds and fly up to 100 miles per hour. UAVs are not required to have aircraft lighting as they mostly have daylight only operation. Since UAVs are often small in size, they can be difficult to be seen in the air. Pilots must remain vigilant during their flights for unsuspected UAVs. If an UAV is being used near an inflight spray plane, it can become a cockpit distraction for the pilot. The pilot may possibly collide with the UAV itself, hit a power line or tree, or fly into the ground if the time of distraction

is during the spraying of a field or pasture. If the pilot is fatigued, which can be normal for aerial applicators during the busy summer months, he may be less likely to see an unknown UAV before an accident occurs. Human error can also occur if the UAV operator fails to consider his responsibility in operating his UAV near aerial application operations or operates his UAV recklessly.

There are also other ways aerial applicators can be proactive about reducing their risk in aircraft-UAV interaction. Pilots can flyover the field needing sprayed and scan for any UAVs or vehicles or people on the ground. Pilots can access the UAV registration

list to become familiar with any registered UAVs in their area. Offseason meetings regarding the threat of UAVs can be organized to help bring awareness to the situation and educate the public about UAV safety. The National Agricultural Aviation Association is a great source for its UAV safety campaign that assists aerial applicators in educating their customers about the concern surrounding UAVs and how to be safe while operating an UAV. These are just a few of the ways an aerial applicator can help ensure protection from UAVs.

According to the FAA, all UAVs must be registered and can be used for recreational or commercial purposes. UAVs must be flown in visual line-of-sight only conditions for the remote pilot in command of the UAV as well as any visual observer. All UAVs must be flown at a maximum altitude of 400 feet or below in an uncontrolled airspace. Other regulations include a no interference rule with manned aircrafts and all UAV operators are required to pass an online aeronautical safety test. These regulations are put into place to protect aircraft and pilots, like aerial applicators, from unintentional UAV interaction. The FAA continues to improve its UAV regulations as the technology around UAVs improve.

Since UAVs have entered the agriculture industry, concerns have been raised regarding the safety of aircraft and aerial applicators in their integration. Although UAVs can be great assets to famers and other agricultural workers, they have added more risk to the aerial application industry. Aerial applicators can take proactive steps to help lower this risk of UAVs in their work. The FAA has been instrumental in regulating UAV interactions with manned aircraft, and they continue to improve this safety. The presence of UAVs will only increase as the technology around them advances, so it is very important that the aerial application industry, as well as aerial applicators themselves, work to ensure spray planes and pilots fly safe.

### **THE NATA VOICE**

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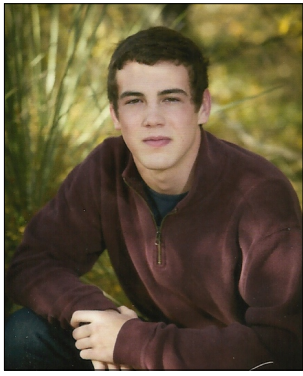
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# RUNNER-UP SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY: LANE APPLGARTH

## UAVs and Safety for the Aerial Applicator

Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) have become prominent in the airspace all around the country. UAVs are being used more and more by individuals with little to no experience in aviation, and this is leading to problems. Currently, rules are in place regarding where these UAVs can be flown to ensure the safety of pilots of manned aerial vehicles. However, these rules are all too often ignored or not even realized by the individuals flying UAVs from the ground. In the summer season, when aerial applicators are active, steps need to be taken to ensure the safety of aerial applicators and other pilots in the air with UAVs.

One of the steps that should be taken is to ensure that those purchasing and flying UAVs are aware of the rules in place to protect pilots from UAVs. All too often, unmanned aerial vehicles are being operated far too close to airports, especially rural airports that aerial applicators are frequenting. Ensuring that UAVs are not being flown too close and endangering pilots should be a top priority. The fun of flying UAVs should never outweigh the priority of keeping aerial applicators and all pilots safe.

Additionally, aerial applicators need to be aware that there may be UAVs flying illegally in the airspace. Aerial applicators must know how to handle the situation for their safety, as well as the safety of their aircraft. Steps should be taken to show pilots how to handle UAVs in their airspace, as well as how to report illegal flying activity. Additionally once actions are reported, authorities need to take the reports seriously and deal with them promptly.

Finally, although it can seem tedious, aerial applicators should take preventative steps to illustrate to the public how UAVs can put the lives of aerial applicators in danger. Information is not often communicated, making individuals unaware they are doing anything wrong, let alone risking the safety of others. Educating the public on the rules of UAVs can ensure that UAVs can still be used, but in a much safer way for everyone on the ground and in the sky. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles are being used more frequently. With this additional use, education for what is legal and illegal to do with these vehicles should also increase. That doesn't seem to be the case. Aerial applicators using the airspace at the altitude UAVs are flown at are being put into unnecessary danger. UAVs can be enjoyed and still be safe for the skies with steps that include: ensuring that UAV operators are aware of the rules, helping pilots learn how to manage around UAVs, and encouraging pilots to share how dangerous UAVs can be for them. Doing so will ensure that the public is aware of the potential negative consequences of flying UAVs. The safety of aerial applicators must be of the highest priority.



# Save the Date

## December 7-10, 2020

### Savannah, Ga.



Join us for the 2020 Ag Aviation Expo in Savannah, GA, Dec. 7-10, featuring the premiere trade show for agricultural aviation, great networking opportunities and a great lineup of speakers and events! It doesn't matter if you're a veteran operator, a fledging ag pilot, or an allied supplier to the ag aviation industry, you won't find a better venue than NAAA's Ag Aviation Expo to help you achieve your professional goals and business objectives.

#### Highlights include:

- Kickoff Breakfast Monday morning and NAAA General Session on Tuesday morning
- Educational & Training Sessions, including the NAAREF Safety Session on Thursday afternoon
- The popular NAAA Trade Show featuring 150+ companies
- Live & Silent Auction
- Networking - plenty of receptions, time between sessions and evenings to network
- Support Committee Programming for spouses and support staff
- Sessions for new or low time ag pilots: Compass Rose & "Ask The Expert" Speed Mentoring Sessions throughout the Ag Aviation Expo

# CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

August 3, 2021 marks the 100th anniversary of an experiment in Ohio when lead arsenate dust was spread over catalpa trees to kill sphinx moth larvae. Under the direction of the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Lt. John A. Macready, a U.S. Army pilot, made the first application by aircraft with a modified Curtiss JN-6 "Super Jenny." The government then utilized aerial application in the Southern states. In 1922, Curtiss biplanes were used to dust cotton fields near Tallulah, LA, to control bollweevils. In 1923, Huff-Daland Dusters, Inc.—the forerunner of Delta Airlines—did the first commercial dusting of crops with its own specially built aircraft.



NAAA is planning a major campaign to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first aerial application flight and the aerial application industry. This includes a short documentary, a complete history book of the industry and a significant outreach campaign to the public and the media. Our industry has a great story to tell. It plays a crucial role in helping farmers feed, clothe and provide bio-fuel to the world. It has evolved remarkably in ten decades. As such we continue to grow as an industry today. Our story is the kind of positive lead that can really help broadcast our industry's image with the world-at-large.

- Share your history! Ag aviation's 100th anniversary is a great opportunity to promote aerial applicators positive stories that we believe will engage the media and consumers alike. We'd love to hear your story about how ag aviation has impacted your life. Fill out this quick questionnaire <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/agaviation100> for a chance to have your story shared in some of NAAA's centennial collateral. Submit your photos to [information@agaviation.org](mailto:information@agaviation.org) and they may be featured in video, print, online and social media to celebrate this 100-year milestone.

- Become a 100th Anniversary Sponsor - Sponsorship of the 100th anniversary is a great way to show your support of the industry's longevity and potentially showcase your contributions to the industry. Your level of support provides you the opportunity to be seen for years to come in the book, on the website and social media, at events and in the documentary. Our industry has a remarkable story to tell. It plays a crucial role in helping farmers feed, clothe and provide bio-fuel to the world. And we hope you'll join us in supporting the 100th anniversary celebration of the aerial application industry.

## BEATRICE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT RECOGNIZED BY THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

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At 7 a.m. every day, whatever the weather may be, someone at the Beatrice Municipal Airport measures the precipitation amount in town for the National Weather Service (NWS). This past fall, airport manager Diana Smith and staff received a 35-year service certificate for being the official NWS Cooperative Weather Observer for Beatrice.

Smith said it made sense for the airport to record the weather, because they are open every day. And at the time they started recording, all the airport employees were already required to be certified weather observers.

"Through the years, we were replaced with an AWOS, which is our Automated Weather Observation System," Smith said. "That AWOS gives all the information that a certified weather observer used to give to the pilots." Despite the change in systems, the airport continued measuring precipitation and calling it into the Weather Service.

According to the NWS, there are over 250 official volunteer cooperative weather observers in Nebraska and nearly 10,000 nationwide. The data provided is used by the NWS, state climatologists and numerous others, and eventually becomes a permanent part of the climatic record for the local area and nation.



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# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By Penny Rafferty Hamilton, Ph.D.

Because airports are so important, many are named to honor our nation's aviation heroes and leaders. JFK International Airport in New York recognizes World War II Naval hero and US President, John F. Kennedy. O'Hare International Airport (ORD) is named for Chicago's World War II US Navy Ace, Edward "Butch" O'Hare, a Medal of Honor recipient.



But, what about Nebraska? We have a long list to celebrate, but here are a few. Eppley Field (OMA) recognizes Eugene C. Eppley, who in 1957 through his estate donated \$1,000,000 (that would be over \$9,000,000 in 2019 dollars) to Omaha to improve the municipal airport for jet aircraft.

Close by is Offutt Air Force Base (OFF). It honors Jarvis Jenness Offutt, born in Omaha in 1894 and died in World War I France, flying on August 13, 1918. At only age 24, he was Omaha's first World War I air casualty. But, his journey home was not an easy one. As often happens in the fog of war, his body was mistakenly identified and buried as Private Walter Heltman of Pennsylvania. After the War, by 1923, his remains were correctly identified and he is buried in the family plot in Omaha's Forest Lawn Memorial Park.

There is much more to this historic story. In 1924, six years after his death, the landing field at Fort Crook, just south of Omaha at Bellevue, was renamed Offutt Field in his honor. The dedication ceremony was on May 10. Offutt's mother and brother were present. An impressive aerial salute of 19 airplanes circled over the airfield. The contingent of seven of those airplanes flew from Fort Riley, Kansas. They dropped a memorial wreath from the air to highlight the memorial ceremony. After World War II, on January 13, 1948, both the airfield and Fort Crook were renamed Offutt Air Force Base.

O'Neill Municipal (ONL) honors hometown hero, the late John L. Baker. Son of a pilot, he used to say he was born to fly. He was a decorated US Air Force Korean War fighter pilot. After graduating from Creighton with his law degree, he headed to Washington, DC. Over the years, he advocated for General Aviation, especially as President of the Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association.

Another airport name honoring a military pilot is Western Nebraska Regional Airport William B. Heilig Field (KBFF). In 1928, airmail service began there. By 1934, Scottsbluff was firmly established on that circuit which grew into today's airport. During World War II, the airport became Scottsbluff Army Airfield, where flight instruction for B-17- Flying Fortress and B-24-Liberator crews was conducted. By 1947, the city of Scottsbluff resumed airport ownership. William B. Heilig, who served as a World War II US Army Air Corps flight instructor, became airport manager. He continued to promote the airport's post-war growth. In 1993, Heilig was inducted into the Nebraska Aviation Hall of Fame (NAHoff).

Another NAHoff 2007 member honored in an airport name is L. Keith Glaze. In 2009, the Broken Bow Municipal Airport (BBW) added Keith Glaze Field to the official name. Born in Nebraska in 1920, Glaze fell in love with flying in the 1930s with his first plane ride in a Ford Tri-motor. By 1940, he enrolled in the Civilian Pilot Training program. As a pilot during World War II, he served in the famed Air Transport Command flying the "Hump" in C-46/47 in China-Burma-India Theater. Later, during the Korean War, Glaze again served as pilot, earning the Distinguished Flying Cross. He remained passionate about aviation.

As these examples show, there is a lot of history and honor in many of Nebraska's airport names.

Penny Rafferty Hamilton, Ph.D., is the author of the book, "America's Amazing Airports." She earned her Private Pilot ticket at Beatrice Municipal Airport KBIE.

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