

MAGAZINE



BizAvJetsUSA

A BizAvJets Inc./In FlightUSA Joint Publication • Volume 2, Number 6 • Fall/Winter 2023

**Brigitta
Hoferle: An
Educator,
Speaker and
Coach**



**BizAvJets USA Interviews
Duncan Aviation CEO Todd
Duncan at 2023 NBAA**

EXECUTIVE | SERIES GSE

PRIVATE. PROTECTED. PREMIER.



Diamond
Engine
Shield EX



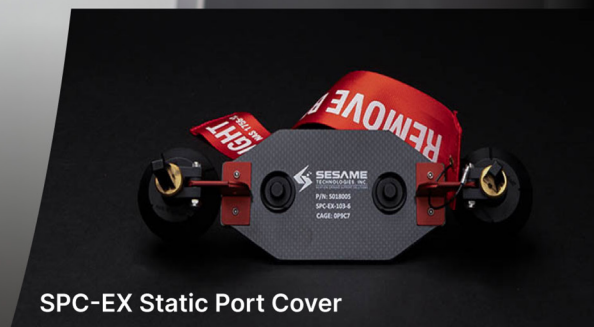
FTC-EX-102 TAT Cover



KPC5-EX Pitot Probe Cover



AOA-EX-Guard



SPC-EX Static Port Cover

Introducing Sesame Technologies, Inc.'s new Executive Series GSE line of products designed to protect today's high performance, luxury elite aircraft.



SESAME
TECHNOLOGIES, INC.
AVIATION GROUND SUPPORT SOLUTIONS

sesametechnologies.com | (252) 833-4980

Please contact Sesame Technologies, Inc. or visit our website for detailed information on the complete line of Executive Series GSE products.

A Letter from the Publishers



Dear Readers,

Happy Holidays! We are proud to present the latest issue of BizAvJets USA, our biz jet sister publication to In Flight USA. We hope that you have been enjoying the season and that you have had opportunities to fly private, whether in your own plane or via charter. With the ups and downs of the economy, we know that time, money, and energy are precious commodities. Here at BizAvJets USA, our goal is to bring you quality stories and news about business aviation so that you can make informed decisions about your private flying life, finding the most affordable and time-saving opportunities.

While the technology industry has seen mass layoffs, we know that the private aviation industry is continuing to grow all the time. Experts at premiere organizations are predicting a rise in private jet sales and charter flight in 2024, and this excites us greatly.

As 2023 comes to a strong close, we look forward to your readership and submissions in 2024. We look forward to accompanying you on your private aviation journey and being distributed at your local airport or jet center.

Happy New Year!

Co-Publishers
Annamarie Buonocore and Elijah Stepp
Co-Publishers
BizAvJets USA



MAGAZINE
BizAvJetsUSA

P.O. Box 5402, San Mateo, CA 94402
(650) 358-9908, Fax (650) 358-9254

Co-Publishers
Managing Editor
Production Editor
Advisory Board Member

Annamarie Buonocore and Eli Stepp (702/465-2027)
Vickie Buonocore
Matt DuBois
Bert Botta

Business matters, advertising and editorial concerns should be addressed to In Flight USA, P.O. Box 5402, San Mateo, Calif. 94402 or by calling (650) 358-9908–fax (650) 358-9254. Copyright © 2008-2021 In Flight Publishing.

BizAvJets USA is not responsible for any action taken by any person as a result of reading any part of any issue. The pieces are written for information, entertainment and suggestion – not recommendation. The pursuit of flight or any action reflected by this paper is the responsibility of the individual and not of this paper, its staff or contributors. Opinions expressed are those of the individual author, and not necessarily those of *BizAvJets USA*.

All editorial and advertising matter in this edition is copyrighted. Reproduction in any way is strictly prohibited without written permission of the publisher.

BizAvJets USA is not liable or in any way responsible for the condition or airworthiness of any aircraft advertised for sale in any edition. By law the airworthiness of any aircraft sold is the responsibility of the seller and buyer.



Ben Ingram During Military Service. (Photo Courtesy of Ben Ingram)

Ben Ingram Warriors in Need

By Eli Stepp

Passion and fortitude are immediately apparent when interviewing “Warriors in Need” Founder Ben Ingram and his business partner Nick Matthews. The pair have served honorably in the military and currently do so in the Aviation Industry. Both have a serious passion for veterans in general, and for veterans in transition to civilian life. To say their military and aviation pedigree are outstanding is quite an understatement.

Ben Ingram is a Marine Corp Veteran who obtained his FAA A&P Credentials when leaving the Corp. He has served directly or by contract in the aviation industry with Martin Aviation, Executive Aviation Specialists, Navy DOD, Zetta Jet, Newport Aviation, Trans-Exec, Clay Lacy, Participant Media, Solairus Aviation. Notable mention, while working with Navy DOD Ben worked with the Missile Defense Agency, the Space Shuttle Program, UAV Projects, Pioneer X drones, Tiger Shark, and generation one predators. He also achieved his pilot certification.

Nick Matthews is also a Marine Corp Veteran who served in Desert Storm and Desert Shield. He worked with a cleaning company in High School developing an excellent work ethic while making life-long contacts. After his military service he re-engaged with the cleaning industry starting his own firm in 1991 which was an upholstery cleaning business specializing in business aviation. Nick was very successful in his business, which was in operation for 28 years serving clientele all over Southern California. In 2019 he was

approached by another firm which bought his company. Nick continued to serve the organization until 2023 and now has separated from the firm and is now partnering with Ben Ingram.

Warriors In Need: An Organization Built from Brotherhood and Memory

In the passionate world of racing and the brotherhood of the Marine Corps, the name “Warriors In Need” may not yet be familiar to all. However, behind this name lies a heart-rending story and a beautiful mission to support veterans, a testament to the unbreakable bonds formed in the face of adversity.

The Inspiration Behind Warriors In Need

The inception of “Warriors In Need” can be traced back to a sorrowful Thanksgiving two years ago. Josh, a charismatic Marine, and a passionate racer, took his own life, leaving behind memories filled with roaring engines, laughter, and camaraderie. From racing cars at the street legal drags in Pomona in 1995, to creating countless memories together, Josh had always been at the center of their group. His 1971 CUDA and his best friend’s 1968 Roadrunner symbolized their shared passions and the adventures they embarked upon.

Beyond the racetracks, Josh was a beacon of joy, with an infectious smile and a knack for humor. His

Continued on Page 5

Warriors in Need

Continued from Page 4

departure left an irreplaceable void in the lives of those he touched.

The Birth of a Noble Cause

Out of this profound grief emerged a resolve to do something meaningful in Josh's memory. Ben Ingram and several Marines rallied together, setting up a fundraiser for Josh's family. Within a matter of weeks, they raised an impressive sum exceeding \$10,000, a testament to the profound impact Josh had on those around him.

The fundraiser's success kindled an idea: why not create a recurring event for veterans, their families, and racing enthusiasts? An event where bonds could be forged, memories shared, and a safe space created for those battling inner demons.

Naming the Dream: Warriors In Need

As discussions ensued, the search began for a name that would encapsulate the essence of racing, support, and veterans. Ben Ingram's son James, a young visionary of just 22 years, proposed "Warriors in Need", a name that resonated instantly. With disbelief at their fortune, the team found that the domain Warriorsinneed.com was available, and the organization's name was cemented.

Moreover, James pointed out the serendipitous abbreviation of the name, (WIN) adding another layer of significance.

Funding the Dream

Realizing the financial demands of hosting a trackside event, the Warriors In Need team faced the challenge of sourcing funds. Instead of solely relying on donations, the idea of starting a business to self-fund and act as a template for their vision emerged. This approach underscored their commitment, proving they were wholly invested in their mission.

Warriors In Need: From Dream to Reality

The heartwarming legacy of a friendship that began in the Marine Corps, intertwined with street legal drags in Pomona, and finally transformed into a significant mission for veterans has given birth to "Warriors in Need." The organization, helmed by passionate veterans, has continuously grown, branching out in unexpected directions, all while never losing sight of its core objective: supporting veterans.

One such direction is the recent acquisition of the aircraft detailing company, GH Graham. The



Ben Ingram Detailing Aircraft (Photo Courtesy of Ben Ingram)

collaboration between the organization's spearhead and Glenn Graham, the retiring owner of the aircraft detailing company, became a perfect way to integrate Warriors In Need's mission of helping veterans. By tapping into the aviation industry, they have not only created a revenue stream to fund their initiatives but also established an environment where veterans can find employment and community. As of now, GH Graham employs two veterans, setting a positive precedent for future recruitments.

The operational motto is simple yet profound: a successful transition for veterans, from the battlefield to the workplace. This dual objective aims first to provide employment for veterans, allowing them to transition smoothly from military life to civilian roles, and secondly, to fund trackside events. Such events, inspired by an exhilarating experience at racetracks, are designed to bring joy and a sense of accomplishment to veterans, even those with disabilities.

The trackside event initiative focuses on giving participants the real deal: a full-blown racing experience. Drawing inspiration from the company, "Feel Like a Pro," the idea is to equip participants with everything they need - from the motorcycle to safety equipment. This way, for a reasonable fee, veterans can experience the thrill of racing firsthand, a proposition that seems both exhilarating and therapeutic.

While Warriors In Need's ambitions are lofty, their progress so far has been commendable. The aircraft detailing venture, GH Graham, has already expanded its

Continued on Page 9



BizAvJets USA Co-Publisher Eli Stepp with Kevin LaRosa at 2023 NBAA. (Photo courtesy of Eli Stepp)

An Exclusive Interview with Kevin LaRosa of 'Top Gun Maverick' Fame A Soaring Conversation at NBAA 2023

By Eli Stepp

In a captivating reunion at NBAA 2023, BizAvJets USA Magazine, had the privilege of catching up with the acclaimed aerial cinematographer Kevin LaRosa II, following our last interaction at Oshkosh in 2022. Renowned for his work in the aviation film industry, LaRosa shared insights into his latest ventures, collaborative achievements, and the behind-the-scenes magic of iconic movie scenes.

Bringing Movie Magic to Life: The Camera Ships of 'Top Gun Maverick'

With palpable enthusiasm, LaRosa detailed how an invitation from NBAA President Ed Boland led to showcasing the three camera ships pivotal in "Top Gun Maverick" at 2023 NBAA. The fleet, include the

L-39 CineJet, Phenom 300, and Airbus H125, played a crucial role in crafting the movie's breathtaking aerial sequences. Equipped with advanced gimbals for camera stabilization, these aircraft enabled the creation of stunning cinematic visuals.

LaRosa's enterprise, "XBrand LLC," operates as an independent contractor in the film and television sector. Conversely, their affiliate, "3 Delta Fox," caters to the demands of airlines, private jets, and entities desiring ready-made footage. Comprising a dedicated team of pilots, technicians, and crew chiefs, LaRosa's partnerships are forged on a foundation of trust and a shared enthusiasm for aviation.

Continued on Page 16



*BizAvJets USA Co-Publishers Eli Stepp Speaking with Ryan Woolard of Sesame Technologies at 2023 NBAA.
(Photo courtesy of Eli Stepp)*

An Interview with Sesame Technologies VP Ryan Woolard at 2023 NBAA

By Eli Stepp

At the 2023 National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) show, Eli Stepp of BizAvJets USA magazine, caught up with Ryan Woolard from Sesame Technologies. Here's a glimpse into the informative discussion that ensued.

Sesame Technologies: Crafting Ground Support Equipment for Over Three Decades

Founded in 1990, Sesame Technologies specializes in designing and manufacturing ground support equipment (GSE). With a track record spanning 33 years, the company has been consistent in focusing on high-temperature applications, working with exotic raw materials like Kevlar, Nomex, high temp silicones, and other polymer-type materials.

This year, the NBAA show served as the launchpad for Sesame's brand-new product line - the Executive Series of aircraft GSE components. "We have a wide

array of GSE components ranging from dehumidification adapters to Engine and APU type protection equipment, along with our avionics protection," Woolard proudly stated.

Introducing the New Product Line

Woolard shed light on the freshly unveiled Executive Series of products that have been in development for several years. This comprehensive range boasts nine new products, encompassing avionics protection equipment to engine inlet and exhaust components. The unique blend of materials used in this product line includes several types of aramids, high-temp silicones, solid-phase polyamides, and carbon fiber.

Among the standout products is the "Angle of Attack" (AOA) guard, and static port covers made of carbon

Continued on Page 16



Inside Stein's Aircraft Services: A Conversation with Mike and Lori Stein at 2023 NBAA

By Eli Stepp

BizAvJets USA Co-Publisher Eli Stepp with Mike and Laurie Stein of Stein's Aircraft Services at 2023 NBAA. (Photo Courtesy of Eli Stepp)

BizAvJets USA magazine recently had the opportunity to sit down with Mike and Lori Stein, the dynamic duo behind Stein's Aircraft Services. Located in Kenosha and Waukesha, Wisconsin, Stein's Aircraft Services has garnered a reputation as a full-service aviation provider, offering a plethora of services to cater to the diverse needs of the aviation community.

A Comprehensive Aviation Service Organization

Stein's Aircraft Services is not just an ordinary aviation facility. "We have a part 145-repair station and are Honeywell approved to do MSP work," Mike began. Operating an area of about 300 miles from their Kenosha facility, they are not limited to their location, always willing to expand their horizons if the opportunity arises. Their service portfolio also includes a 135 certificate, under which they currently operate a turboprop.

However, their prowess doesn't end there. They have a robust management side, overseeing multiple types of aircraft including a Boeing 737. With a couple

of airplanes in a flight school and an additional four in a school up at Waukesha, it's evident that their reach in the industry is extensive.

The Power of Partnership

Behind the company's success is the strong partnership between Mike and Lori. Having been married for 26 years, the couple has seen a myriad of experiences in their professional journey. From Mike's tenure at a law firm and a public company to Lori's stint at United Airlines, their combined expertise forms the bedrock of their enterprise.

Expanding Horizons

Stein's Aircraft Services is a significant player in the Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) sector. Most of their MRO work is on outside aircraft, with approximately 75% of their projects coming from

Continued on Page 9

2023 NBAA

Continued from Page 8

external sources, a testament to their growing reputation in the industry. Their expertise covers a range of aircraft, with a notable focus on Hawker maintenance, Falcons, and Lear 45s.

When asked about the possibility of expanding their facilities, Mike hinted at some growth right at their Kenosha base with a new hanger. However, while they are keen on expanding their service offerings, they don't foresee growing in terms of physical facilities just yet.

Challenges and Changing Dynamics

Despite their success, the Steins are not strangers

to challenges. In an industry where meeting deadlines is paramount, Mike proudly asserts, "When we tell somebody that, hey, we can do this, we can have it out by this date, we make the date." But they are also practical, emphasizing that they won't take on work if they can't meet the deadline.

The industry's dynamic has also shifted over the years. The emphasis has moved from what employees can offer employers to what employers can offer their staff. Retaining talent has become more challenging, with staff often leaving for greener pastures.

Nevertheless, with their commitment to excellence and the strong partnership at its helm, Stein's Aircraft Services is poised to continue making waves in the aviation industry. BizAvJets USA Magazine wishes Mike, Lori, and Stein Aircraft Services all the best in their future endeavors.

Ben Ingram

Continued from Page 5

repertoire. With new cleaning capabilities that specialize in aircraft upholstery, the organization has broadened its customer base and offerings.

Looking forward, there's a vision of growth and expansion on the horizon. Currently based out of Burbank and servicing neighboring Van Nuys, the goal is to eventually extend their reach, potentially covering airports like Camarillo and LAX.

To bolster their cause further, the organization has already forged strategic partnerships. One noteworthy collaboration is with the Wounded Warrior Project, particularly their "Warriors to Work" initiative. This partnership aims to funnel pre-screened veterans to Warriors In Need, ensuring that those who need help the most have access to it. Additionally, they're also engaging with Duncan Aviation to potentially organize job fairs, further cementing their commitment to veterans' welfare.

In conclusion, Warriors In Need is not just an organization; it's a mission powered by heartfelt stories, undying passion, and the desire to make a real difference in the lives of those who've served. From the racetracks of Pomona to the runways of Burbank, this journey is a testament to the power of dreams, resilience, and the unwavering spirit of camaraderie. Individuals and/or organizations can learn more at www.WarriorsInNeed.com. Our publication wishes all the best to Ben Ingram, Nick Matthews, Warriors In Need, and G.H. Graham Custom Aircraft Detailing.



Ben Ingram, Warriors In Need Founder (Photo Courtesy of Ben Ingram)

Brigitta Hoeflerle: An Educator, Pro-Speaker and Coach With An Affinity for Business Aviation

By Eli Stepp and Annamarie Buonocore



Brigitta Hoeflerle enjoying Challenger 601 cabin (Photos Courtesy of Brigitta Hoeflerle)

This is Eli Stepp here with BizAvJets USA magazine, along with my partner, Annamarie Buonocore, and we are very fortunate to interview Brigitta Hoeflerle. Brigitta is a professional, veteran in the education industry, and has an affinity for business aviation. I wanted to get her story and learn about her future goals about flying private. These are her insights on the future of this powerful industry.

I met Brigitta at a conference in Milwaukee, and then I saw her again at a conference in Las Vegas. I consider her a personal friend now. She's part of my family as far as I'm concerned. So we love it and are very excited to interview Brigitta. We will roll through this organically.

BizAvJets USA: Brigitta, thank you for joining us today. Can you give us a nutshell of your history, what you have done, and what you plan to do?

Brigitta Hoeflerle: Yes. First of all, thank you, Eli, and thank you, Annamarie, for having me on this interview. My name is Brigitta Hoeflerle. As the name already might suggest, I'm not from the United States.

It's not an English name. I am German by birth and was born and raised in Germany. And yet in my heart, I am American. I also have a U.S. Passport now. When I met my husband in 1999, we decided that we wanted to move to the States at some point. And that kind of was one, among many things, that connected us. When we met, I was in publishing. I was on the marketing side, and my husband was on the journalism side. If you know anything about publishing, those two departments do not mingle well together. Yet we made it work. I think that has been our success pattern. That through communication and through being able to see the others' point of view and the other side of the world, we were able to have 24 years of a very successful and loving relationship.

Out of our relationship, came two children who are now adults and incredible beings in their own right. Our oldest daughter is a Hollywood actress whom you will be able to see in the movie theater very soon. She is in

Continued on Page 11

Brigitta Hoeferle

Continued from Page 10

one movie coming out in November, and the other one is coming out in January where she's playing elite role. Our youngest daughter just received not one but two scholarships, and she chose the full ride at a beautiful university in Asheville, NC. I say all of that because I'm a proud mama, and I am also a successful business owner. When we moved to the United States in 2004, fast forward from when I met my husband, we came to the United States to build a Montessori school. At that point, I was building a business and a school. I was in my early 30s and thought, you know, I hold two degrees. I can do all of this easily. I'm on top of the world! I thought I had it all figured out, only to find out I didn't. Soon my business was failing. Sometimes it felt like I took one step forward and two steps back instead of the other way around.

I soon realized that I needed to work on myself for about three years. I pointed fingers at everyone else, and I said, everyone else needs to learn and do certain things... Until one day, I said, "What is the common denominator in all of my difficult interactions?" The

common denominator was Brigitta. So Brigitta needs to do some work on herself. That was a bitter pill to swallow. I'm glad that I was able to actually take that inventory because that was when I learned more on self-development, neurolinguistic programming, and human behavior. I continued to just learn and soak up even more. This was what really got my business going. Now I'm out of the day-to-day operations of the school business. And out of that great work that I did, I was able to support the largest self-development company in the world. Now I am their fast-track female speaker on stages like Tony Robbins, T. Harv Eker, and other incredible stages, like that of Les Brown. They are really incredible, well-known speakers. I helped that company

build their coaching program, and out of that, I was yet again scouted to take over a very successful business in Atlanta, GA., called the Center of Training and Center of NLP.

As that happened, I passed on the baton to a family to run my school and to grow the school. I said, "Okay, I'm a little burned out." I was not looking at another business. I was not looking at another opportunity, so I passed it on to very capable hands. Then another opportunity came my way. So, if God and the universe puts something in your lap, I'm the last one to say, "No, thanks." I'm there to look at it. And here I am running that training center very successfully, where we certify practitioners, coaches, and speakers; very successful speakers are coming out of our training center. That is what I do today. That is my long-winded answer to your question, Eli. I love educating. I love teaching. That's my spiel.

B A J U S A :
Wonderful! I appreciate the rundown. It's always difficult to ask an umbrella question in a nutshell, but you did a very good job. Thank you so much. So I'm curious, can you explain a little bit about the NLP programming and what that is?

BH: Yes. So, NLP is neurolinguistic programming. Neuro is our brain, our operating system. Linguistic refers to our communication. Although a lot of

people think communication has everything to do with talking, it actually has more to do with not talking than talking. Per the Mehrabian Communication Model, our words in our communication only carry about seven percent of the entire communication. The biggest piece is our nonverbal cues and our body language, and then another big piece in our communication is our tonality. So that's the linguistic part. The programming is how our thoughts, our behavior, and our communication program ourselves through our self-talk or how it programs other people that we're communicating or not communicating with. Because when we're not communicating, we're also programming through our nonverbal communication.



Brigitta Hoeferle enjoying Challenger 601 cabin (Photos Courtesy of Brigitta Hoeferle)



Continued on Page 12

Brigitta Hoeferle

Continued from Page 11

So, the programming is what we think, what we do, and what we say. All of this has an impact on us and on other people. That's NLP in a nutshell, and it studies the human behavior and the human communications model. It allows people to have great tools to be better communicators. When we are better communicators and we are able to see the limitations in our own communication, then we can build better relationships.

When we build better relationships, we can have a better life in our businesses and in our personal lives. We can build more quality and more intentional relations, and that's basically the basis of all business and all life quality.

BAJUSA: I certainly understand. So, is this something a person can take as training to improve himself and then also become a trainer of NLP?

BH: Correct. We certify individuals to also become NLP trainers to train others. Sometimes we have trainers from organizations or large corporations take our course to add it to their development piece of the organization. Sometimes we have individuals. I sometimes have couples that take the practitioner or NLP training course together so they can become better communicators with each other, and I applaud those people because it is all about improving relationships.

BAJUSA: So the NLP is your main occupation?

BH: The Center of Training is my main occupation. I certify, train, speak, coach, and mentor an umbrella that is the Center of Training. That is what I do.

BAJUSA: So, on the speaking end of things, you go to conferences as I've witnessed. How often are you traveling or going to speaking events?

BH: I travel at least once a month. I'm always going somewhere to speak in person, and boy, am I glad that we are in person again! During the pandemic, I was in front of a screen speaking at conferences, on platforms, and at summits and so forth, probably every week. If you ask my neck and shoulders, they will probably tell you that it was everyday.

BAJUSA: That's wonderful! Let's talk a little bit about your potential exposure or past exposure to aviation or business aviation. Have you flown private in the past?

BH: I have, and it is wonderful! I have flown private, I have flown commercial, and I have flown charter in the past. I come from a country where back in the late '80s early '90s, private flying became a thing. To fly to places

Continued on Page 13



Brigitta's journey from school building to worldwide impact, particularly her focus on Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) and effective communication, can have significant relevance in the context of Business Aviation:

1. Enhanced Crew Communication: Effective communication is crucial in the aviation industry, especially among the flight crew. NLP techniques, which focus on understanding nonverbal cues and tonality, can help aviation professionals interpret and respond to subtle communication signals, fostering better teamwork and safer flights.

2. Client Relations: In Business Aviation, building strong relationships with clients is key to success. Brigitta's expertise in NLP can be applied to train aviation professionals in client interaction. Understanding clients' nonverbal communication can lead to better service, anticipating their needs, and ensuring a positive experience, which is vital for client retention and satisfaction.

3. Training and Leadership: Brigitta's role in training, coaching, and mentoring individuals can be adapted to train aviation staff and crewmembers. Effective communication is not only about speaking but also active listening and understanding the needs of the team. By teaching NLP techniques, she can help aviation leaders enhance their leadership skills, fostering a positive work environment and ensuring seamless operations.

4. Conflict Resolution: Miscommunications or misunderstandings can arise in high-stress environments like aviation. NLP techniques can be invaluable in resolving conflicts by improving understanding between team members. By recognizing and addressing communication limitations, aviation professionals can minimize misunderstandings and work together harmoniously, ensuring the safety and efficiency of flights.

5. Passenger Experience: Applying NLP principles can also enhance interactions with passengers. Crew members trained in NLP can better understand passengers' needs, preferences, and emotions, leading to a more personalized and satisfactory flying experience. This heightened level of communication can lead to positive reviews, client loyalty, and referrals in the business aviation industry.

By incorporating Brigitta's expertise in NLP and effective communication strategies, Business Aviation professionals can create a safer, more efficient, and customer-focused environment, ultimately elevating the industry's standards and reputation."

Brigitta Hoeferle

Continued from Page 12

like Ibiza and Majorca, I would charter a plane, and a whole group of people would join the charter to go to those islands. I think it is a very unique way of traveling.

BAJUSA: Was that charter you took a six-passenger, eight-passenger, ten-passenger aircraft, or larger?

BH: It was larger. I remember it had about 89 seats, so it was much larger.

BAJUSA: Wonderful! You've been exposed to business aviation, and I think a little bit of a bug gets into people once they do it. Do you want to do it some more?

BH: I feel the exact same way about the bug. I definitely want to fly private again. It is a wonderful experience.

BAJUSA: Do you see yourself potentially chartering a business aircraft soon?

BH: Yes. It is so convenient and makes for a great business experience.

BAJUSA: Great! And just let me ask you too, this isn't necessarily aviation related... Are you promoting any humanitarian efforts? We often ask because we like to promote Corporate Angel Network. They provide free seats for cancer patients needing treatment. I always like to ask if there's a humanitarian effort that you do as well.

BH: Yes, of course. We have had this experience of administering humanitarian aid when we lived in Tennessee. This area is often called "tornado alley," and we had tornadoes come through every year. One year, the tornado literally wiped us out. Our school sits on a hill, and we have 175 students now, going to 250 for the next school year, as we're adding high school. But our school sits on a hill, and the tornado came and literally jumped over. We had all of the children in the hallways come down into a friend's house, and then the house imploded. The house was turned inside out. Through generous efforts, the community came together. We had people flying in with their private jets to bring chainsaws, cleanup materials, water, and toilet paper. There were people coming from Wyoming and Minnesota with their private jets to help out. I thought, wow, what an incredible way of giving back when you have those kind people, and in this case, a jet to help out other people. In this case, this was just an incredible

effort that went not just community wide but nationwide. That was beautiful. I'm all for that. My efforts go in that direction as well.

BAJUSA: I appreciate you sharing that story. I know you shared it with me before, but it's worth sharing again and hearing because as I've said before, there's so much that business aviation does, and they don't ask for credit or they don't promote it. They just do it. Business aircraft can make it to small airports. In fact, they can make it to 5,000 airports in the United States, whereas airliners can only make it to 500. So things like that are really great for administering aid. What is your favorite jet to fly on?

BH: It's the one with the champagne in it. Just kidding... I enjoy many different kinds. I can't say that I have a favorite. I do like the smaller planes, but if they're too small, I don't like the falling feeling. I don't do well with that. I remember being in a chartered plane flying to Martha's Vineyard. That was rough. I'm going to stick with whichever has the best champagne.

BAJUSA: You recently had an experience with the Challenger 601 in the Atlanta area. Now, what about that size?

BH: Yes, it was a beautiful aircraft. It was very nicely kept. It was very spacious yet small. I think that was a 10-seater. This was in Peachtree City, Ga. I want to give the entire operation in Peachtree City a big shout out because they've bent over backwards for me. They are just the nicest, kindest people that are running that operation. Absolutely top notch!

BAJUSA: Yes. I've known the CEO, Johnny Foster, for a long time. I'm older than him, so I've known him a long time. His dad started the business years ago, and it's wonderful. Do you see yourself owning a business aircraft?

BH: You know, my husband and I were talking about that on the way back from Peachtree City to Atlanta. As we (our business partners and photographer were there, too) were talking about that, my question was, with what intention would I own one? Do I just want to own it for the sake of owning it, or with what intention would I own it? In many companies that own a jet, the executives need to be at a certain place, at a certain time, quickly. With their jets, they can land, like you said, on smaller airports or smaller fields with more ease than going through Atlanta Hartsfield Airport, which, if you've been there in the last year, that place is booming. The



Brigitta Hoeferle outside Challenger 601 (Photos Courtesy of Brigitta Hoeferle)

Continued on Page 23

A Deep Dive with Duncan Aviation: An Interview with Todd Duncan

By Eli Stepp



BizAvJets USA Interviews Duncan Aviation CEO Todd Duncan at 2023 NBAA (Photo courtesy of Eli Stepp)

In a recent sit-down with BizAvJets USA Magazine's Eli Stepp, Mr. Todd Duncan of Duncan Aviation discussed the company's illustrious journey through the aviation industry. Here are the key highlights from their insightful conversation.

The Origins of Duncan Aviation

Duncan Aviation's journey spans over six decades. The company's inception was not as many would assume. It started as an aircraft sales organization, with Todd's grandfather at the helm. Initially functioning as a Beech distributor, the firm later became a Learjet distributor. Over the years, under the guidance of Todd's father, Duncan Aviation pivoted from its sales-oriented roots to a maintenance, repair, and overhaul facility based in Lincoln,

Nebraska.

The legacy of aircraft sales persists in the company's DNA. Duncan's grandfather held the distinction of selling more used Lear jets than any other individual or company during his time.

Duncan Aviation's Locations

The company boasts three primary facilities where they offer comprehensive aviation services:

- Lincoln, Nebraska: This is Duncan Aviation's mainstay location.
- Battle Creek, Michigan: Acquired more than 25 years ago, this facility was formerly known as the Cal Aero facility. Today, it provides a plethora of services ranging from engine overhauls

Continued on Page 15

Duncan Aviation

Continued from Page 14

to heavy maintenance and aircraft and airframe repairs.

- Provo, Utah: Although Duncan Aviation has marked its presence in Utah for over a decade, their state-of-the-art facility at the Provo airport is relatively new. Home to 400 team members, this facility stands as a testament to the company's growth and commitment to excellence in aviation.

The Expansion in Lincoln

Recent additions to the Lincoln facility have been the talk of the town. Duncan Aviation is in the process of setting up a new maintenance shop. This expansive 46,000-square-foot facility is not just limited to Lincoln; a similar momentum of growth and enhancements can be seen at their Battle Creek facility.

Nurturing Talent with the A&P Apprenticeship Program

One of the most commendable initiatives by Duncan Aviation is their A&P apprenticeship program. Started before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, this program is tailor-made to train and mold young talent straight out of high school, as well as veterans from the military, to earn their A&P certifications.

The program has the distinction of being approved by the US Department of Labor. As of this summer, the program celebrated the graduation of over 100 individuals across all its locations. Once enrolled, participants undergo practical training for four to four and a half days a week, coupled with theoretical sessions that grant them their airframe power plant certification in two to three years.

In gratitude for this invaluable education and opportunity, graduates are encouraged to commit a couple of years working with Duncan Aviation.

Duncan Aviation at the 2023 NBAA

The 2023 National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) saw Duncan Aviation making a series of announcements, showcasing their long-term vision. From establishing new partnerships to launching various initiatives, Duncan Aviation continues to solidify its position in the industry.

When asked about any concluding thoughts, Todd Duncan expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to share and converse about the company's milestones and aspirations. The sentiment was warmly reciprocated by Eli Stepp, wrapping up a truly informative exchange.

In aviation circles, Duncan Aviation's commitment to innovation, quality, and people-centric growth is widely acknowledged. And with leaders like Todd Duncan at the helm, the future surely seems to be ascending to greater heights.



CEO Todd Duncan and Eli Stepp at 2023 NBAA (Photo courtesy Eli Stepp)

Kevin LaRosa

Continued from Page 6

The Art of Teaching Flight: The ‘Tom Cruise Flight Academy’

During our conversation, BizAvJets USA highlighted LaRosa’s significant role in Top Gun Maverick, notably in training the actors to pilot aircraft. LaRosa fondly recollected the ‘Tom Cruise Flight Academy’, a term coined for the training sessions. Actor Glenn Powell, featured in both “Top Gun Maverick” and the aviation film “Devotion,” was mentioned, spotlighting LaRosa’s influence in shaping actors for aerial roles.

On the Horizon: The Thunderbirds Project

Delving into future endeavors, I inquired about LaRosa’s upcoming project with the Thunderbirds. Confirming the speculation, he revealed that filming was set to start the following week. This ambitious undertaking, mirroring their previous collaboration with the US Navy Blue Angels, aims to capture dynamic aerial sequences. Spanning several months, LaRosa and

his team will intermittently contribute their expertise in aerial cinematography.

A Global Presence in Aerial Cinematography

Based in Los Angeles, California, LaRosa emphasized his international scope, holding validations for both the UK and EASA, to facilitate global film projects. With a fleet of aircraft strategically located across the United States, LaRosa’s team remains poised to deploy their equipment swiftly, embarking on cinematic expeditions at a moment’s notice.

In a parting note, LaRosa extended an invitation to aviation enthusiasts at 2023 NBAA to explore their aircraft. Each plane, adorned with cast signatures and custom modifications for specific movie shots, narrates a unique story. “It’s fun for us when someone asks, ‘Why is that there?’ It’s all about creating that perfect shot in the movie,” LaRosa shared with a smile.

As our interview concluded, it was evident that in the realm of aviation cinematography, Kevin LaRosa is a maverick in his own right, seamlessly blending the thrill of flight with the artistry of filmmaking. BizAvJets USA wishes him all the best in the future.

Sesame Technologies

Continued from Page 7

fiber components. A significant highlight of this series is the first-of-its-kind engine protection cover “Our core aim is risk reduction,” Woolard stressed, explaining the company’s intent to minimize dangers to personnel, pilots, passengers, and the aircraft itself.

The Diamond Shield EX Engine Cover

The conversation steered towards one of the company’s most talked-about innovations - the “Diamond Shield EX” engine cover which can be installed from the ground with a collapsible extension tool. Launched only a day prior to the interview, this revolutionary cover promises unparalleled protection.

Behind the Scenes at Sesame Technologies

Woolard revealed that the company operates with a dedicated team of 35 full-time employees. While not a family venture, Sesame Technologies encompasses a diverse workforce, with roles ranging from

administration to R&D, engineering, sales, customer service, manufacturing, logistics, and a high-level quality control department.

When questioned about his journey before Sesame Technologies, Woolard spoke about his 23-year tenure in biocontainment and nuclear air filtration. A love for aerospace, aviation, and new product development drew him into the aviation sector.

Innovating for Safety

A notable product discussed during the conversation was the Pitot Static cover, crafted with Kevlar and high-temp silicone. These covers are built to withstand accidental heat cycles, ensuring they don’t harm the pitot probes. “If someone accidentally activates the pitot probe, our covers will protect the equipment,” Woolard assured.

Concluding the interview, Woolard reflected on the successful launch at NBAA. “It’s always a pleasure meeting with industry peers having really valuable discussions,” he shared.

As the aviation industry continues to evolve, it’s clear that Ryan Woolard and the Sesame Technologies’ team are highly focused on driving change, on prioritizing safety and risk reduction, and on further introducing innovations that can make a difference.



While many pilots see corporate jobs as their career, opposed to a stepping-stone to commercial jobs, private and business operators need to be more proactive about attracting talent, like approaching colleges to recruit and showcasing why corporate flight departments and fractional ownership operations are a great place to work. (Photo by Mike Fizer, courtesy AOPA)

Airlines Draw Pilots From Business Aviation: Private Operators Under Pressure

By Niki Britton, AOPA

Big salaries, signing bonuses, and a strong recruiting presence at aviation colleges have more new pilots than ever flocking to the major airlines, while private business aviation faces a challenging new reality.

Hiring at the major airlines is on track to outpace last year's record pilot hiring, with almost 10,000 pilots hired by the major airlines year to date. According to Chief Advisor and Executive Editor at Future and Active Pilot Advisors (FAPA) Timothy Genc, the industry is on pace to hit 13,400 pilots hired by year-end. Genc added that the industry is still shy of being able to staff all of the aircraft currently parked.

JSfirm.com saw a boost in job seeker traffic compared to this time last year with a 21.2-percent increase in applications and a 40.8-percent increase in new memberships. These job seekers run the gamut from

recent graduates to experienced executives and represent every category of the aviation industry.

Companies are still competing to attract talent with 19.7 percent more companies advertising their open positions and total jobs posted up 16.7 percent compared to 2022. Incentives are still at an all-time high and JSfirm.com is confirming relocation and sign-on bonuses up to \$175,000 for pilots.

Ultra-low-cost carriers (ULC) have seen a decrease in hiring and training, according to FAPA. A memo from Spirit Airlines, which plans to merge with JetBlue, announced the company was suspending all hiring and new pilot and flight attendant training because of a disappointing third quarter and the expected grounding of dozens of Airbus aircraft over the next year for

Continued on Page 22

VISIONSAFE: A Beacon of Safety in the Skies

By Eli Stepp



Eli Stepp interviewing Chris Skurat and Alex Werjefelt of VisionSafe. (Photo courtesy of Eli Stepp)

BizAvJets USA recently sat down with Alex Werjefelt and Chris Skurat of VisionSafe, a pioneering company with a unique product designed to ensure the safety of pilots during challenging situations. Here are the highlights of the interview.

An Overview of VisionSafe

When asked about the origins of VisionSafe, Alex mentioned that the company was formed in the late '90s. Their main product, the "Emergency Vision Assurance System" (EVAS), was designed to allow pilots to see in the unlikely event of smoke in the cockpit. Over the past two decades, their system has been incorporated into over 90% of domestic cargo.

Family Roots

VisionSafe is a family-owned endeavor. Alex revealed that it was his father who invented the EVAS system. The senior member of the family initially started with a product called Pels, which he eventually sold in order to transition into the inception of VisionSafe.

Chris Skurat's Journey with VISIONSAFE

Chris shared that he has been with the company for four years. Prior to joining VisionSafe, Chris had a 25-year stint with AMSTAT business aircraft market research organization. He expressed his admiration for VisionSafe's commitment to aviation safety.

Understanding the EVAS System

Alex and Chris provided a deeper dive into understanding the workings of the EVAS system. It's primarily an inflatable tunnel that ensures a clear line of sight for the pilot when the cockpit fills with smoke. The system uses an independent power source, drawing in the compromised air, filtering it, and filling up the inflatable unit. This process ensures that the pilot has a clear vision of the instrument panel and flight path.

Also explained during the interview was practicalities such as the system's attachment to the glare shield using Velcro, ensuring it remains securely in place during critical scenarios. The design accommodates the presence of aircraft controls, ensuring pilots have unhindered access during operation.

Continued on Page 19

VISIONSAFE

Continued from Page 18

Installation Insights

When it comes to installation, VisionSafe prides itself on simplicity. The EVAS system can be installed within a short time span, ranging from half an hour to a couple of hours, depending on the aircraft model. One advantage is the system's independent power source, eliminating the need for intricate electrical work during setup.

An interesting revelation during the discussion was the system's widespread acceptance. With around hundreds of installations annually, a majority of these are from new aircraft manufacturers, with Gulfstream even making it a standard equipment on the Gulfstream G650. The system is also installed in aftermarket aircraft.

Real-World Applications

VisionSafe's system isn't just a theoretical solution; it has proven its mettle in real-life situations. Alex and Chris recounted instances where pilots, even before fully

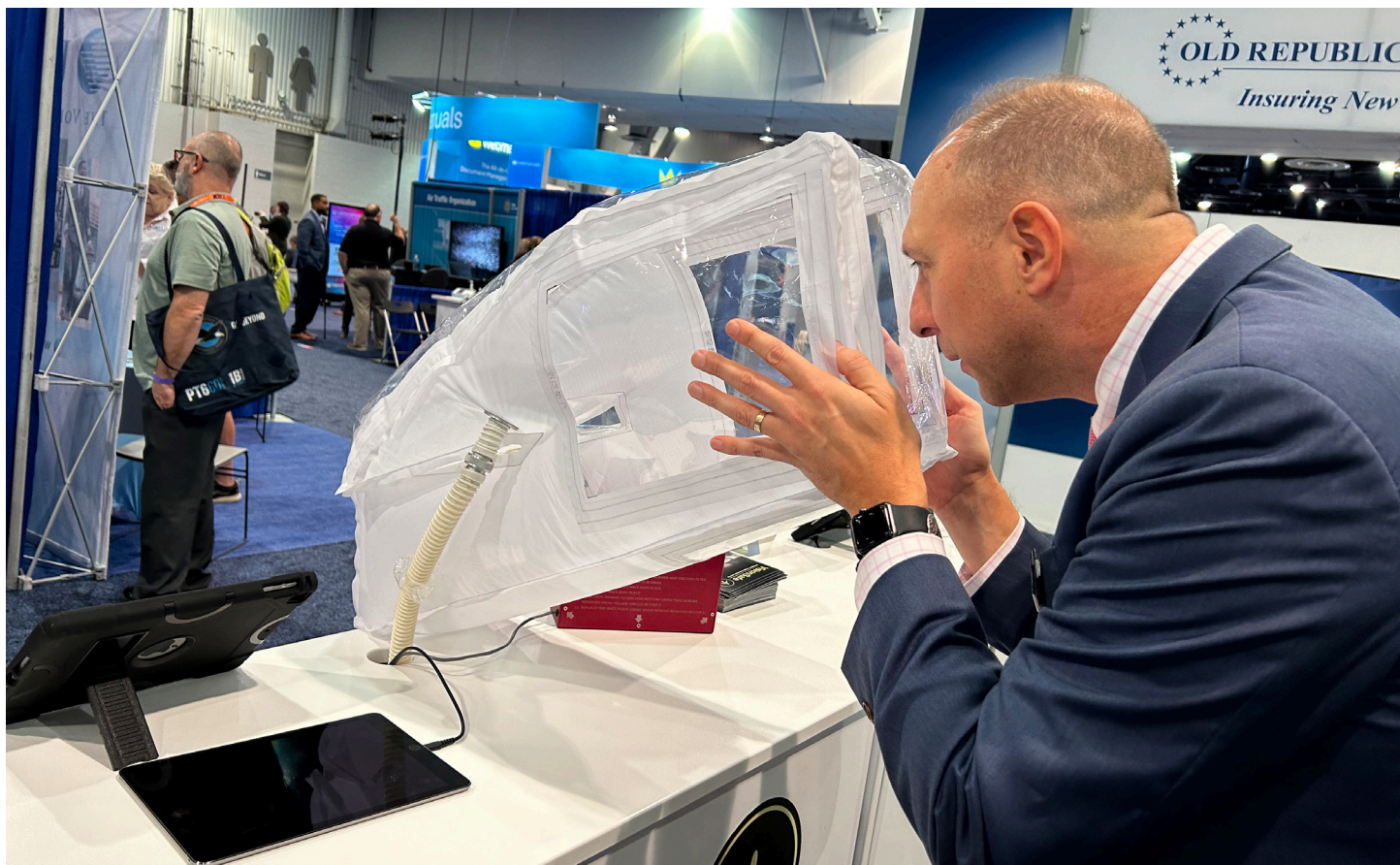
deploying the EVAS system, felt a surge of confidence and assurance knowing that they have a safety net in case the situation deteriorates.

In Conclusion

In a world where safety is paramount, innovations like the EVAS system by VisionSafe are not just welcome but essential. As aviation continues to evolve, companies like VisionSafe underscore the importance of proactive safety measures, ensuring that the skies remain as safe as ever. BizAvJets USA Magazine wishes the best to everyone at VisionSafe.



VisionSafe QR Code to Video Content (Photo courtesy of Eli Stepp)



Chris Skurat of VisionSafe demonstrating simulated system deployment. (Photo courtesy of Eli Stepp)



Tecnam brought its aircraft to the outdoor display at Henderson Executive Airport (HND) during 2023 NBAA-BACE. (Photo credit: NBAA)

NBAA-BACE Demonstrates: Business Aviation Is Climbing Fast

The National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) on Oct. 19 concluded a momentous 2023 Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (NBAA-BACE), underscoring the industry's mission to achieve net-zero flight, and celebrating the trailblazers and technology building toward that future. NBAA-BACE was held at the Las Vegas Convention Center and Henderson Executive Airport Oct. 17-19.

Sustainability permeated the agenda all week, with a dozen leaders from across the industry leveraging business aviation's largest event to launch a new initiative, Climbing. Fast., affirming the entire sector's commitment to net-zero emissions by 2050. "At NBAA-BACE we made clear: business aviation is on a mission to net zero – and we are Climbing. Fast.," said NBAA President and CEO Ed Bolen.

The game-changing advances delivering a sustainable future of airborne mobility were on vivid display, on both the show floor and in the air. For the first time ever, electric air taxis soared over the aircraft display at Henderson Executive Airport (HND), in demonstration flights each day by advanced air mobility (AAM) pioneer Volocopter of its 2X multirotor personal air vehicle.

Henderson and the Las Vegas Convention Center set the stage for the many amazing new aircraft unveiled at NBAA-BACE, including the Textron Aviation's Cessna Citation CJ3 Gen2, the Honda Echelon and Embraer Phenom 100EX, as well as the convention debuts of the Airbus ACJ220, the Beechcraft Denali and Bombardier's certified pre-owned Challenger 300.

"NBAA-BACE brought together the thrilling innovations and industry visionaries shaping the future of aviation," said Bolen. "We had a huge number of exciting product launches, and showcased the breakthroughs in propulsion, increasingly efficient aircraft and sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) that are cutting emissions while transforming mobility."

The show also made clear that business aviation's drive to decarbonize is built on a foundation of safety. In a keynote discussion with Bolen, National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Chair Jennifer Homendy and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Deputy Administrator Katie Thomson detailed their work with business aviation stakeholders to continually enhance aviation safety and efficiency.

Held throughout NBAA-BACE, the annual

Continued on Page 21

NBAA-BACE

Continued from Page 20



Innovative new sustainable aviation technology, such as Volocopter's 2X two-seater electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft got plenty of attention at the outdoor aircraft display at Henderson Executive Airport (HND) during 2023 NBAA-BACE. (Photo credit: NBAA)

Single-Pilot Safety Standdown, the Small Operators Symposium and the National Safety Forum addressed risk management, preventing runway excursions and cultivating leadership in small flight departments.

More than 800 exhibitors showcased stunning concepts, including the unmanned aircraft systems and AAM vehicles in the Emerging Tech Pavilion from VoltAero, Wisk and others. Just outside the convention center, BLADE Urban Air Mobility returned with its popular flights to the airport, offering a look at evolving on-demand aviation models.

In moving keynotes, barrier-breaking aviators captivated crowds. Retired Col. Nicole Malachowski shared how she overcame hurdles and self-doubt to become the U.S. Air Force's first female Thunderbird pilot. Wildly successful aviator and entrepreneur Jared Isaacman talked with his fellow civilian astronaut Dr. Sian Proctor about their historic journey into space.

Exhilarating journeys were commemorated throughout the show, with three aircraft used to film the blockbuster film *Top Gun: Maverick* parked on the show floor: an Aero L-39 "Cinejet," Embraer Phenom 300 Camera Jet and an Airbus H125 Camera Helicopter.

Tennis superstars and powerhouse philanthropists Andre Agassi and Stefanie Graf also inspired keynote audiences, as did Shark Tank investor and FUBU CEO Daymond John, with stories of triumphing over adversity and making meaningful change in peoples' lives.

Further illustrating the sector's commitment to decarbonization, SAF was available at all three Las Vegas-area airports. All turbine aircraft departed with the renewable fuel, which can reduce net-carbon emissions by up to 80 percent. Also as part of the show,

78 leading companies took the NBAA-BACE Exhibitor Sustainability Pledge, entailing a variety of actions to shrink their carbon footprint and reduce waste.

A number of convention sessions provided insights from government leaders who outlined the FAA's partnership with industry to decarbonize and enable new modes of flight, including Shannetta Griffin, FAA associate administrator for airports; David Boulter, FAA associate administrator for aviation safety; Paul Fontaine, FAA assistant administrator for NextGen; Tim Arel, chief operating officer of the FAA's Air Traffic Organization and; Jeffrey Vincent, FAA executive director of the UAS Integration Office.

NBAA-BACE was also where the next generation of business aviation leaders found nearly endless pathways for turning a passion into a profession. Students and career-seekers had the chance to discuss job and internship possibilities with recruiters at the Collegiate Connect gathering and the first-ever, two-day NBAA Career Fair. At the inaugural NBAA-BACE maintenance competition, run by Flying Classroom's Bombardier Academy, students from across the country tested their skills for fun and prizes.



For the first time, NBAA-BACE included a new, raised viewing and photography platform in 2023, offering an impressive view of the entire outdoor static aircraft showcase at Henderson Executive Airport. (Photo credit: NBAA).

"This year's NBAA-BACE was unforgettable on every level," said Bolen. "We saw history in the making, with new types of carbon-free aircraft taking flight, a new advocacy initiative launched to champion the industry's mission to net-zero flying, and a new generation of leaders making this industry all their own. This incredible week, the future started to become reality."

NBAA will return to Las Vegas for next year's edition of NBAA-BACE from Oct. 22-24, 2024. More information is available at nbaa.org/2024.

Airlines Draw Pilots

Continued from Page 17

inspections of geared turbofan engines made by Pratt & Whitney.

FAPA also noted that Spirit Airlines is talking about offering voluntary leave for cabin crewmembers.

For some pilots, corporate aviation gig work is the answer. Owen Leipelt, a corporate pilot, enjoys the experience he gains getting to fly various types of aircraft to locations all over the world and recommends pilots interested in corporate aviation attend networking events like the National Business Aviation Association Business Aviation Convention and Exhibition to learn more about available career opportunities.

“Corporate aviation is all about networking,” Leipelt said. “Saying yes to every opportunity and putting yourself out there. It can be as lucrative as you make it with some incredible experiences you cannot get at the airlines! If you are looking to build time for the airlines, it can also be a great steppingstone gaining valuable experience outside the traffic pattern and up in the flight levels.”

Leipelt is not alone viewing business aviation as a “steppingstone,” and that has increased the pressure on fractional-ownership operator NetJets, amplifying the challenge of attracting and retaining pilot talent. Private and business aviation was once widely viewed as a career to keep until retirement, but that dynamic has shifted.

“Private and business aviation never used to be an entry-level jet job, but that’s exactly what it is right now because there aren’t as many pilots and the biggest thing that they can do to compete with that airline lifestyle is quality of life,” Genc said. “But for the person that absolutely wants to go to the majors or wants to go the jet route who does not want to be a flight instructor, some of these private and business aviation or cargo carriers are really attractive to them.”

Genc added that private and business operators need to be more proactive about attracting talent, like approaching colleges to recruit and showcasing why corporate flight departments and fractional ownership operations are a great place to work.

Director of Graduate Services at California Aeronautical University Raschel Grant said that only about 6 percent of the school’s graduates over the past five years have taken jobs in business aviation. “The majority of our graduates are working for the airlines,” Grant said.

“I think we’re seeing so little movement towards business aviation because corporate opportunities are underrepresented,” Grant continued. “We’d love to be able to better promote these opportunities on campus and provide our students clear pathways to all sectors of aviation.”

According to Sheryl Barden, president and CEO of Aviation Personnel International, many charter

companies are hiring lower-time pilots than they used to. Where business aviation jobs traditionally required 3,000 hours and an airline transport pilot certificate, “... now we’re looking at perhaps bringing people in younger. Not as a solution to the pilot shortage but more as a well-rounding for the flight department, keeping the flight department multi-generational. “Bringing in newer low-time pilots, according to Barden,

means more work to make sure the newer pilot is successful — something that NetJets Association of Shared Aircraft Pilots (NJASAP), the union representing NetJets pilots, says NetJets, the largest fractional private business carrier, is struggling with.

Clare Carey, a pilot at NetJets and member of the union negotiating committee, said, “A huge problem that we’re facing right now is while they [NetJets] have chosen to lower the minimums in order to recruit, they have not updated their training footprint to better prepare these young aviators with low time for the high paced dynamic environment that is working for NetJets. And then on top of that, these low time pilots come here with



Pilots in the cockpit of a commercial jet. (Photo courtesy of @DCStudio)

Continued on Page 23

Airlines Draw Pilots

Continued from Page 22

the plan to earn their time and move on...”

NetJets provided a written statement in response to questions: “In the U.S., NetJets has hired more than 600 aviators this year alone. With plans to welcome additional pilots through the end of 2023, NetJets is on track to reach its established pilot hiring goal. Aviators who join NetJets remain with NetJets, with over 90 [percent] staying year after year and often referring their peers.”

Another trend in business aviation Barden mentioned is in pilot retention. Some companies are implementing retention initiatives like higher pay; retention bonuses; and long-term incentives like stock grants, equity, restricted stop options, and more.

NBAA’s new compensation survey reported a 12-percent increase in pay for pilots and a 7.22-percent increase in overall business aviation positions from 2022 to 2023; pay for aviation managers who do not fly and senior flight attendants decreased. The survey also found “the average captain received long-term retention bonuses of around \$27,000 per year.”

The NJASAP Negotiating Committee published a bargaining update to its membership in October that reported a negotiation breakdown. NJASAP President

Pedro Leroux told AOPA in an email, “Obviously, NJASAP is exceedingly frustrated by the company’s refusal to make competitive adjustments like market-rate wages and quality of life to the current collective bargaining agreement. To assume a position that does absolutely nothing to position the Fractional to retain experienced aviators amid the most competitive environment for pilot labor in a generation — and whilst attempting to support a growth plan that would double the size of the fleet — is mystifying. Plainly stated, we view the company’s head-in-the-sand posture as a strategic mistake that compromises the brand’s continued status as the global leader in private air transportation.”

With salary negotiations at NetJets stalled, NJASAP told AOPA in an interview that the company has seen attrition rates nearly double, from around 4 percent to over 7 percent this year. NetJets did not directly address pilot retention rates in its written statement.

“With an unmatched scale and operations excellence, NetJets, a Berkshire Hathaway company, has resolute financial strength and stability,” the company said. “NetJets is uniquely able to sustain ongoing responsible growth that supports its team members and elevates the travel experience of its customers.”

Conversely, Kenn Ricci, principal of Directional Aviation Capital, the parent company of fractional carrier Flexjet, told Robb Report, “It cost us \$30 million to raise our pilots’ salaries. We’ll have to do that regularly to stay competitive in the marketplace.”

Brigitta Hoeferle

Continued from Page 13

lines and waits are long. I see myself owning one, only if I can use it for charitable purposes to benefit others as well as my own business.

BAJUSA: Great answer! I can tell you’ve thought about this. It really is an expense. There are companies who have profited by the branding and things of that nature. But again, it has to make sense to do it, and it is expensive. On the other hand, if there are humanitarian efforts or charity that you can do with it, that may be a different thought process. Obviously, we have to live with dollars and cents, but there are times we’ll go ahead and spend more to help more. So anyway, cool!

BH: You have to look at it this way, “When I fly somewhere, my time is valuable. How much time am I wasting on Delta or any other airline that would fly

me wherever I need to go? My time is money. And as you said, it’s an investment. The plane itself is an investment. The parking of the plane is an investment. The maintenance of the plane is an investment. I think from where I’m standing right now, it makes a lot more sense for me to charter than to own.

BAJUSA: I certainly agree. I just ask that far-ranging question to different people that do interviews with us to see what their thought process is and how big they think they’ll get. When I say big, I mean successful. You are right. Usually what happens for businesses like yours is that you’ll charter and then if it makes sense, maybe you’ll do a fractional. If your business does well, maybe you’ll go ahead and pursue full ownership. Right now, there are different options available. This year, it’s 80 percent. If you buy a jet, there’s a bonus depreciation you get right off. It will depreciate 80 percent all in one year. That has been a driver, and that’s going to be reduced in the next few years anyway. Good luck to you and thank you!

SAFETY COVERS



- Trailing Edge Covers
- Antenna Covers
- Static Wick Covers
- Full Protection Kits
- Lift/Stand Covers
- Wing Mats

And more.....

TRISOFT
AIRCRAFT COVERS

800-844-2371
sales@trisoftcovers.com

www.trisoftcovers.com