

# COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

## ✈ ✈ ✈ Plane Talk ✈ ✈ ✈

The Official Newsletter of the Combat Air Museum

Forbes Field Topeka, Kansas

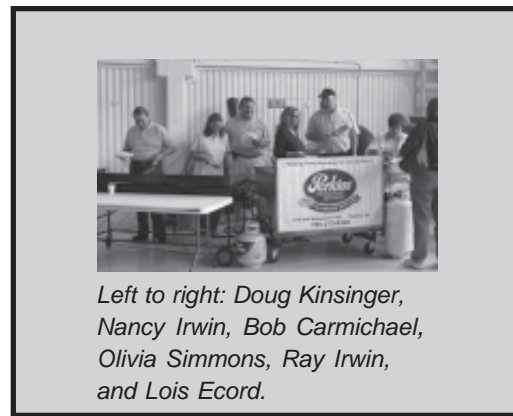
June / July 2010 • Vol. 26, No. 3

### Annual Celebrity Pancake Feed offers food and fun

We took in 539 tickets for this year's Celebrity Pancake Feed. Our net proceeds were \$2,963.85. Our expenses were \$1,025.90. Of the net proceeds, over \$1,485 were from the Silent Auction.

Twenty-seven celebrities took part in the event as flippers and servers. Entertainment was provided by the **Topeka Santa Fe Band** and the **Beverley Bernardi Post Conservatory of Dance and Pom**. "Mr. Ichabod," the mascot from **Washburn University**, and "Reggie," the mascot from the **Topeka Roadrunners** ice hockey team, circulated among the crowd. The **190th Air Refueling Wing**, Kansas Air National Guard, provided a KC-135R *Stratotanker* for tours, and several vehicles from the **Rolling Thunder** chapter of the **Military Vehicle Preservation Association** were available for viewing. **Sergeant Michael Mathewson** of the **Civil Air Patrol** had an exhibit and information table set up inside Hangar 602. **Ken Pringle**, owner of the F-111 Aardvark crew capsule, came up from Hartford, Kansas, and opened up the capsule for visitors to look at while answering questions and visiting with the viewers.

**Bob Carmichael** of the **Perkins Restaurant** was the chief flipper and coach. Bob and Perkins provided the pancake mix, sausage, syrup, butter, and grills.



Left to right: Doug Kinsinger, Nancy Irwin, Bob Carmichael, Olivia Simmons, Ray Irwin, and Lois Ecord.

One hundred and twenty items were donated for the Silent Auction. Most of these were sold. For items that did not sell, donors had the option to take them back or leave them with the Museum. Those that were left are currently for sale in the Gift Shop. **Marlene Urban** and **Dick Trupp** set up the Silent Auction and say thanks to everyone who donated items and to the volunteers who helped run it.

See "Pancake Feed," con't. on page 3



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## Combat Air Museum

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### *Museum Curator*

Danny San Romani

### *Office Manager*

### *Board of Directors*

Gene Howerter - *Chairman*

Dave Murray - *Vice Chairman*

Tad Pritchett - *Secretary*

Les Carlson

Don Dawson

Stu Entz

Raymond Irwin

Doug Jacobs

Ted Nolde

Dick Trupp

### *Museum Hours*

January 2 - February 28/29

Mon. - Sun. Noon - 4:30 P.M.

Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.

March 1 - December 31

Mon. - Sat. 9 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.

Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.

Closed New Year's Day, Easter,

Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

### *Newsletter*

### *Editing & Design*

Toni Dixon

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**Plane Talk**, the official newsletter

of Combat Air Museum

of Topeka, Kansas,

is published bi-monthly.

Your comments are welcomed.

## In Memoriam

William G. "Bill"

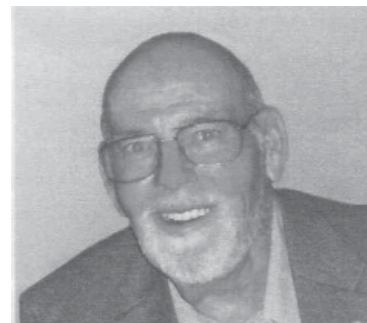
**Ballentine**

# 3038

Sixteen year

membership

1929 - 2010



Combat Air Museum and its volunteers lost a valued friend in May when **Bill Ballentine** died of complications from pneumonia. Bill was one of our regular Gift Shop operators and great supporter of the Museum. He always had a welcoming smile for everyone who came into the Gift Shop, and people always felt better for having talked with Bill. He was a true gentleman.

Bill enlisted in the US Air Force in June 1951. He was commissioned in December 1957 and served as navigator on KC-97 *Stratotanker* and C-130 *Hercules* aircraft. He retired as a Major in 1973. Curator Danny San Romani often brought navigation related donations into the Gift Shop to show Bill and learn something about their respective uses.

Bill went back to college and received a degree in Special Education in 1980. For the next 22 years he worked with and taught troubled youth in Topeka's school district at the Shawnee County Youth Center and the Alternate Education Program. His teaching limited his early volunteering at CAM to mostly weekends, but after a second retirement he worked regularly on Tuesdays and frequently on Saturdays.

If you saw a gentleman with a white beard, white Combat Air Museum ball cap, and a bright, multi-color Kansas City Chiefs jacket coming up the sidewalk, that was Bill. If we wanted to have a little fun with him, during the fall we would occasionally tell Bill we had to schedule him to work the Gift Shop on a Sunday, picking a day the Chiefs were playing a home game. His response was always measured, and good natured, but we were told in clear terms he was not available that day.

Last year, Bill had some surgery on the top of his head for skin cancers. It ultimately involved some skin grafting and this left a rather large bandage on his head. It was uncomfortable for him to wear his ball cap, and Bill resorted to a bandana. So, for several sessions, visitors and members alike were greeted in the Gift Shop by CAM's own 79 year old home boy wearing his do-rag. Bill will be in our memories and conversations for years to come.

Bill is survived by his wife of 59 years, **Carol**, also a CAM member, five children, nine grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. ➔

## Visitors

During **March**  
the Museum had  
**1013 visitors**

from **36** states,  
and

Australia

Canada

China

Germany

Japan

Kenya

Peru

During **February**  
we had

**921 visitors**  
from **31** states,  
and

Canada

Chile

Ecuador

Great Britain

Hong Kong (China)

## Celebrity Pancake Feed offers food and fun con't. from page 1



*Beverly Post (back to camera) lines up five meteorologists and three Washburn University football players for a Dancing With the Stars routine.*



*Jeremy Goodwin shows his winning form in the pancake catching contest.*

Five local television meteorologists participated in this year's pancake catching contest. **Members of Washburn University's football team** judged the contest. Bob Carmichael was the flipper and had the weather folks scurrying about to catch his deliveries. **Jeremy Goodwin**, chief meteorologist for WIBW-TV, Channel 13, was judged the winner. **Tom Hagen** of KSNT-TV, Channel 27 was declared

second, and **Ed Bloodworth** of KTKA-TV, Channel 49 was third.

A big thanks goes to **Gene Howerter**, Board chairman, for inviting all the celebrity flippers, including many personal telephone calls, and organizing the event. And, of course, another big thanks to all our volunteers who helped in the preparation, running of the event, who attended the feed, and cleaned up

afterward and moved five aircraft back into the hangar. So ends another successful Pancake Feed. Planning and ideas for making it better for next year have already begun. The 2011 edition, as always, will be on the last Saturday in April. Start thinking now of items to contribute to the Silent Auction, and plan to be part of next year's event.



### **This year's celebrities included:**

Shelly Buhler, Shawnee County commissioner  
 Jerry Moran, US representative  
 Ted Ensley, Shawnee County commissioner  
 Eric Johnson, president, MTAA  
 Lynn Jenkins, US representative  
 Ann Mah, Kansas State representative  
 Jerry Farley, president, Washburn University  
 Oliva Simmons, president/CEO, Visit Topeka  
 Larry Walgast, Topeka City councilman  
 Doug Kinsinger, president, Topeka Chamber of Commerce  
 Bob Archer, Topeka City councilman  
 Kevin Singer, superintendent, USD 501  
 Ben Bauman, co-anchor KTKA-TV

Ed Bloodworth, meteorologist, KTKA-TV  
 Ashley Meene, meteorologist, KTKA-TV  
 Frank Waugh, meteorologist, KSNT-TV  
 H.R. Cook, general manager, Topeka Expo centre  
 Brian Folkerts, Washburn University offensive tackle  
 Stephanie Ramos, anchor/reporter, WIBW-TV  
 Greg Schoenberg, Washburn University fullback  
 Tom Hagen, meteorologist, KSNT-TV  
 Ty Lewis, Washburn University offensive center  
 Jeremy Goodwin, chief meteorologist, WIBW-TV  
 Raymond and Nancy Irwin, Heartland Park Topeka  
 Richard Harmon, Topeka City councilman  
 Kelli Stegman, co-anchor, KSNT-TV



**Visit our website at [www.combatairmuseum.org](http://www.combatairmuseum.org)**

## National History Day contestants visit CAM for Membership Luncheon

*Left to right: Susan Sittenauer, Kathryn Brooks, Caitlyn Priddy, and Gina Mosser*



**Caitlyn Priddy, Gina Mosser, and Kathryn Brooks of Seaman High School** were our guest presenters for the April Membership Luncheon. They were accompanied by their history teacher, **Susan Sittenauer**. The three young ladies presented their entries for the National History Day contest. Caitlyn had a solo presentation while Gina and Kathryn worked together on their project. The three had competed in the state regional, and all were headed for the state finals. This year's theme was "Innovation in History."

Caitlyn began the presentation. She was entered in the Senior Individual Documentary and had produced a digital video disc (DVD) documentary titled *Radio: On the Air*. Caitlyn had to script, narrate, produce, and edit a DVD that could run no more than 10 minutes time. The goal was to get as close to 10 minutes as possible. Besides the narration, Caitlyn added background music, and put a compilation of period photos on the disc. Until this project, she had never made a DVD.

The disc covered the golden age of radio in the 1930s and 1940s. During the Great Depression, radio allowed a means of escape for the listening audience. The DVD mentioned the extremely popular Amos and Andy radio show. Caitlyn's narration spoke about how water pressure in cities and towns was affected during the show, as people stopped using water during the show, then pressure went back up afterward. She also commented on the racist and ethnic nature of the show.

Giving an example of the popularity of radio in the 1930s, Caitlyn stated there

were more radios in 1938 than there were indoor bathrooms or cars. She said that radios were often referred to as Marconis after the Italian who did much to develop wireless telegraphy.

In the 1920s and early 1930s, sports were the main venue on the airwaves. One of the first sports broadcasts was of the America's Cup yacht racing. Boxing was also a favorite in the 1920s. Baseball, and especially the World Series, was popular, as was college football. In the 1920s, radio had much to do with making the Orange Bowl what it is today.

Business advertisements soon appeared on radio because of the size of the listening audience. General Mills, Mobil Oil, and Goodyear Tires were but a few of the giants who advertised over the radio. Soap Operas were born on radio, called such because of soap company ads aired during the programs.

Caitlyn talked about the impact *War of the Worlds* had when broadcast by Orson Welles on October 30, 1938. The manner in which it was broadcast was said to cause people to leave their homes, thinking a Martian landing had occurred.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt recognized the mass appeal of radio and began his Fireside Chats in 1933 that lasted into 1944. Through radio, FDR made a connection with millions of Americans.

Radio offered job opportunities during the 1920s-1940s. Vaudeville broadcasts were popular. One former vaudevillian used radio to support a bond drive during World War II. Kate Smith was on air from 1 am until 8 am the following day and raised 36 million dollars.

The narration ended by stating that radio is still important today. Its innovation and technology led to television and computers.

In answering questions from the audience, Caitlyn said she did the research and learned on her own how to make the DVD. Her first cut was about 10 minutes 30 seconds, and she found it difficult to figure what to cut in order to lose the extra 30 seconds. She also said she picked radio because it was something around music, but ended up not talking much about music at all.

Gina Mosser and Kathryn Brooks competed in the Senior Group Documentary. They, too, produced a DVD and chose Dorothea Lange, noted photographer of the Great Depression who also greatly influenced modern documentary photography. And like Caitlyn, Gina and Kathryn had to learn how to produce their DVD.

Their documentary included a brief outline of Dorothea Lange's life. She contracted polio when seven years old that left her with a permanent limp. After photography schooling in New York City, she launched her career in 1918 and opened her own studio in 1929. But the Great Depression had its economic effect, and Lange found she was unable to provide for her two sons, who were sent to a boarding school.

In 1935, she divorced and remarried, and with her second husband, began work for the federal Resettlement Administration (later the Farm Security Administration) documenting and photographing sharecroppers, displaced farmers, and migrant workers. In March



1936 Lange took her most famous photograph, that of a migrant mother with three children in a pea picker's camp. Lange did not ask the woman's name or her history. She did learn her age and found that the woman had just sold the tires from her car to buy food. After the photograph was published, some 20,000 pounds of food was distributed to the poor.

Other photographs by Lange during the Great Depression included riots and strikes in San Francisco and another photograph in that city known as the White Angel Breadline photo. She was

known for her appreciation for the ordinary and empathy towards the people she photographed.

Lange was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship for excellence in photography in 1941. The documentary said she continued her career in far eastern cultures during 1950-1960, and died of cancer in 1965 at age 70.

Like Caitlyn, Gina and Kathryn said their DVDs were too long. They were just 15 seconds over 10 minutes, but it was difficult to find those 15 seconds to cut out. When asked if the judges gave

feedback about documentaries, all three students said that the judges gave a lot of feedback to improve their DVD formats. Between competitions, students can re-work their projects.

One question was to Susan Sittenauer about the national competition held at the University of Maryland at College Park. Susan has taken students to this competition several years running. Susan said that as of now, there will be no more money for entries or travel to nationals after this year. ➔

## Our next Membership Luncheon speaker

**Lieutenant Colonel Doug Jacobs (Ret)** is our guest speaker for the June 14 Membership Luncheon. Lt. Col. Jacobs is a member of CAM's Board of Directors, and is command historian for the Museum of the Kansas National Guard. He will be speaking to us about a ceremony he attended in October 2009 in Remicourt, France that commemorated and honored the 91st Anniversary of the World War I Remicourt Aerodrome and members of the United States Army Air Service 50th Aero Observation Squadron that was stationed at the Aerodrome. Two Congressional Medal of Honor recipients came from that squadron, **Lieutenants Harold Goettler** and **Erwin Bleckley**. Bleckley was a former Field Artillery officer in the Kansas National Guard. Because of this, Lt. Col. Jacobs was part of a delegation from the Kansas National Guard who attended the ceremonies.

Lt. Col Jacobs will talk about his trip, the history of Lt. Erwin Bleckley, and the circumstances for which he was awarded the Medal of Honor. The lunch will start at 11:30 am in the Jean Wanner Education Conference Room. ➔

## MVPA convention coming in July

The 35th annual **Military Vehicle Preservation Association** (MVPA) convention will be held in Topeka July 8-10, 2010, at the Topeka Expocentre. It will be hosted by the MVPA's *Rolling Thunder* affiliate, based in Topeka.

Activities on Thursday, July 8 include a Military Museum Tour from 8:45 am to 1:45 pm. The tour includes the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas Air National Guard, then a tour of the Kansas National Guard Museum, followed by a box lunch served at Combat Air Museum. For further information go to [www.mvpa.org](http://www.mvpa.org) or call 800-365-5798. ➔

## June/July Calendar of Events

### June

#### Monday - Thursday, June 7-10

Aviation Education Class  
Jean Wanner Education Conference Room  
9 am - 12 pm

#### Monday June 14 Flag Day

Membership Luncheon  
Jean Wanner Education Conference Room  
11:30 am  
Our guest speaker is LT COL Doug Jacobs  
(Ret)  
a CAM Board Member and command  
historian  
of the Museum of the Kansas National  
Guard

### July

#### Thursday, July 8

Military Vehicle Preservation Association  
box lunch and tours.

#### Monday - Thursday, July 12 - 15

Aviation Education Class  
Jean Wanner Education Conference Room  
9 am - 12 pm  
There is no Membership Luncheon in July.

## Projects and new artifacts add to the Museum

### Screen Doors

**Dick Trupp** and **Jim Braun** have installed four new screen doors in the hangars, one in 602 and three in 604. Each door has had some custom work done to it to fit its respective door frame. After the first few were in, **Bob Kelly** noticed while conducting a tour that people tended to push the door open by pushing the screen and not the door handle. Bob bought and donated metal grill works for each door to protect the screens, and these have been installed. Dick and Jim have one more door to install in 602.

### Drone Engine

**Don Dawson** and **Gene Howerter** finished their respective work on the McCulloch O-100 drone engine reported on in the previous issue of *Plane Talk*. Don installed the propeller and mounted the engine on a stand. It is now on exhibit in hangar 604.

### Paint Booth

**Bob Crapser**, **Don Dawson**, and **Danny San Romani** have been converting a portable garage into a parts paint booth. The booth is in the northeast corner of Hangar 602. Lighting has been installed, and the preliminary work for an exhaust system is installed. A floor tarp has been purchased for installation. This will be taped to the walls of the garage to form a nearly sealed enclosure. Then the ventilation system will be tested for effectiveness. Member donations are funding this project.

In the meantime, Don built an A-frame assembly for hanging parts to be painted. It is 12 feet long and has an adjustable height from five feet to seven and one-half feet.

### F-86H

**Robert Johnston** delivered more painted assemblies for the *Sabre* prior to departing on six months temporary duty.

### Artifacts

**Tad Pritchett** and **Danny San Romani** traveled to Olathe, Kansas on April 30 to pick up some artifacts for the Museum. Danny received a phone call in March from **Ms. Jennifer Madison** of the headquarters of Applebee's restaurants. She told Danny that an Applebee's restaurant located by the Great Mall of the Great Plains in Olathe was going to be remodeled, and they had artifacts from the Old Olathe Naval Air Museum that had been displayed on the walls to return to us. Old Olathe Naval Air Museum (OONAM) closed in 2004 and we acquired the majority of their collection in February of that year. Until Ms. Madison's phone call, we had no idea artifacts from OONAM had been loaned to the restaurant. Ms. Madison and Danny made arrangements to have him pick up the artifacts in April. Danny told Tad Pritchett about the trip and Tad offered to go along and drive his SUV in case there were some large and/or a number of items.

Then Danny received an email from a **Ms. Sherrilyn Gerdel** who was offering to donate a field chapel communion kit used by her father that was issued to him in 1958. He was an Air Force chaplain, and she wrote that he had been a chaplain at Forbes Air Force Base during the 1960s and early 1970s until his retirement in 1973. Danny responded that he would be at the Museum with the exception of the date he was going to Olathe to pick up some artifacts. Ms. Gerdel quickly responded that she taught at Olathe North High School and asked if Danny could stop by the school to pick up the field kit. Danny replied that he would fit that in. Danny contacted Tad with the new information.

Tad and Danny made the trip to Olathe on April 30 and found Jennifer

Madison as she was moving items from a storage unit. She gave Tad and Danny some of the artifacts from the unit, and they retrieved the rest from inside the restaurant. After Danny signed some release papers, Tad and he traveled a few miles to Olathe North High School. They signed in at the school and Sherrilyn Gerdel met them. She had the kit but asked that Tad and Danny go to an area of the school with a large wooden eagle to have some pictures taken. Ms. Gerdel, Tad, and Danny, with the chaplain kit open, had their pictures taken by a student photographer in front of the eagle. With that done, Tad and Danny loaded up and traveled back to the Museum.

The trip was productive. Artifacts from Applebee's included some photographs and framed documents, a 1950s vintage Navy flight helmet, a montage of patches, caps, and Naval Air Station Olathe memorabilia, and a two-blade metal propeller with bent tips.

The field chapel kit looks like a small carry on suitcase. It is black with U.S. stenciled on it. A tag inside indicates it was first issued in 1957. This kit will complement chaplain kits from World War II and the 1980s. ➔

## 2010 Events Calendar

*Dates subject to change*

### June

7 - 10 Aviation Education Class

### July

8 Military Vehicle Preservation Association Box Luncheon and tours.

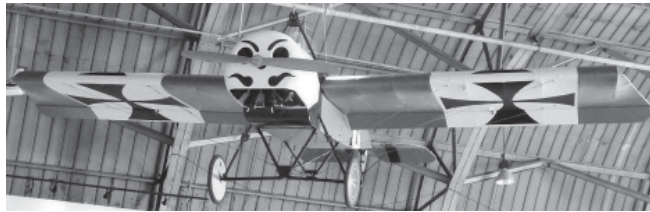
12 - 15 Aviation Education Class

### August

2 - 5 Aviation Education Class

### September

25 Winged Foot 5K Fun Run/Walk



## The Pfalz E1 flies in Hangar 602

We suspended the replica *Pfalz E1* German World War I scout fighter in Hangar 602 on April 20. This aircraft was donated to CAM in November 2009 by **Mr. Robert Baslee** of Holden, Missouri.

Five aircraft were moved out of the hangar in preparation for the Pancake Feed, and we used this opportunity to get the *Pfalz* hung. **Dick Trupp** had arranged the loan of a deicer bucket truck and driver from Million Air Topeka, a fixed base operator on Forbes Field, for that day. **Don Dawson** had the beam clamp, chain hoist and cable all set to go, and **Gene Howerter** gave the plane a washing the previous week.

Earlier in the month we used the fork lift to raise the aircraft off the floor and check its balance. We found it was tail heavy, so additional cables were added to bring the aircraft in a slightly nose down "flying" attitude. With that done, everything was ready to make the lift to the rafters.

Don and **Danny San Romani** rode the bucket lift up to the rafters to install the beam clamp and hang the chain hoist from the clamp. They then came down to hook the cable assembly to the hoist chain. Danny go out of the bucket to put

a tag line on the tail wheel assembly, and **Bob Crapser** got into the bucket with Don to go back up and start hoisting the *Pfalz*.

Don and Bob hoisted the 3/4 scale replica to a height above the floor the same as the replica *Taube* and *Nieuport* 27. Danny tied off the tag line so that the *Pfalz* is directed toward the *Nieuport*.

Once the suspension was done, we then used the bucket lift to raise two electricians from Shockwave Electric of Topeka to check four ceiling lights that were not operating properly. They found that the capacitor in each of the lights had gone bad, and the lights were brought to the floor to effect repairs. There were remounted and all four worked correctly.

We thank Million Air Topeka for the donated use of their bucket truck and driver. Without that lift capability, hanging these aircraft from the rafters, and in this case, repairing the lights, would be an expensive affair.

We now have 12 aircraft on the floor and three in the air inside Hangar 602. Next in the works is the possibility of acquiring a full scale replica of a World War I *Fokker E-III*. Gene Howerter is working on this prospect. ➔

## New Supporters

Shelly Buhler  
Michael & Tammie DeBernardin  
Ed, Kate, Nate & Heather Elder  
Loren, Lynda, Lyle  
& Leah Fisher  
Joseph Henry  
David Moffet  
Bill & Beverly Newman  
Tim Pecenkia

## Renewing Supporters

Oscar Albrecht Family  
Dale Anderson  
Jim & Mary Braun  
Marty, Terry, Katherine, Andrew & Matthew Braun  
Marcella Briery  
Robert & Barbara Buntin  
Anderson Chandler  
Ron & Linda Coash  
Bill Davis  
Wayne Dodson  
Donald & Olga Fluke  
Tom & Diane Gorrell  
Phil Hotzel  
Paul Idol  
Robert & Peggy McKitterick  
John & Rita Moyer  
Dan Pulliam  
Wayne Probasco  
Marion Raper  
Thomas & Carole Rost  
Chris, Clariss & Adam Rundel  
Danny San Romani  
Gerald & Jane Sliter  
Craig & Kathy Stevenson  
James, Kellie, Dylan  
& Alexa Tinsley  
Dick & Jeanne Trupp  
Dr. Rees, Kathy, Luke, Morgan & Karsen Webber  
William Welch

Join the  
Combat Air  
Museum!

## Changes in our newsletter reflect a loss of city funds and a tightening of our belt

You may notice there are changes to *Plane Talk*. This is a reflection of economics. For the past three years, the Museum was a recipient of Transient “Bed” Tax monies from the city of Topeka. We received several thousand dollars each of these years from bed tax money, paid in quarterly installments. Those monies are now no longer available to us.

Bed Tax money was not just handed out to Topeka attractions. In fact, it was a paperwork intensive process. We had to apply for the money each year by essentially writing a grant request. And the city declared that the money could only be spent on promotion and advertising of the respective attraction. Quarterly reports were required, detailing how the money was spent. The costs of publish-

ing *Plane Talk* fell under museum promotion. **Gene Howerter** and **Dave Murray** were our primary document writers for getting the money and doing the required reports. **Lois Ecord** and **Les Carlson** kept track of where the money was spent. It was a good financially for the Museum.

Then last year, Visit Topeka, our convention and visitors bureau, campaigned to the city that they should get all the bed tax money excepting that marked for Heartland Park Topeka, the Topeka Expocentre, and the Great Overland Station. In turn, Visit Topeka would use the money to do all the advertising for Topeka and its attractions. The city council agreed to this proposal, and beginning this year, we could no longer request bed tax money as an individual entity.

Any money now spent by the

Museum for advertising and for publishing *Plane Talk* comes out of our general fund. **Dave Murray** did a study of last year’s finances and found that our total membership dues did not cover the costs of publishing the newsletter. We have to make changes to reduce expenses.

One goal is to limit each issue of *Plane Talk* to eight pages. You may already notice that the font (print) is smaller, as are the images. This issue is the first try, and there are sure to be adjustments made. We will still strive to keep you informed of the happenings at the Museum, but perhaps not with as much depth, especially when reporting on presentations given at the luncheons.

When additional information is available that would not fit in the newsletter, we will provide it on the Internet. ➔