



Big Easy Wing



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Volume 10-Issue 1

January 11, 2026

Unit Leader—Bill Triay



Welcome to 2026!

I'm starting out my first month as unit leader and trying to learn the ropes as soon as possible. Thanks to all who have

helped. I met with Bruce and he has approved of our invitation for the April appreciation for all of the FAA controllers; he promised to distribute our flyers to help. I also applied for my Lakefront Airport entry badge and when I get that authorization, I'll be able to authorize any other people who need one. I am open to ideas.

This year should be a great flying adventure. We'll have our poker run, our annual Father's Day/British car show and hopefully other flying events. Don't forget this year the United States is celebrating **its 250th anniversary**. We will be incorporating this anniversary throughout the year. As of now the board has agreed to lower the *\$300 city flight to \$250* in honor of this Anniversary. By now, everyone has heard Jared spencer is now one of our pilots. Thus, we can offer more Stearman flight days.



I have also contacted several people who are interested in putting their planes in our hangar. We just need to come up with a plan that will allow them to come and go with their planes without interfering with our operations. I think with a little training for the new people a system for taking the planes in and out of the hangar can be worked out. We will be adding this training to our Ground School.

January 17th –NOAA

Membership 10am

BD meeting 11:30



COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE

Big Easy Wing
8550 Lloyd Stearman Dr.
New Orleans, LA 70126
Next to FAA tower

Contact us:
info@bigeasywing.org

On the web:
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Wing leader continues

We have a confirmed buyer for our Stuka. Hopefully this transaction can be completed soon. I will be working with the CAF to ensure the allocation of the funds to either our debts or to another aircraft.

Anyone who has any information that they would like to share or ideas on how to make our wing more profitable and ways to recruit new members let me know. Please make every effort to come to our January 17th meeting at NOAA. It will be very informative. We hope to sell flights from Slidell airport. Please use these fliers as needed.

FAA TOWER EMPLOYEES APPRECIATION DAY AND WING 8TH ANNIVERSARY
Family Gathering

FOOD | DRINK | MUSIC | GAMES
SATURDAY | 11 TH APRIL | 11 AM

Big Easy Wing Hangar next to FAA Tower

RSVP
Bigeasywingcaf@gmail.com
Cost \$25/person-free for FAA workers and family

Wanted Volunteers
COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE Big Easy Wing

- Aviation enthusiasts
- WWII buff
- Fan of airshows
- Enjoys working with youth
- Values STEM eg Flight Simulators

We are currently inviting people who are interested in the above list to become members of our Wing. As a member you will have the opportunity to get involved with our STEM Aviation Classes and work with local youth groups.

We need help with :

- Flight Days/Airshows
- General maintenance
- Flight simulator
- Aviation History Classes
- Cooking
- Events

Make a difference Join Us!

Location: 8550 Lloyd Stearman Dr. next to fire station
Meet: 2nd Saturday of the month

N'AWLINS LADY
1943 Stearman

For questions, please visit:
www.bigeasywing.org or call 504 445 6275

Come Fly with The Big Easy Wing

fly New Orleans

Plane Rides for Sale

N'Awlins Lady, 1943 Stearman
at New Orleans Lakefront Airport
Shoreline Flights for \$150 Superdome Flights \$300
Call: 504-445-5275



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Assistant Operational Officer– Kris Caldwell



Hello Members!

I hope everyone has recovered from the holidays and is ready for Mardi Gras season! Jared is all qualified in the Stearman and ready for some cold weather rides. We had a few rides after our December meeting and Jared found time the next day to take his wife, Skye, for a short ride. I guess to prove to her that he is finally a BEW Stearman pilot. Congratulations!



There are some good field trips lined up for the next couple months. We have the NOAA Weather Station in Slidell on January 17th, and Jared will be flying N'Awlins Lady there to sell rides. On Feb 21st we have a tour of the Seaplane Base at Southern Seaplane in Belle Chasse. There will be rides available in seaplanes but please give me some advance notice.

Also, please make plans to attend our annual ground school on March 14th. Ground School is required by the Commemorative Air Force. Safety above all! We need loadmasters so I suggest everyone to take that class. Looking forward to seeing you in February. I am out of town for a couple of weekends. Happy New Year! Happy Mardi Gras!



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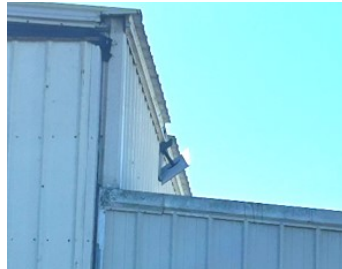


Educational Officer– Roger Jeffrey



Hello Members!

In late December our Starlink Satellite antenna took a hit from high winds and was dislodged from its mounting pole, left to dangle and beat against the hangar wall. I was going to attempt repair during the week between Christmas and New Year, but the winds kept blowing. Finally on Friday January 2nd, along with the assistance of Glenn Metzger and David Capo, I was able to apply a fix, strengthening the mounting pole and attaching some support cables from the pole to the roof of the hangar. IT STILL WORKS! Hopefully, this will make the antenna able to withstand future high winds... time will tell.



Listed below are the members on our 2 Scout training teams:

Team A: Roger Jeffrey
Harold Buchler
Karl Shearer

Team B: David Capo
James Mykris
Richie Gray
Bill Triay

When I set up a date for our next Scout training, I will refer to these teams. It should be Team B since Team A did this last one in January.

Visit to fire department and tower The wing is extremely appreciative of both the fire department and the tower for allowing the Scouts to visit and learn about these career opportunities.

Troop 230 -2nd group from this Troop





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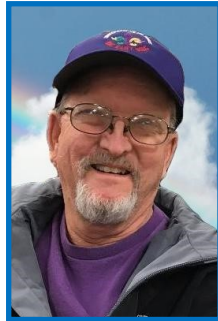
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Safety Officer—Rick Wood



Good Afternoon BEW

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

As we get closer to ground school training, I will be putting emphasis on getting all members certified as loadmasters. I discovered this past year that 3 people are not enough. Having knowledge of the book instruction, completing of certificates and having guest sit in our mock-up aviation seat will not require you to assist passengers getting into plane. Getting on the wing to help passengers will always depend on one's physical capabilities.

With our strange weather conditions this winter, we will be flying prior to April. As your safety officer I just want to remind everyone that we all need to be knowledgeable of various flight requirements.

On these flight days we may not have everyone present so it is important for everyone to be willing to do more:

- always keep an eye on people around the plane
- go over the loadmaster manual-check for hold harmless
- have extinguisher ready and out when plane starts
- stay clear of the prop when it is starting up
- be conscience of the prop back wash picking up dust and small rocks,
- chocks must be placed after landing and prior to take off
- help pilot with take and landing by marshalling if needed
- keep guest back as plane lands
- assist with loading and unloading
- always make a point of asking pilot if he needs anything especially water

I hope to see everyone at the next meeting and hope to attend as many events as I can. I am doing as well as expected and modifying my home to accommodate my illness.

Membership –Shirley Colomb



Welcome to 2026! **And welcome William Clark our newest member**

If you are reading this newsletter section, please check to see if you paid your dues for 2026. we still have about 9 members that need to rejoin. If not interested then please let me know and I can remove you from our email list.



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Event Coordinator –Shirley Colomb



Happy Mardi Gras!

Our winter weather has been bizarre and the rains have been fierce at times! However the warmer weather makes flying available sooner but not for this Saturday. We will have to keep an eye on the weather. With 2 pilots at home while Mike is still serving his country, we should be able to set up more flight weekends and events.

This coming weekend Jared will be flying. Bill and I will be advertising this flight day. Flights will follow our meeting. If you know anyone interested in flyng, provide them with this info.



January 17 NOAA– Slidell weather station 62300 Airport Rd 70460 10am

Please shoot me an email if you are coming to the station. They requested a headcount info@bigeasywing.org Teenagers are welcome.

February 21—Southern Seaplane #1 Coquille Dr 70037 10am Kris will be our presenter—flights will be available but Kris will need to know prior to event – contact email is juliekilocharlie@yahoo.com

March 14 Ground School

April 11th Appreciation for our local FAA workers and 8th Anniversary BEW Luncheon -Held at hangar—cost for everyone other than FAA workers is \$25.00

Please send Karl any ideas about what we can do to celebrate the US 250th Anniversary. Rogers plans to discuss this topic with his car club since that has become one of our big events

I am working on some other ideas that I will share with you as it comes to fruition.

Looking forward hearing from you!



Helio H-295 Super Courier

First Impressions: Backcountry pilots everywhere have heard of this almost-mythological bush plane with the exotic name. Its performance seems to defy the laws of physics, even fully loaded. We're not talking about an ultra-lightweight, two-seat fabric plane with gigantic bush tires. The *Helio Courier* can do things no other fixed wing aircraft can and has been doing so for almost 70 years in some of the most remote places on Earth!

Background: The Helio Courier is the brainchild of MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) Professor Otto Koppen. Dr. Koppen was a graduate of MIT and served there for 61 years as Professor of Aeronautics (1929 to 1965) and *Professor Emeritus* (1965 to 1990). Prior to designing the Helio Courier, Dr. Koppen worked at the *Stout Metal Airplane Division of the Ford Motor Company*, where he designed the tiny *Ford Flivver* in 1926 and had a significant role in developing the *Ford Trimotor*. Throughout his teaching career, he was widely considered an authority on aircraft stability and control. He wanted to design a Short Takeoff and Landing (STOL) aircraft that could be flown from very short airstrips. The “airplane in every garage” idea was popular in the late 40s and 50s, and the Helio STOL concept would make it possible for people even from semi-suburban neighborhoods to commute to work, as long as they had access to a small strip... or even a tennis court!

Dr. Koppen's “proof of concept”, Heliplane #1, utilized a modified Piper PA-17 *Vagabond* fuselage with strut-braced, highly modified wings. The wings had leading-edge slats, a lengthened flap span, shortened ailerons, and lengthened main landing gear, giving it a high, three-point angle of attack. Even though the Heliplane #1 utilized a Continental C-85, Professor Koppen knew that a vital key to a short takeoff is low-end torque powering a large diameter prop. He devised a multi-belt, speed reduction unit that, when coupled to a gigantic 9-foot prop (allowed by the lengthened landing gear), developed heaps of static thrust with only 85-horsepower. Dr. Koppen did not subscribe to the theory that STOL airplanes need to be aerodynamically dirty. His self-described “proof-of-concept” two-seat Heliplane was developed into a 145 horsepower, four-seat prototype, sporting relatively low-drag cantilever wings with the flaps and slats retracted. With the big problems



worked out, the Helio Aircraft Company was founded in 1954 and began producing the four-seat (with a fifth optional seat), 260-horsepower H-391B Courier. In 1959, the 290-horsepower GO-480-powered H-395 Super Courier was introduced. The Helio Aircraft Company produced the six-seat H-295 from 1965 to 1974.

Impression continues

Many variants of the Courier were developed, including floatplanes, a tricycle-gear model, turbine-powered *Stallions*, gunship *Stallions*, and even ultra secret *Twin Couriers*. The L-24 and L-28 (later redesignated U-10) were military variants of the H-391 and H-395, respectively. The same STOL characteristics that make for an extraordinary missionary bush plane were also ideally suited for the clandestine work of the CIA's Air America branch. The Helio could insert and extract agents and partisans into places no other fixed-wing plane would dare venture. It served notably in Laos before and during the Vietnam War. Army, Air Force, and Air America Helios served in Southeast Asia (including Vietnam), Latin America, and even West Germany during The Cold War. Most of the mission sets of the Helios were ultra-secret.

JAARS (Jungle Aviation and Relay Service) has operated Helio Couriers and Super Couriers since 1956. Because they support missions and Bible translators in some of the most inaccessible places on the globe, the Helio was the perfect plane for that mission. They have operated Helios in Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Liberia, Indonesia, Cameroon and the Amazon River on floats! JAARS has more Helio Courier pilot and maintainer experience than all other operators put together.

Design Features: The Super Courier is a six-seat, all-metal (except the ailerons) taildragger with cantilever high wings. The cantilever wing obtains its strength from a carry-through steel truss spar. Distinguishing features of the Helio Courier include the forward-positioned main landing gear legs that somewhat resemble a stiff-legged stubborn dog. The H-295 is easily distinguishable from the earlier H-395 and H-391 by the trapezoidal rear windows that replaced the round porthole windows.

The safety record of the Helio speaks for itself and is based on a few design characteristics; some of which were intentional and some of which are second-order effects. The cabin is framed with a chrome-moly steel cage. The front four seats in JAARS Helios are S-frame style and the back two seats use a thick energy-absorbing foam (all designed by JAARS R&D engineers). These seats are attached to the airframe with high strength Brownline tracks and have been tested for up to 30 Gs of protection for the occupants. Safety is paramount at JAARS, and their Helio Couriers are equipped with four-point restraints. If the pilot and passengers are retained in their seats and the seats stays in the steel cage, everyone has a good chance of surviving a crash. The JAARS record speaks volumes; in over 67 years of Helio operations in the most austere settings on Earth, they have never had a fatality in one of their Couriers.

When the slats are deployed and the ailerons travel past approximately 10 degrees up, two sets of "interceptor" blades will deploy up on the respective wing, immediately behind the slat opening. This spoils the lift flowing over the wings, thereby causing a rolling moment on that side, even at very low airspeeds. Interceptors function similarly to spoilerons but differ by operating in conjunction with actual ailerons. The interceptors work with mechanical connection to the ailerons. All four slats are not mechanically-driven, but will deploy and retract independently based on the airflow and angle of attack. When deployed, the air flowing through the slot between the slats and the leading edge of the upper surface of the wing is redirected, maintaining boundary layer control and contributing to the allowable high angles of attack.

The Frise-style ailerons are the only fabric-covered surface and have a deep chord in order to maintain a lot of flight control area while not robbing flap "real estate". The Fowler flaps span 66% of the wing span and extend to 40 degrees with 18 clockwise turns of the overhead flap crank. The stabilator is 14 feet from end to end - longer than an entire Piper Cherokee wing! It is all-moving and trims with an overhead knob that controls a jack screw in the tail. The airplane does need a lot of small trim inputs, but a little movement of the crank goes a long way. One of the Courier's safety features is how difficult it is to stall. The stabilator is purposely travel-limited. The plane will not result in a stall "break" unless the pilot is very deliberately attempting to stall and using considerable power to do so. The critical angle of attack is an incredible 30 degrees!

Impressions continues

Helio Couriers have a long list of available STCs, and the JAARS engineering and maintenance team is responsible for the majority of them. The airframe I flew had 26 STCs and two field approvals incorporated, including a belly pod and cargo door. The max gross weight for the H-295 is 3400 lbs. and the U-10D has a max gross weight of 3600 lbs. All JAARS Helios have a gross weight STC; increasing the max gross weight to 3800 lbs.

Powerplant: The H-295 Super Courier uses a 295-horsepower GO-480 to power a Hartzell 96-inch three-bladed constant-speed propeller. Of course, the geared engine was purposefully selected and the gearbox produces a 77:120 reduction ratio, enabling the eight-foot, three-bladed prop to deliver more torque at lower RPM. Each wing has a 30-gallon bladder tank and the fuel system is gravity-fed. Some H-295s are equipped with auxiliary fuel tanks, adding an additional 30 gallons per wing for a total of 120 gallons.

A pressure carburetor with Automatic Mixture Control (AMC) lightens the workload to fly the Courier, which is a good thing. Interestingly, the prop clearance for the initial H-391B (102-inch prop) from the ground was an initial concern for the Civil Aviation Authority, but after four test pilots tried (repeatedly) to get the prop to hit the ground, the CAA was appeased and issued the type certificate. The combination of the forward-positioned main landing gear, the heavy tail, limited stabilator travel, and the landing gear “tuck” keeps those blade tips out of the dirt.

Preflight: One unique preflight check of a geared engine is to check for “play” in the gearbox. This is done by slightly moving the prop in either direction to ensure there is no more than ½ inch of movement. Fuel is checked by stepping on a main wheel and then two handy fuselage steps. During preflight, the slats will be fully deployed, providing a great opportunity to check all the “tomahawks” (slat support tubes) and rollers. After all,

when in flight with the slats fully extended, 64% of the aircraft’s weight is carried by the slats and associated tomahawks! Take time to move each slat and check for smoothness of operation. An interesting detail you may notice during preflight inspection is a small ridgeline bump that runs along the upper trailing edge of the ailerons. During the certification process, the CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) test pilot declared that the roll control was too light. Rather than going back to the drawing board and redesign-



ing an engineering solution, Dr. Koppen had someone glue a piece of cord to the trailing edge of the ailerons. The CAA was satisfied with the resulting “heavier feel”. Since then, a segment of cord is laid onto the wing and doped in during the fabric-covering process.

Impressions continues

Takeoff: A STOL takeoff requires 15 clockwise turns of the overhead flap crank to reach 30 degrees. After pre-takeoff checks are completed, lineup on the runway and wiggle your feet. You're going to need to keep them moving on the takeoff roll! Smoothly add-in full power, which will give you about 3400 RPM at the crankshaft and 2182 RPM at the prop. The heavy-duty main landing gear legs are splayed out with a stance of approximately nine feet with the aircraft's weight on wheels. With weight off the wheels, the stance is only about five feet. This means that during takeoff, as the Helio wings develop lift, the wheels begin to tuck in. This makes the nose rise, almost like a floatplane getting on "step". This rise indicates that the stabilator is developing lift and it is time to lift the tail to just off the ground. Once the tail is up and the aircraft is accelerating, the nose will want to pitch down. Back pressure is now required to hold the tailwheel just clear of the ground. The Helio will lift off and fly away in this attitude. Also, full throws of the rudder pedals may be required to track straight. If the takeoff sounds like a lot of work, it's because it is! At a typical training weight, the Super Courier will be off the ground in 450 feet and clear of a 50-foot obstacle in only 700 feet.

Every aircraft design is a series of compromises, and the Helio Courier is no different. The same STOL characteristics that make it an incredible bush plane are what cause it to be somewhat of a handful, notably on the ground. The landing gear of a Cessna 185 is positioned 21 inches forward of the aft-most CG. On a Helio, the gear is a full **50 inches forward of the aft-most CG!** When you factor in landing gear that "tucks" in, you have an airplane that would like to swap ends, particularly if you have a CG approaching aft limits! This is certainly an airplane that requires attention and perhaps this is why JAARS continues to use it both in evaluating and training new potential missionary pilots.

Flight Characteristics: The Helio's performance airborne is just as impressive as the takeoff and landing. It is, however, a very "hands-on" airplane in all phases of flight. JAARS does not have autopilots in their Helio Couriers, mostly because every ounce of weight saved means available useful load for medical supplies, food, fuel drums, livestock, missionaries, etc. In the pre-mission brief, JAARS Chief Pilot Steve Bevelhymmer stated that we would be doing steep turns (45 degrees) with 40 degrees of flaps at only 50 knots, while maintaining altitude! I had a hard time believing that, but he proved it airborne! This canyon-turn performance is certainly a good tool to have when flying over the mountainous jungles of Papua, Indonesia! It does not have much adverse yaw tendency, but there are some over-banking tendencies and lots of torque, so it's important not to spend too much time heads-down in the cockpit.



Impressions continues

Landing: The missionary pilots at JAARS have perfected the Helio STOL technique over the past 67 years, and there is no tolerance for “cowboy” techniques or attitudes. Every landing strip is carefully evaluated and performance is methodically calculated. Margins of safety are built-in and pilots must fly their approaches precisely. Many of their landing strips are one-way in and one-way out with a landing commit point early in the approach. Their precision STOL landing techniques are similar to U.S. Navy carrier operations and likewise have narrow margins for error. JAARS teaches a very precise pattern with a completely stabilized approach using angle of attack (gauged from slat position) and power for glideslope. On downwind, slow to 60 knots and crank in 30 degrees of flaps. After the base turn, slow to 55 knots and crank in 40 degrees of flaps. Approaching the final turn, you’ll need to slow and stabilize at the “on-speed AOA”. Rather than using an AOA indexer light system or instrument, the pilot references the slat position. As you slow, the inboard slats will extend first. I’m not sure how long it takes to get used to the slats slamming down, but it’s more than just one flight! Every time they moved up or down, I’d see the movement with my peripheral vision and flinch, thinking it was traffic or a bird. The pilot gauges on-speed AOA based on the outboard slat position. The outboard slats should be about 1 ½ -inches short of fully extended. Once this AOA is attained, a quick glance at the airspeed indicator will show approach speed for the current weight. Landing speeds can indicate as low as 28 (NOT a typo) knots! The STOL approach is steep (5.5 - 6°) and will usually be a 450 to 500 fpm rate of descent.

JAARS does not teach a flare as such; it is simply a transition to landing attitude. At about one wing-span’s distance from the runway, the pilot will close the throttle and pull the yoke back, setting a three-point attitude. There is no float whatsoever because the pilot has managed energy to the minimum. The Helio simply plants and sticks to *terra firma*. Air-oil shocks on all three landing gear do much to absorb the landing. Heavy braking can be used after touchdown, with no chance of nosing over due to the unique forward position of the main landing gear legs and heavy tail. Using this technique, the H-295 can be stopped within 200 feet. And no, **JAARS pilots do not expect “smooth landing” comments from deplaning passengers.**

Toña History: The H-295 I flew (serial no. 1436) was picked up new from the factory in 1972 by JAARS and has spent its entire life as a missionary airplane. It has served in Ecuador, Indonesia, and the United States. It has over 10,700 airframe hours and 18,000 landings. Before the airplane was delivered to South America, a young native Ecuadorian convert to Christianity, named Toña, was martyred by a neighboring village. Upon delivery to Ecuador, serial no. 1436 was dedicated and named *Toña* in his honor. Just from its service in Indonesia alone, [Toña](#) carried 10,114 passengers and over 2,500,000 pounds of payload more than 550,000 nautical miles. It recently completed a top to bottom restoration by JAARS mechanics and was rededicated in May of 2023 at JAARS 75th anniversary celebration (see *EAA Sport Aviation* article June 2023, *Mission: Possible 75 Years of Flying Goodwill*).

Wrap-Up: The Helio Courier is truly a remarkable airplane and deserves the reverence it receives in the bush pilot world. In the words of JAARS president, Steve Russell (EAA#1203140), “The Helio Courier is to JAARS what the Spitfire is to the Royal Air Force, or what the P-51 is to the U.S. Army Air Corps”. For almost 70 years, Helio Couriers have flown in and out of the most hostile environments in the most isolated corners of our planet. Toña’s mission is far from over as it continues the task of evaluating and training some of the world’s best missionary pilots!