



# AIRWARD NEWS

**In Recognition of Professional Performance during a Hazardous Aviation Event or Significant Contribution to Aviation Mishap Prevention**

October 2000

## Jill McCurdy Makes a Great Catch and Steps Up to Plate



The district biologist asked Jill McCurdy, a Helicopter Manager on the Ashley National Forest, if she could store some 2,000 pounds of grass seed at the helibase. Jill told the biologist that she could store it, but not for long, and the biologist replied “we’ll be moving it tomorrow, we’re doing an aerial seeding project”. This was news to Jill, as it was to dispatch and everyone else. She attempted to contact the Forest Aviation Officer, but found that he was out of town. This is the great catch; project planned, no aviation plan. So what does Jill do, she steps up to the plate and takes it upon herself to put together an aviation plan to make sure all the bases are covered. For your great work Jill, this Airward’s for you! No SafeCom submitted

## Bob Wofford “The Wise Guy”

Bob Wofford, airtanker pilot of T-11, a P2V that he flies for Neptune Aviation, is commended for making a very wise decision. Bob was working out of McCall, ID on the Nick Fire in mid-August. At the same time, the McCall area was hosting a Back Country Fly In, which drew aviation enthusiasts from all over. The McCall Airport was experiencing heavy traffic, communications were poor, and the Forest Service had a very complex aviation program in full swing. Bob became very concerned and decided he had to shut down airtanker operations. His suggestion to reload out of Boise was an excellent idea. For being such a “Wise Guy” we gave Bob a well-deserved Airward. Thanks Bob! No SafeCom submitted





## Houston Helicopter Pilot Saves The Day

Jorge Pino, a Bell 212 pilot for Houston Helicopters is commended for the actions he took when the landing gear on his Bell 212 failed. With crewmembers approaching the helicopter when the landing gear failed, he was able to keep it from hitting anyone. While the helicopter sustained major damage, fortunately Jorge and one person on the ground received only minor injuries. For your actions Jorge, we extend a huge Thank-You and an Airward too! SafeCom 00-810

## Hey Brendan, You da Man

In the middle of a hectic fire season, Brendan Mullen became fully qualified as a helicopter manager for the Lewis and Clark National Forest light helicopter. Brendan was bombarded with minimally qualified crewmembers and trainees that were rotating in and out almost daily. Brendan was often tasked to do multiple missions which he assisted management in prioritizing. With this challenging situation, Brendan initiated regular communication with the Forest Aviation Officer regarding his concerns and needs. He demonstrated a high level of proficiency and a sincere effort to ensure safety above everything else. Due to his actions, his crew became better and consistently staffed. Forest Fire Management Officers were better informed of his helicopter and crew capabilities and limitations, resulting in better utilization of the helicopter. Congratulations and Thanks Brendan for a job well done! SafeCom 00-759



## Super Mechanic, Aaron Young



No picture available

Rogers Helicopter mechanic Aaron Young's pre-flight inspection on his Bell 212 includes a procedure for inspecting the tail rotor for delamination and debonding. Using a coin, he taps on the entire tail rotor, listening for a distinctive noise that would indicate a bad rotor. As Aaron was tapping his rotors one morning, a mechanic from another company was watching him, wondering what in the world he was doing. When he asked Aaron, he explained and offered to show him on his Bell 412. As Aaron was showing the other mechanic, low and behold, they heard a very different distinctive noise on that 412. One of the rotors was indeed delaminated. Aaron's pro-active safety attitude and willingness to share his knowledge earned him this Airward. Our hats are off to you Aaron, THANKS No SafeCom submitted

## “See and Avoid” Pays Off

Dell Boyd was flying Air Attack on the Storrie Incident when he observed a helicopter approaching head on at the same altitude. To avoid a mid-air collision, Dell took evasive action by diving and taking a hard right. He estimated the distance between the helicopter and his Cessna 182 to be less than 500 feet. The helicopter was identified as a Life Flight helicopter that had been cleared into the TFR earlier that day to transport an injured firefighter. Follow-up with the FAA and Life Flight determined that the Life Flight pilot thought that once he was cleared into a TFR he had clearance for the remainder of the day. This obviously is not the case. The pilot of Life Flight was directed to write a TFR plan for the company, present it to all employees and send a copy to the Sacramento FSDO. Once again “See and Avoid” pays off. Thanks Dell, keep up the Good Work and Safe Attitude! SafeCom 00-770



## Enough Already



On the afternoon of August 25<sup>th</sup>, Ron Tieg had had enough. He was managing a helispot on the Lewis and Clark National Forest in support of the Antelope Creek fire and the Incident Commander was asking just too much of the minimally staffed crew. Ron put his foot down and called for a Stand Down of the helispot, which included two lights and one medium helicopter. There was so much confusion and poor management of the resources, Ron felt like he had to do something. He called a meeting with the Incident Commander and crews to discuss how the resources would be best utilized and staffed and how the helispot should be managed. The stand down was exactly what needed to happen and we're grateful for your decision Ron. Excellent job, Thanks!  
SafeCom 00-758

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