FLIGHTS OF FANCY

Gulfstream’s Photography Department brings its imagination, creativity and technical skills together to produce awe-inspiring images that showcase and market our aircraft.
It has been about two years since we first witnessed the beginning of what has been referred to as the global recession. We are all well aware of the impact it has had and remain anxious about the time it will take to fully recover. Earlier this year, many economists were predicting improved growth during the second half of this year. Now, very few are doing so.

One Friday night last July, I had the opportunity to participate in a panel discussion during the National Aviation Hall of Fame Awards Dinner in Dayton, Ohio. With me on the panel were leaders from Clay Lacy Aviation, IBM, NetJets, Rockwell Collins, NBAA and Cessna. Although our panel discussions took us through a number of topics, from how aviation has changed over the last 50 years to how the recession has impacted our industry, much of our attention shifted toward the future. Sometimes looking ahead is difficult when you consider what our industry has been through over the last two years... job losses, reduced business, lost opportunities and reduced investment, just to name a few. In light of what’s happened, we all acknowledged dwelling on the past is not what has made our businesses viable over the years. What has become more evident than ever is that investing in the future remains critically important to our industry and to our country.

When we consider the demands facing the general aviation industry over the next several years, it would be naïve on our part to think we can sit back and let change overtake us instead of us leading the way.

One example of a challenge facing our businesses now involves the need to modernize our nation’s air traffic control system. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is faced with the daunting task of advancing the right technology to satisfy what has been referred to as “Next Gen.” However, they cannot and should not do it on their own. The FAA needs help in funding and designing the right technology. Our industry has proven many times before that it is willing and able to collaborate with government on complex problems. We’ve agreed to help fund these needed improvements through increased aviation fuel taxes. But that’s not all—the hardware and software changes within the airplane itself, which will move us from ground-based air traffic management to one that is more precise, or satellite-based, is already being developed.

A second example involves climate change. Our industry is committed to new technology, operational efficiency and continued innovation to affect long-term emissions reductions. Consider our challenges and the commitments we have already made: 1) to achieve carbon-neutral growth by 2020; 2) to improve fuel efficiency by 2 percent per year from today until 2050; and 3) to reduce general aviation’s total CO₂ emissions by 50 percent by 2050. Although technological advances will be critical to achieving these targets, the introduction of bio-fuels will play an even more important role. Again, this will only happen if there is a partnership between government and industry.

So, as I reflect back on that night in July, my sense of where our industry is headed remains very upbeat. We have so much going for us here at Gulfstream: the backing of a strong parent company, General Dynamics; a proven reputation in the advancement of technology and innovative products and services during both tough and good times; and, world-class employees.
SLIPPING THE SURLY BONDS OF EARTH
Marek Malolepszy first found freedom when he and his family escaped from Communist Poland. Now he finds freedom soaring the skies in his glider.

IT’S A CIRCLE, NOT A LINE
Quality improvement has been a longtime priority for Gulfstream. Over the years, we have evolved into a Lean Six Sigma culture that is having a tremendous impact on our quality, costs and success.

THE QUEEN OF LEAN
Some things, like the importance of real beef and the Cowboys, haven’t changed in Dallas. But at our facility in the Big D, Lean Six Sigma is declaring that there is a new sheriff in town.

SUPPORTING THEIR SOLDIERS
When our military personnel deploy to fight, they leave behind the wives, husbands, moms, dads, kids and families who—while coping with a loved one being so far away—become our at-home heroes.

THE ART OF GULFSTREAM
They are imaginative. They are creative. They are our company’s team of photographers and computer artists who generate the “wow” in the images we show the world. These are among their favorites.

SHELLIE, RANDALL AND BRUCE’S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE
Moving from the United States to China to support our aircraft takes more than just learning to eat with chopsticks. It’s a new culture, a new way of seeing the world, and the experience of a lifetime for these three Gulfstream employees.

HOLLYWOOD’S REAL JET SETTER
The TV show “Criminal Minds” has many adored and talented actors, but one—a Gulfstream jet—is not in it for the fame or glory. It just wants to help solve the crime.

KEEPERS OF THE OLYMPIC FLAME
Several field service representatives went beyond the call of duty recently to support a G550 that transported a very special piece of cargo: an Olympic flame.

I REMEMBER … OCTOBER 2, 1963
Walt Wendelstein reflects on the moment 47 years ago when Gulfstream’s GII first took flight in Bethpage, N.Y.
Slipping the surly bonds of Earth

BY DICK GORMAN
In late summer 1981, Marek Malolepszy bundled his wife and two small children into the car and set out with two other families, ostensibly for a vacation in Greece. The three-car caravan crossed the border into what was then Czechoslovakia and continued on to Austria. It was only after arriving in Vienna that the true nature of the trip became known: They were defecting from Communist Poland and seeking permanent residency in the United States. Three months after initiating the formal immigration process, the Malolepszy family was granted permanent visas and placed on a charter flight to Los Angeles.

Not long after arriving in California, Malolepszy capitalized on a master’s degree in metallurgy to embark on what would become a long career in aerospace engineering. After several positions in the industry, he joined Gulfstream in 1998 as a technical specialist II at the Long Beach Completion Center.

While his days are devoted to his job at Gulfstream, Malolepszy’s summer weekends and vacations are reserved for his glider. “I love the sensation of soaring,” he says. “You fly without an engine. You soar with the birds. I enjoy the challenge and freedom soaring brings. It’s a wonderful experience.”

Fact is, Malolepszy has been involved with aviation virtually all his life. He began building and flying model airplanes at the age of nine. His real flying, however, didn’t begin until he was strapped into the cockpit of a glider at the local Aero Club of Czestochowa, Poland.

A PILOT AT 16

“I made my first glider flight at the age of 16,” he says. “We learned how to fly gliders that were towed by a winch. A winch is a piece of machinery with a gasoline engine and a clutch that transfers power to a large drum that holds a steel cable. One end of the cable is hooked to the glider, the other is attached to the winch’s drum, which spins, accelerating and lifting the glider like a kite. At about 1,000 feet, the pilot yanks the cable release and begins to fly.”

Malolepszy’s flight instructor declared him ready to solo following 30 flights on the winch. After soloing, he learned to fly behind a tow plane and then to soar like an “eagle.” That was the nickname bestowed on him by his flight instructor. By the age of 17, Malolepszy had earned a Silver Badge for gliding a distance of 50 kilometers, ascending to an altitude of 1,000 meters and remaining aloft for more than five hours. Achieving ever longer distances and higher altitudes enabled him to earn a Gold Badge and then a Diamond Badge. The badges and diplomas were awarded by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI) in Lausanne, Switzerland, the sanctioning body for the sport of gliding.
In 1971, Malolepszy began his professional flying career when he joined LOT Polish Airlines, the nation's flag carrier, as a co-pilot on the Antonov An-24, a 52-seat, twin-engine turboprop. "That wasn't an easy airplane to fly," he recalls, "especially when you're a beginner with zero time on a heavy airplane." At 28, Malolepszy was promoted to airline captain. He transitioned to larger jets, starting with the Tupolev Tu-134, a Russian commercial jet similar in design to the DC-9. Two years later, he was selected to fly Warsaw and cities in the U.S. and Canada, and conducted charter flights to Peru, came the decision to "vacation" in Greece. "As an airline pilot, I had a very good life," Malolepszy admits. "But to make a long story short, I emigrated to build a better life for my children."

FOCUSING ON RECORD-SETTING FLIGHTS

"When I was young, I wanted to compete," he says. "I took part in various flying competitions in Poland and abroad, including the U.S. Nationals in 1983, shortly after I came here. I flew a dozen times in the Polish Nationals and many regional contests. I was in top positions several times, including the winner's spot on the podium. Flying for records was the next step for me. The way I see it, first you learn how to fly. You fly for pleasure. Then you fly for badges. Then you fly for competition. And finally, you fly for records. I stopped flying for competition sometime ago and now I enjoy much more flying for records."

Sailplanes are categorized by class. There are the World Class, 15 Meter and Open classes, each one defined by wingspan and aerodynamic features like wing flaps, for example. The FAI awards records in each class for the longest distance flown or speed over a set course.

"I fly a high-performance sailplane, the SZD 56 Diana," he says. "It was designed in Poland; it's one of the best 15 meter gliders in the world."

Malolepszy keeps his glider at home. He trailers it to one of several desert airports, assembles it, takes a tow behind a tug plane to an altitude of a couple thousand feet, then goes off soaring, sometimes for hundreds of miles. When he lands, he disassembles it, loads it on the trailer and drives home.

On weekends, he prefers to launch from California City, Tehachapi or Inyokern in the Mojave Desert. "The best flying conditions occur when we get moist air from the Gulf of Mexico. Three years ago, riding thermals and ridge lifts from the Sierra Nevada Mountains, I made a flight of 826 kilometers from California to his soaring credentials. "The declared 1,000-kilometer flight is a dream for every serious soaring pilot in the world," he says.

Achieving Every Glider Pilot's Dream

In 2003, Malolepszy achieved a life-long soaring goal: He successfully completed a 1,088-kilometer flight (about 680 miles), adding the FAI 1000K diploma to his soaring credentials. "The declared 1,000-kilometer flight is a dream for every serious soaring pilot in the world," he says.

Not all flights produce a new cross-country record. When things don't work out as planned, pilots either abandon their plans, turn back for home or make what they call an "off-field" landing. That means finding a safe place to put the aircraft down without damaging pilot or glider. One of Malolepszy's most memorable landings was at the U.S. Nationals at Tucson International Airport as he was running out of daylight.

"I talked to air traffic control," he says. "I had enough altitude to wait for two airliners to land and then I turned around and flew all the way back."

The tricky part of flying for a record is that you have to declare the task on the ground before you take off. "First, you study the meteorological conditions and determine an effective flight path given the weather prognosis. Then, when you're aloft, it's often very challenging to execute that plan based on the actual soaring conditions. If the forecast is accurate, the plan is correct and the execution is successful, you may end up with a record-setting flight."

When he can devote more than a weekend to gliding, Malolepszy tows his airplane to Ely, a small town in eastern Nevada that's well known in the soaring world. This year, the meteorological gods were smiling on both pilot and glider. Competing for a new record in the category of speed around a triangle course of 300 kilometers (about 186 miles), Malolepszy coaxed his glider up to 155 kilometers per hour (about 96 miles per hour), which exceeded the existing records of Nevada, Poland and the U.S. in both the 15 Meter and Open classes.

The fact that Malolepszy's new speed record bettered the previous Open Class record was doubly impressive, considering the fact that the Open Class is unlimited and includes the best gliders in the world; gliders with wingspans that exceed Malolepszy's 15 meter Diana.

Because his FAI sporting license was issued in Poland, Malolepszy will claim the flight as two more records for Poland. That brings his grand total to 19 national Polish records.

PHOTO: ERIC CURRY

City, I went almost to the Lake Tahoe area and then I turned around and flew all the way back."

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Gulfstream has been following the path of continuous quality improvement for nearly 25 years. Long-service employees can trace the origin of our quality-improvement efforts back to December of 1986 when we formed the Production Technologies Group and assigned it the responsibility of working with Manufacturing and related functional groups to "identify, develop and implement continuous improvements" in our production processes, procedures and material flow.

Four months later, in the spring of 1987, we introduced the Quality Improvement Process (QIP), which focused on preventing errors rather than simply correcting them. QIP was to be an ongoing process, "a new way of viewing our work and making it as perfect as we can."

By the time the GV program was launched in the early ’90s, Manufacturing was keenly attuned to three basic elements: cycle time, cost and quality. And, of the three, cycle time was the first priority. We discovered we could streamline the manufacturing process and save valuable time in production by "rolling back"
Collaborating with Customers and Vendors

One example of how Gulfstream improved the value stream involves a project team that Ken Johns participated on earlier this year. Johns is IPT manager in G650 Aircraft Assembly. The Partnership in Continuous Improvement initiative worked to create a collaborative environment among Gulfstream, its customers and the suppliers who contribute essential components used in the final phase of production. Final Phase Materials, Operations and Engineering partnered to develop a formal process of supplier inclusion. Team members included: Christina Davis, Jill Pantin, Jim Moco, Robbie Stroud, Johns and representatives of the vendor, BE Aerospace of Miami, a manufacturer of lighting and seats for our large-cabin aircraft. Using the eight-step process practiced at BE Aerospace and Gulfstream’s five-step DMAIC process, the team analyzed the workflow at both organizations and developed a process that more closely conforms to our needs.

The new collaborative relationship involved online sharing of computerized requirements, engineering drawings, quality data and more. The team was divided into two project groups, both of which included representatives of the two companies. Davis and Maco served as team leads.

“Credit for the success of these projects must go to Christina and Jim,” Johns says. “They brought the action items back to Savannah and coordinated the efforts of individuals at BE as well as multiple Gulfstream facilities. They never wavered, even as members of the team were assigned to new areas.”

The team identified a part on the seat that received a coating at the BE plant. That was one element of a larger issue. “We would receive the seat at the Savannah facility and then have to strip off the coating so we could paint it,” Johns says. “In essence, we were paying our employee to remove the coating that another company was paying its employee to apply. Now we save time, effort and money by not having to take the coating off, and they save by not having to put the coating on. The team relied on the experience of Robbie Stroud to identify numerous improvement opportunities and avoid potential problems. His insight showed how the changes would impact all of the facilities, not just Savannah.”

Another product improvement involved the process of plating seat latches and related items. “When we receive the seat, it’s only a metal framework, but it’s fully assembled,” Johns says. “We disassemble it and select items that are visible—like the latches—off to be plated. So they would assemble it, we would disassemble it. Now, when we receive the seat in, all the parts to be plated are sent in a bag. We just send the bag off to the plating shop.”

By revising the production process at BE Aerospace, Gulfstream avoids removing the seat from the shipping box and taking the parts off to send them to be plated, then reassembling the seat.

“By working collaboratively across the value stream, we were able to devise a production path that benefits both companies,” Johns says. “whereas, if you had one company working independently, the results would have been restricted.

“If we are going to continue to the next level of LSS improvement, the supply chain must be agile and capable of understanding the changing needs of a continuous-improvement culture. If they are not part of our journey, then our improvement efforts will be limited by their capabilities.”

“Continuous improvement enabled Final Phase to shorten the manufacturing cycle from 18 weeks to 12 weeks. That’s a significant reduction. Final Phase shortened the cycle by using Lean tools and ideas submitted by employees.”

– John Beall

the installation of some items—electrical, mechanical or plumbing—from the final phase of production to the initial phase.

“Continuous improvement enabled Final Phase to shorten the manufacturing cycle from 18 weeks to 12 weeks,” says John Beall, a Lean Six Sigma black belt. “That’s a significant reduction. It means instead of getting an airplane to a customer in 18 weeks, we’re delivering it in 12 weeks. Final Phase shortened the cycle by using Lean tools and ideas submitted by employees.”

Lean manufacturing is an operational strategy that seeks to achieve the elimination of waste. Its benefits include improved profitability, customer satisfaction, throughput and employee morale. Six Sigma is a business-management strategy that removes the causes of defects and minimizes variability in the manufacturing process. Employees companywide participate in continuous improvement. Everyone starts by implementing simple solutions to everyday problems. As our culture progresses, the tools needed to solve problems become increasingly advanced. Gulfstream is fortunate to have hundreds of employees who have earned Lean specialist status. Eighty of them have gone on to become green belts.

Gulfstream’s commitment to continuous improvement became evident in 2005 when the LSS Program Office was launched as part of the Quality Organization. The program office, headed by Charles Wood, LSS program manager, works with the LSS Steering Committee and the LSS Standardization Council to set the continuous-improvement strategy for the business. LSS black belts, facilitators and Lean leaders are deployed to each of our organizations. They provide technical support and mentoring to organizational leadership and individual contributors in an effort to establish a continuous-improvement culture driven by employee empowerment. This last point—employee empowerment—is the key to the long-lasting success of any continuous-improvement culture. One role of the LSS Program Office is to develop and provide employee training that creates an internal knowledge base and sustains the momentum of our LSS culture.
Decades after launching the QIP, our continuous-improvement efforts extend well beyond the shop floor. Virtually every Gulfstream organization today has functioning Lean teams promoting Your Ideas at Work (employee-suggested ways to make the workflow more efficient) or the 5S workplace methodology (sorting, straightening, systematic cleaning, standardizing and sustaining) or the DMAIC project methodology (define, measure, analyze, improve, control). We employ a vast array of tools with such exotic names as Poka Yoke, Kanban, Kaizen, Value Stream Mapping and Pareto Charts.

“In the last decade, we have moved past addressing the issues of cost and quality to encompass the concepts of Lean Six Sigma—both in manufacturing and beyond the shop floor. Our emphasis now is to establish a sustained culture of continuous improvement,” says Al Prieslicka, an LSS black belt.

Today’s Gulfstream embraces a continuous-improvement culture and a learning environment that promotes continuous-improvement principles and open communication of strategic ideas.

Modifying the trailer that transports the G250 mockup to customer events and the NBAA show eliminated the need to have a second vehicle—a utility trailer—accompany the mockup. The net result was a savings of more than $53,000. Then, by resurrecting and repairing the generator from the G150 mockup tour, the Completion Design Department in Sales and Marketing saved another $7,200 by not having to rent a generator at each location.

According to Dave Pilgrim, senior designer for Interior Design, Sales and Completions, the original G250 mockup required two trailers to transport it from location to location. The primary trailer carried the mockup—basically a fully configured cabin without wings—and the utility trailer carried the entrance and exit stairs, a generator to provide electric power and ancillary items.

Pilgrim modified the heavy and bulky stairs from the original G100 mockup, making them lighter and easier to position in place. He then installed a header bulkhead in the front of the primary trailer to accommodate the new stairs and other items. Pilgrim then located the generator from the G150 mockup and sent it to Ground Support for renovation. They repaired it, cleaned it thoroughly and readied it for use on the G250 mockup.

The real value of the modifications became evident when Sales and Marketing dispatched the G250 mockup on a multi-city tour of the West Coast. The trailer hauled the mockup out to Seattle, then drove it down the spine of California, making stops at each sales director’s location. Potential customers were invited to see how roomy and comfortable the G250 interior will be. Then it was on to Arizona and Texas.

After briefly stopping in Savannah, the trailer trekked up to Canada for the start of the East Coast tour, which ranged down through the Atlantic Coast states before ending in Raleigh, N.C. In all, the mockup stopped at 23 locations and played host to 1,250 people.

The $59,875 total savings was generated by eliminating the utility trailer, thus reducing transportation costs by 50 percent, and then by eliminating the need to rent a generator at a cost of $800 a day over a nine-day period.
objectives while encouraging innovative ideas that will help our employees achieve those objectives.

One of the reasons the Lean Six Sigma culture has been so successful is that it actively seeks out employee involvement in refining work processes. Also, aligning individual employee efforts with our continuous-improvement objectives serves to support them and ensure their success.

"Whether the opportunity involves safety, manufacturing, ergonomics, sustainability or quality," Preslicka says, "we’ve learned that it’s the employees at the process level who are the experts. They provide the solutions. They use the tools they’ve learned to use either individually with Your Ideas at Work or in teams through Lean projects."

A CONTINUOUS JOURNEY

“We’ve come a long way on this journey, and I think we’re showing good progress,” Beall says. “But then Toyota has been doing this for 60 years, and we’ve only been doing it for 10. We just started the walk. It’s not a case of how fast we’ll get to the end. It’s how we’ll get there. There’s no real finish line. It’s a continuous journey, a continuous journey to business and process excellence.”
Beef is still big in the Big D, Mark Cuban hasn’t lost his mogul status, and the Cowboys are as popular as ever.

But the culture is changing in Dallas—at least it is at Gulfstream’s Love Field facility.

“People are coming around,” says industrial engineer Linda James. “Sometimes you can see their eyes light up when they make a difference. Change is difficult, but we’re getting there.”

That “change” is putting the multilayered efficiency system known as Lean Six Sigma to work at the 500-employee facility, which is home to Gulfstream’s mid-cabin completions facility and a product support center. After teaming with another industrial engineer, Lam Nguyen in Final Phase, for more than two years, James has been the Lean Six Sigma facilitator for Dallas’ Product Support unit since April of 2009. Certified Lean specialists James and Nguyen have spearheaded a sitewide Lean effort that has resulted in $307,000 worth of savings since January 2010.

What distinguishes James is the knowledge and energy she brings to the job. Before coming to Gulfstream Dallas in October 2006, she was immersed in the Lean culture for 13 years at Boeing in Renton, Wash.

Her personality helps make believers out of the biggest skeptics in the eliminate-waste-and-create-flow movement.

“She works well with the people there,” says John Beall, a Savannah-based Lean Six Sigma black belt for Gulfstream. “She’s very upbeat and really takes the time to listen.”

It is one thing to be involved with manufacturing-rooted systems such as Lean and Six Sigma in Final Phase. Product Support, however, presented a different task for James.

“The biggest challenge for me is to help convince our employees that Lean can work in a product support environment,” James says. “I think you can apply Lean in just about every environment. We can always make our jobs easier and more efficient.”
Jam es took on her new duties during a difficult 2009 for Gulfstream. Due to the economic downturn, Gulfstream eliminated 1,200 positions in the summer, including more than 500 in Dallas.

"The morale was down," James says. "People were still in that shockwave mode."

It was not long after that when James helped introduce a Lean tool—Your Ideas at Work—for all employees. Also, she and Nguyen recommended that team leads be included with managers and supervisors in employee empowerment training. Even at that difficult time for the Dallas organization, Your Ideas at Work proved to be contagious. In the past year, Dallas has submitted more than 400 improvement tips.

"People weren't used to being able to voice their ideas all the time," James says. "Before, they were used to asking, 'Can I do this?' It is empowering when you have a voice—when your ideas are considered. That's what Your Ideas at Work does. It's your idea—something you can do on your own, with no outside resources—that makes you more efficient in your job."

Your Ideas at Work has spread like kudzu at Gulfstream. Now, the facility has regular events like Leadership Walks, where management visits employees and sees changes they've implemented into their work, and Reverse Gemba Walks, where employees do the same with management. Interaction between management and staff is at an all-time high.

"We try to do the Leadership Walks at least twice a month," says Robby Harless, general manager/vice president at Dallas. "My staff and I will spend an hour on the floor, talking with employees, getting their input, seeing what ideas they have put to use. On other occasions, employees will come around and see what improvements management has implemented. We share ideas, and that makes the whole site better."

Dallas' Lean movement now includes a Lean steering committee, four green belts (one level down from the highest-level Lean expert, black belt), 11 Lean specialists working on their certification, 20 Lean champions trained in Lean principles, and display boards with ideas from Dallas and other Gulfstream sites. Dallas employees recently presented some of their Lean successes at a companywide symposium in Orlando, Fla.

The goal is continuous improvement, and James seems to be the right person to spread the word.

"I try to be positive, especially when teaching the Lean tools," James says. "Sometimes, a person's first reaction is 'No, I don't want to do that.' That's just normal human behavior. I listen and let them know the positives that will come out of this change. If they can embrace it and let it work, it will work."

Examples of your ideas at work at Dallas Site

- Bin locations by date
- Scrap forms
- Ropes on hand reels
- Created T/R tool kit from line service trailer and G200 tire change kit with jack adapters
- Archiving work order reference documents, including e-mail
- G200 pitot tube removal assist tool
- Tool that disassembles handrails faster and requires less manpower

Sitewide, Lean efforts in Dallas have produced $307,000 in savings this year.

Active Lean Projects at Gulfstream Dallas

**Project manager:** Elizabeth Christofferson (warranty specialist III); Lean specialist in training; working on her certification project, Mid-Cabin Cannibalization Process

**Project manager:** Savannah Henley (business analyst); Lean specialist in training; working on her certification project, Eaton Flexshaft Warranty

**Project manager:** Mark Tritschler (Completions center lead); Lean specialist in training; working on his certification project, Completions Kit Shortages Handling/Reporting

**Project co-managers:** Glen Toman (material planner) and Tim Hoffman (airworthiness inspector); Lean specialists in training; working on their certification project, Inventory from Work Order to Stock

**Project manager:** Kevin Le (Completions Center lead sr. install); Lean specialist in training; working on his certification project, G150 Galley Install Fwd Closet Install
Rhonda Stafford keeps her Gulfstream badge clipped close to her heart.

It’s no wonder.

Placed between her company-issued ID and the emergency phone lists, the administrative assistant has carefully tucked pictures of her two sons, both of whom serve in the military.

“It’s kind of a reminder for me every day,” Stafford says, glancing down at the glossy pictures tied with yellow ribbon.

Actually, a reminder is the last thing Stafford needs. Her sons are never far from her thoughts, especially now that Alan, a 23-year-old Army specialist, has just returned from a yearlong deployment to Afghanistan. Billy, a 27-year-old Navy petty officer, is poised to depart for destinations unknown.

“You feel proud,” Stafford says of her sons. “But at the same time, it’s really stressful. You know they’re doing a good thing, but you want to be a little selfish and keep them for yourself.”

Stafford isn’t alone. With Savannah’s Fort Stewart on one side and Hunter Army Airfield on the other, Gulfstream—the area’s largest employer—has become a magnet for military family members, be it mom, dad, aunt, uncle, sibling or spouse.

BADGE OF COURAGE

When Stafford came to Gulfstream 12 years ago, she had no idea the company would be her safe haven while her two sons went off to war. At the time, Billy was in high school and Alan was in fifth grade. “Alan grew up while I worked here,” Stafford says.

Indeed, he did.

After Billy joined the Navy, Alan set his sights on joining the Army. But his timing was a bit too much for his mom to handle.

“Billy joined the Navy before 9/11, so there was no war,” she says. “Alan is the one I was most concerned about, because he joined the infantry. He had knee and ankle surgery, so I never thought he’d make it through boot camp. I cried at his graduation, and it wasn’t because I was happy. I really didn’t want him to join, but he wanted the same military lifestyle his brother had.”
That’s not exactly what Alan got. While the Navy deploys for six-month stints, Army deployments normally swallow a year at a time. While Billy spends most of his time in the air, launching buoys and performing surveillance, Alan stays firmly rooted on the ground, driving a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle and trying to avoid IEDs.

“Billy has been to Iraq and Afghanistan, but he hasn’t seen what Alan has,” says Stafford, who switches the outermost picture on her badge based on which son is deployed. “The first three months were really hard.”

To maintain her focus, Stafford serves as cub master for Cub Scout Pack 566, comprised entirely of 3rd Infantry Division soldiers’ sons. You’d think the constant reminders of separation, sadness and soldiers would sap her mental strength. Not so, she says. “I feel like I’m helping the Army. It’s hard enough on a parent when your son is overseas, so I can just imagine how hard it is on a kid. We try to make it easy on them.”

YOU’VE GOT MAIL

Tom Murray knows what it’s like to try to lighten someone else’s load.

His nephew, Pfc. Corey Gage, has been stationed in Afghanistan since late spring. As soon as 25-year-old Gage settled into his new digs, Murray, a Gulfstream technical specialist, started shipping packages overseas. The boxes brimmed with the typical trappings of young adulthood: compact discs, newspaper clippings, books, Wiffle balls, food. And then it dawned on Murray to ask his sister, Dale, if there something else his nephew wanted that he wasn’t getting.

Turned out, there was.

Gage had asked his mom to send him paper, pencils, pens and crayons for the local Afghan school students, who could do more with those basic supplies than they could with candy or snacks. “It was interesting,” Murray says. “I thought, ‘Wow, he understands what it’s all about.’ He wasn’t thinking about himself. That to me is a sign of maturity and growth. He got it. He wasn’t just a kid any more; he had grown up.”

These days, it’s not unusual to find Murray at the post office in Pooler during his lunch break, shipping off another flat-rate box packed with paper, pens and other paraphernalia. “We send all the school supplies we can cram into that box,” Murray says, smiling.

That simple act brings Murray, a 22-year Gulfstream employee, a small degree of comfort. “I worry about him a lot,” says Murray, whose family can trace their military service to World War I. “It’s personal. We take it real seriously. I’m very nervous about it, always am.”

COMING TO THE CHAPEL

Donna Arand-Hopkins’ son takes his commitment seriously, too. A child of the 9/11 generation, Nathan Hopkins joined the military through an ROTC scholarship. Hoping to scale back while attending Kansas State University, Nathan tried to extricate himself from the rigors of ROTC. But included in the contract he’d signed was the requirement to pay the scholarship back, fulfill the service
requirement immediately, or fulfill it after school. With two wars raging, the Army decided to come calling right away.

“We were all a little bit shocked,” says Arand-Hopkins, a procurement contract manager at Gulfstream. “But it was what it was. In hindsight, it was probably the best decision he could have made.”

Nathan attended basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; advanced individual training (AIT) at Fort Sam Houston, Texas; and airborne school at Fort Benning, Ga. He landed momentarily at Fort Bragg, N.C., before heading to Iraq.

“I think we always knew he was going to end up deploying,” Arand-Hopkins says. “But because he was in basic and AIT and then he went to airborne, we got complacent. Then he called and told us. We didn’t make a big deal about it. We were concerned, but we knew they were going to be in Baghdad, which was a little quieter. Still, it’s a war zone.”

Nathan, now a specialist, landed in Kuwait on his birthday. A few months later, he called his mom with more news: He was planning to ask his girlfriend, a fellow soldier, to marry him. Wedding planning fell to Arand-Hopkins, who had just six weeks to pull together a ceremony for her son and his soon-to-be bride, Kourtney. “It was crazy,” she says.

But the family, including Nathan’s minister dad, managed to pull it off. The couple got married, enjoyed a whirlwind honeymoon in Orlando and then returned to Iraq, all within just two weeks. After the couple returned to combat, Arand-Hopkins used work to keep her from worrying.

“It’s a good distraction,” says Arand-Hopkins, who donned two military pins for the duration of the deployment. “It’s nice to be able to talk to other people about it.”

These days, Arand-Hopkins has traded worries for welcomes. Nathan and Kourtney came back in July. “There’s no way to describe seeing them walk up the tarmac and knowing they’re home,” she says. “I can’t tell you how glad I am to have them back.”

Sarah Devescoi, an interior designer, has reminders of her husband, a member of the 75th Ranger Regiment, sprinkled throughout her Gulfstream cubicle.

“There’s no way to describe seeing them walk up the tarmac and knowing they’re home. I can’t tell you how glad I am to have them back.”

– Donna Arand-Hopkins
For Sarah Devescovi, the welcome homes are frequent … and fleeting.

Her husband, Luke, is a sergeant with the 75th Ranger Regiment at Hunter Army Airfield. In the seven years Devescovi has known him, her soldier-husband has deployed six times. In the beginning, the Gulfstream senior interior designer wasn’t quite sure what was going on, since the Rangers are notoriously mum about their missions.

“At first, we were just friends, and he would just disappear,” Devescovi says. It took some time, but Devescovi has learned to cope with her husband’s many departures. Being a local, having an interesting job and connecting with fellow military spouses have helped her figure out the life of the armed forces wife.

“I know I might have to give up my job, my family and my friends if he gets stationed somewhere else,” she says. “I had to be willing to do that before I could marry him. It comes as a package deal. I think you just have to get into the mindset of that’s what they do.” That doesn’t mean the adjustment comes easily.

Devescovi, who appreciates having a schedule, has married someone who really can’t live by one. When duty calls, Luke goes. In fact, when Devescovi found out she was pregnant with their first child, the couple thought Luke might miss the November birth because of a deployment. As it so often does, the schedule changed and dad is tentatively slated to be home for the arrival of his son.

“If I wasn’t an independent person, I’d really struggle with all of this,” Devescovi says. “But I think it’s gratifying, too. I’m proud of what they do, that they’re willing to do that so we can be safe here. It’s also gratifying to support them when they’re gone. It’s a lot more meaningful the closer you are to it.”

Fellow Army wife Kay Ramus shares a similar sensibility. She was married to her husband for three years before the two agreed that he should join the Army. When Paul signed up, deployments were an anomaly. Not any more.

“We’ve been married for 15 years, but we’ve only been together for nine, and that includes the time before we were married,” Ramus says. “That’s the big joke.”

Because of her husband’s frenetic schedule, Ramus is accustomed to flying solo on many a milestone moment, like her first ultrasound, which took place the day after her husband, now a staff sergeant, deployed for the first time. They thought they’d planned better with their second child. But just four weeks before his scheduled return, Paul told Ramus he’d been extended, leaving her to negotiate the last months of pregnancy on her own.

Ramus has adjusted to cutting things close when it comes to the calendar. One time, Paul made it home just hours before his oldest daughter’s first day of school. When Ramus gave birth to their second daughter, Paul managed to be there. Ramus delivered her daughter on Monday, was released from the hospital on Thursday, went to the zoo with the family on Friday, and bid farewell to Paul on Saturday.

“Sometimes it works out and sometimes it doesn’t,” Ramus says. “Sometimes, you have to cut corners.”

For Ramus, that might mean scaling back on volunteer time at her daughter’s school or negotiating birthday celebrations so she can handle the planning and carry-through on her own.

“I don’t have a choice,” she says. “I don’t think about it. I just do it. Some
things are more difficult, but it’s got to be done. If he were here, there might be other problems.”

One place Ramus doesn’t cut corners is communication. The biggest challenge, she says, is staying together while living apart. On the one hand, today’s technology has made it easier. On the other, they still have to make the commitment to communicate. “My husband works 12-hour shifts, six days a week,” Ramus says. “Sometimes he’ll call when it’s least convenient for me. And I just stop what I’m doing, step out and talk.”

That’s possible, in part, because of the support she receives from her boss and coworkers at Gulfstream, Ramus says.

“They’ve never been anything but supportive,” she explains. “It helps that I have friends at work. There’s nothing anybody can really do for me, but knowing I have someone to listen to me, knowing I can say that right now is a rough time and people will say, ‘It’s OK. Things happen.’ There’s always someone I can turn to.”

It’s just as likely, though, that Ramus will turn to her canine and a long stretch of concrete. An avid runner, she pounds the pavement with her pooch, Georgia, to help her deal with the many challenges a deployment brings, including the lack of her normal running partner, Paul.

“You need a positive way to relieve stress,” she says. “In my case, I put on my running shoes and take it to the road.” That worked just fine for deployments one and two. Not so much for No. 3.

“Running isn’t cutting it, so I’ve taken up triathlons,” Ramus says. “If you think you have a problem, put on your running shoes. Ten miles later, it won’t be a problem.”

Heidi Fedak is married to Pete Fedak, who is currently serving with the U.S. Army’s 3rd Infantry Division in Tikrit, Iraq.
The extraordinary artists who comprise our Photography Department don’t use a paint palette or a brush and canvas to create their masterpieces—their tools are cameras and computers. The images on the next several pages are among this talented team’s favorites. Come join us as we enjoy a stroll through a gallery of Gulfstreams.
"This shoot was a true team effort. We had to tug the plane onto the ramp, someone had to work the lights, and somebody else wetted down the ramp for a reflective, slick look. The incredible colors as the day faded were the only part we didn’t stage—and it turned out perfect.”
“This was shot right after the G650 rollout. We were lucky to have such a fabulous sunset that day, which allowed us to create a marketing-quality image.”

“Anytime Anywhere
Terry Douth
APS G100
Savannah, 2008
Photography

“The storm was rolling in and the plane was ready to go. We ended up shooting in the rain for about two hours. This was the last shot of the day—and the one everybody liked the best. We were soaking wet, but it was a lot of fun.”

“Sunset Beauty
Terry Douth
G650
Savannah, 2009
Photography

“This was shot right after the G650 rollout. We were lucky to have such a fabulous sunset that day, which allowed us to create a marketing-quality image.”
JEWEL OVER HAWAII
Paul Bowen
GV
Hawaii, 1997
Photography

“Chosen by Beth Getman from the company’s photo archives. “I love all the different contrasts—the white plane showcased against a blue sea that fades into a green lagoon, and then the brown and emerald mountains with a deep blue sea and sky behind them.”

FACE OF THE FUTURE
Matthew Stephan
G650
Savannah, 2007
Virtual 3-D Image

“This image was created for our website but never used. I like the ‘camera’ angle. To me, it looks like a face.”

I love all the different contrasts—the white plane showcased against a blue sea that fades into a green lagoon, and then the brown and emerald mountains with a deep blue sea and sky behind them.”
Next summer, when friends ask Gulfstream Brunswick Senior Airworthiness Inspector Shellie Lewis about his year as an expat in Beijing, the conversation will invariably cover his living conditions in China’s capital city (good), the people he encountered at work (friendly) and the sites he saw (spectacular).

All those topics may have to wait, though, for the conclusion of his “chicken foot” story.

“Yesterday, I got this chicken dish for lunch,” Lewis says. “I was about halfway through it when I noticed something strange. I moved it around with my chopsticks, and then I just kind of picked it up and moved it to the side.”

Upon closer inspection, he saw toenails.

“It was a chicken foot,” a laughing Lewis says. “I don’t think I’ll forget it as long as I live.”

National delicacies aside, China has been an eye-opening experience—in a good way—for Lewis and fellow Gulfstream employees Bruce Franklin and Randall Emard, who are all living and working in Beijing. Franklin is a senior avionics and electrical technician from Gulfstream headquarters in Savannah, while Emard is a mechanical team lead from the Gulfstream facility in Appleton.

The trio started work in Beijing on June 17. Their assignment is to provide technical assistance to Beijing Capital Airlines Co. Ltd. (BCAI) and support the
warrant aircraft program. The business-jet charter company, formerly known as Deer Jet, has a fleet of 15 Gulfstreams—five G200s, four GIVs, three G550s, two GVs and one G450.

Most days, Lewis, Franklin and Emard leave work with a sense of accomplishment.

“Most of the guys at BCA are young and eager to learn,” Lewis says. “They love when you teach them something from the manual or actually show them on the airplane. You can see it on their faces. They really eat up what we’re telling them.”

Of course, sometimes it takes awhile to get through to the BCA employees, many of whom do not speak or understand much English. The ones who do often translate for the Americans.

NOTHING IS EASY

Life outside of work is often more challenging.

“It’s a pretty involved process to get some things done here,” Emard says.

For several days, just getting to work was difficult. “It was tough to communicate with the cab drivers,” Lewis says. “They didn’t understand us. They got us to the airport, but not the corporate side.”

After a plea to Tami Patton, manager, Gulfstream International Human Resources, the gentlemen now have a designated driver to take them to and from work.

Still, communicating is a daily challenge for the group.

“You must quickly learn how to improvise when it comes to communication,” says Hong Kong-based Mark Thibault, regional director, Product Support Asia Program. “Hand signals, using digital translators and simply pointing become commonplace in one’s efforts to communicate.”

Franklin spent eight years in Asia while with the U.S. Navy and worked in Beijing for Gulfstream during the 2008 Summer Olympics. Diving into a new culture wasn’t too difficult for him or Lewis, who spent time overseas, including Beijing, while director of aviation maintenance for a major U.S. holding company from 1998-2004. Emard, however, had never been outside of North America.

“I wanted to try it,” Emard says. “I thought it would be interesting.”

Emard is adapting but admitted culture shock hit him early on. Jet lag, the language barrier and culture shock are the three biggest obstacles to overcome for most expats, Thibault says.

“Jet lag and culture shock are the immediate and initial obstacles,” says Thibault, who has lived in Asia for about four years and loves it. “Mainland China is very, very different from other parts of Asia. It is a society that was isolated from most of the world until only 10 years ago. They are playing ‘catch-up’ in regard to Western ways and modern conveniences.”

Thibault says expats need to be flexible, tolerant, have a sense of adventure and be patient.

Franklin knows that all too well. “I kind of knew what to expect before I got here,” he says. “I just tell these guys to be patient and things will work out.”

It helps that each of the three live in the same 31-story apartment building in the fast-growing Chaoyang district near downtown. With the exception of a dryer, each of their apartments has most modern amenities. Restaurants, markets and a workout facility are nearby.

HAZARDS OF A BIG CITY

Nobody has a car, but that may be a good thing, considering the chaotic streets.
“I've driven in rush hour in major U.S. cities like Chicago and haven’t seen anything like this,” Emard says. “Lanes seem to be only a suggestion here.” If Lewis, Emard and Franklin aren’t hoofing it, they’re riding the Giant bicycles they each purchased in June. Bicycling is a popular way to get around the city, especially when the weather and air are good.

The city of nearly 15 million people may have had clear skies during the 2008 Olympics, but smog is a problem again. Lewis was told the air quality will get better when the temperature drops.

“There’s lots of air pollution here,” Lewis says. “You really appreciate it when you see the sunshine. Today, from my window, I can see mountains about 50 kilometers outside of Beijing. It’s beautiful. The fall is supposed to be gorgeous.”

Of course, the most difficult thing about living in Beijing for Lewis, Emard and Franklin is being away from their families. Each is married, and Franklin and Lewis have two kids apiece. Modern technology has made things a lot easier for all three, especially Lewis, who has a 6-month-old son back home.

“Right before I left, I bought a laptop for my wife and myself,” Lewis says. “They both have webcams, so with Skype, I’ve been able to see my wife and our baby boy. It’s fantastic.”

Lewis and Franklin will go home on vacation in late December, while Emard will welcome his wife to Beijing for a visit. “I want to give her a chance to see the area,” he says.

In the meantime, the trio will continue to enjoy their once-in-a-lifetime assignment.

“I feel very fortunate to be here,” Lewis says. “I’m enjoying every day. To be able to represent Gulfstream and help start up this support unit here is a great feeling.”

If you called Gulfstream employees Bruce Franklin, Randall Emard and Shellie Lewis trailblazers, you wouldn’t be wrong. The men, on a year-long assignment, are the first U.S.-based Gulfstream employees to work and live in mainland China.

Each is a member of the technician team supporting Beijing Capital Airlines (BCA), the largest fleet operator of Gulfstream aircraft (15) in the region. With the business-jet population in China predicted to grow by 600-1,200 in the next decade, Lewis, Franklin and Emard are the start of a pipeline that will continue—and may get bigger.

“We are here to stay and will continue to rotate people in and out of China for the foreseeable future,” says Mark Thibault, regional director, Product Support Asia Program. “Many, many aircraft are being sold into China and we want to support them at the same levels as anywhere in the world.”

In the last year, Gulfstream has added a field service representative in Beijing, doubled spare parts at bases in Beijing, Hong Kong and Singapore, added an international distribution manager for parts and materials in Hong Kong, and placed interior maintenance specialists in Hong Kong.

As Gulfstream grows globally, so does its International Human Resources Department. “Our organization was created in November of 2007 and has quickly moved from a reactive role to a more proactive one,” says Tami Patten, manager, International Human Resources. “We have become part of the strategy when we talk about Gulfstream doing business globally.”

Supporting employees includes taking care of their relocation, benefits, premiums, allowances, tax, immigration and more. Support—from the company—is one of the reasons Lewis applied for the Beijing assignment in the first place. He spent time in Germany for the company as a member of the Contractor Logistics Support (CLS) program in 1994.

“I knew Gulfstream’s history and the way they treated me in the past,” Lewis says. “The staff in Savannah is almost like family.”

That group, which includes Patten; Sonia Shavers-Jenkins, specialist, International Human Resources; and Dennis Boatright, regional senior manager, Human Resources; had Lewis, Emard and Franklin take a day-long cultural training class in Savannah before they left for China. It could’ve been titled “How Not to Offend Someone.”

“I thought it was a little bit silly at the time, but it definitely has helped,” Lewis says.

He may be a guest lecturer for the next class.

“One of the interesting things we’ve discovered over here is dealing with business cards,” Lewis says. “When a person gives you their business card, they look you in the eye and give it to you with both hands instead of one. You are expected to take it with both hands and look them in the eye. It’s almost a procedure.”

Some of the best advice Lewis and company received before they left for China came outside of class. Get a VoIP (voice over Internet protocol) product, Patten says. For $19.95, you get a year’s worth of unlimited long distance.

“You can call home and your family can call you,” Lewis says. “Randall and Bruce have one, too. What a home run for everybody involved.”
Hollywood’s real Jet Setter

BY PATTY JENSEN

In the upstairs bedroom of a suburban San Diego home, a young mother energetically goes through the paces of her aerobics routine, bending, reaching, stretching her torso in tandem with the music. She turns, and her eyes widen in terror. A stranger stands there. He will be the last sight she ever sees.

She is the sixth victim of a serial killer who—before he murders his victims—glues their eyes open so they are forced to see him in their final moments. There is no time to waste. The local police need help now to stop this monstrous murderer.

So begins the episode of “Criminal Minds” titled “Plain Sight.” The popular television series, which began its sixth season this fall on CBS, follows a team of profilers from the FBI’s Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU) at Quantico, Va. The drama differs from many other similar shows by focusing on the criminal rather than the crime itself. Its cast of characters is beloved by the millions of viewers who faithfully watch each week’s exciting new episode unfold. While the actors most certainly receive thousands of fan letters, there is one very important character that never gets a single love note or even a tweet of adoration, yet is critical to the show. That cast member is a Gulfstream jet.

“The Gulfstream is an important element in our series,” says Vincent Jefferds, production designer for “Criminal Minds.” “In each show, time is of the essence. This is a ‘ticking clock’ premise. The BAU team must fly all over the country in a hurry, and they need to familiarize themselves with the criminal’s behavior and be ready to go when they land. They require a place to work while they are traveling, and that place is the inside of a Gulfstream.”

Nearly every episode of “Criminal Minds” features footage of a Gulfstream
at the beginning of the show, usually a G450 or G550, winging its way through the sky, then cuts to the interior of the jet as the BAU team discusses and begins to analyze the mind of the “UNSUB”—the “unknown subject” of the investigation. The shows often end with the cast coming home on the Gulfstream, tired but happy that they caught the villain.

“The Gulfstream is essentially one of the series’ characters,” Jeffers says. “In most episodes, the aircraft bookends the show, appearing at the beginning and in the final scene.”

When the show’s producers were creating the pilot episode in 2005, they considered various business jets to determine which would be fast enough to get the BAU team to cities across the country, while providing the environment necessary to conduct the team’s research during the trip. Helping their search was Jennifer Ketelsen, associate producer, who admits she had an inside scoop on Gulfstream’s superior qualifications for the job.

“My dad, Buzz Yates, was Gulfstream’s Southeast regional sales manager at the time,” she says with a laugh. “I certainly understood Gulfstream’s superb attributes. The timing was perfect, since he retired later that year.”

When the producers approached Gulfstream, they went through the usual vetting process required for every request to use a Gulfstream—whether for a movie, television show or advertisement.

“Gulfstream’s brand and image are incredibly important and valuable assets for our company. We need to review the context, the script, and how the product is positioned. No bad guys, drugs, terrorism or unsafe ways of flying, like near-misses.” — Will Dent

Once his department saw the premise of the show, they knew they had a winning partnership, according to Dent. “Every week the BAU team finds and stops a vicious criminal. And they use the Gulfstream as an important business tool in solving each crime. It was a perfect fit.”

Ultimately, Dent’s department sent nearly four hours of footage to the “Criminal Minds” producers, with beautiful aerial shots of our aircraft flying over many different landscapes. In addition to videos of the G450 and G550, Dent later provided footage of the G150 and G200. That is why keen observers (and Gulfstream
aficionados) of the show may see different models of our planes from episode to episode. But most importantly, they are all Gulfstreams.

Once the exterior shots were obtained, the series needed a way to film interior views of the BAU team working in the jet while they rush to solve the next crime. The solution? Build a complete working set of the interior of a Gulfstream.

“Gulfstream was extremely generous in helping us create the Gulfstream set,” Ketelsen says. “Your Long Beach employees were especially kind in allowing us to view your facilities so we could create the most realistic set possible.”

Of course the set, situated on a sound stage in Glendale, Calif., is not an exact replica of the interior of a Gulfstream. For example, the aisle is wider than a true Gulfstream to allow for the show’s cameras to traverse up and down the set.

“We built the set in parts so they can be moved for shooting,” Jefferds says. “The top comes off, and we can pull off the sides. We create a sense of motion by the lighting we use.”

The production crew of “Criminal Minds” is constantly working to keep the interior set, which is a blend of a G450 and G550, updated. To achieve that task, they often request technical advice from Gulfstream employees.

“We were recently asked by the show where they could obtain drawer latches for an aft lavatory on the set that would match the mockup’s other latches,” says Michael Hinely, Final Phase manager in Long Beach. “As it turned out, we no longer use those square latches. But we found some leftover components and sent them to the crew. It helped us clean out part of our old inventory and helped them update their set.”

The series’ association with Gulfstream has been fun for Long Beach employees, says Hinely. “Several years ago they came to our site and did some filming for the show. They shot one of our aircraft taxiing up after it landed, and then the doors opened and all the stars walked off the plane. That was pretty cool.”

“Criminal Minds” is a popular show. While it will likely be renewed again next year, it is destined to live in reruns forever. And it will continue to showcase Gulfstream jets in a positive light, which is a marketing—and public relations—plus for our company.

Oh, and whatever happened with the serial murderer in San Diego? They got him. What puzzled the BAU team was how he was able to skulk around neighborhoods observing houses so he would know when to find his next victim home and alone. Why didn’t anyone see him? As it turned out, he worked as a telephone line repairman. Nobody paid him any attention, yet he was in “plain sight” the whole time. Another victory for the BAU team and Gulfstream—until the next criminal mind strikes.

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so you want to be in pictures?

Gulfstream aircraft have been featured in dozens of motion pictures over the years. Sometimes just a bit player, other times with a significant role, Gulfstreams have an impressive resume of appearances that would make most movie stars jealous. Can a place on Hollywood’s legendary Walk of Fame be far behind?

Here are a few of our business jets’ movie credits. Go see some current showings, or rent the ones listed below, and see how many Gulfstreams you can spot. Have fun!

Inception 2010
Iron Man 2 2010
Tropic Thunder 2008
The Bucket List 2007
Ocean’s Thirteen 2007
Balls of Fury 2007
Mission Impossible III 2006
Two for the Money 2005
Rumor Has It 2005
Flightplan 2005
Ocean’s Twelve 2004
Mr. Deeds 2002
Ocean’s Eleven 2001
Cast Away 2000
Shaft 2000
The Whole Nine Yards 2000
Random Hearts 1999
Rush Hour 1998
Six Days Seven Nights 1998
Wag the Dog 1997
Red Corner 1997
The Rock 1996
Sabrina 1995
It Takes Two 1995
Casino 1995
True Lies 1994
Clear and Present Danger 1994
Pretty Woman 1990
Wall Street 1987

Have you seen a Gulfstream in a movie that’s not listed above? Please let us know and we will add it to the list.
A G550, operated by GS Executive AG of Zurich, left Araxos Airport in Greece to start its worldwide tour transporting the official flame of the inaugural Youth Olympic Games.

The question has come up more than a few times in Ken Maxwell’s 21 years as a Gulfstream field service representative: What exactly does an FSR do?

In short, an FSR provides customer service wherever an aircraft is located. Take, for example, a G550’s recent 13-day, 50,000-kilometer journey. The aircraft carried dignitaries and officials, but its most important “passenger” was a lantern that housed the symbolic Olympic flame for the inaugural Youth Olympic Games in Singapore.

The event, which involved more than 3,500 athletes representing 204 countries, took place Aug. 14-26.

“This effort was beyond anything we’ve ever done in regard to the many locations,” says Maxwell, operations manager, International Field Service. “It was an excellent example of a plan coming together and working well. Everyone involved did a great job.”

“Operation Youth Olympics” began in late July when a G550 operated by GS Executive AG of Zurich spent a few days at the Jet Aviation facility in Geneva. Maintenance personnel replaced the LP fan blades on both engines and applied decals.

With little time to spare, the aircraft left Geneva on July 23 for Araxos Airport near Olympia, Greece, site of the first Olympic Games 23 centuries ago. A day after the official Olympic flame was ignited in a ritual ceremony, it and International Olympic Committee members were flown to Berlin. The worldwide whirlwind tour continued on to Dakar, Senegal; then Mexico City/Toluca; Honolulu; Auckland, New Zealand; and Seoul, South Korea. Celebrations took place in each city except Honolulu, where Gulfstream Contractor Logistics Support team members assisted a middle-of-the-night stop for fuel and fresh pilots. The flame’s G550 journey ended in Singapore on Aug. 6.

Keepers of the Olympic Flame

BY SEAN COUGHLIN
“It was exciting knowing that this aircraft was flying around the world and so many of Gulfstream’s FSRs were supporting it at every stop,” says Eddie Hernandez, a Mexico-based FSR. “I know the flight crew that I met was very appreciative with the support Gulfstream provided.”

FSRs “chase jets” for a living, Maxwell says, but this assignment was different because those involved did not work from their home base. Singapore-based Mark Moss met the aircraft in Auckland, while Hong Kong-based Danny Allen did the same in Seoul, and so on.

“Every aircraft arrival was met,” Maxwell says. “The FSR debriefed the crew at every stop and was there until the aircraft departed. They made sure everything was OK.”

The trip went as planned. The biggest issue was a galley oven fan that was found inoperable in Dakar. FSR Dave Sowards troubleshooted it for the flight to Mexico, then Technical Operations personnel in Savannah arranged for Gulfstream Airborne Product Support to transport a new oven to Toluca. Hernandez took care of getting the part through customs.

“This is what we do,” Maxwell says. “We go out and meet airplanes, but we’ve never done something of this magnitude. The guys love what they do. They are totally absorbed making sure customers get everything we can possibly give to them. If we are asked to do this kind of thing again, I think we will. We really showed what we can do.”

As for the Olympic flame, which has come to symbolize “the light of spirit, knowledge, and life,” it traveled in a 7-pound, purple-and-silver safety lantern, packed in a special fire-proof cabinet, while on the G550. During air travel, where open flames are not allowed, the flame burned in the lantern, which acted like a miner’s lamp. A member of the Zurich Airport Fire Department served as the full-time flame caretaker in flight. Her bed was located next to the cabinet.

When on land, the flame was used to light a torch that was relayed around each city on the trip. The flame was transferred back to the lantern at the end of the day. In case the flame went out while on a torch relay, other strategically placed safety lanterns were kept alight.

“This effort was beyond anything we’ve ever done in regard to the many locations. It was an excellent example of a plan coming together and working well. Everyone involved did a great job. Every aircraft arrival was met. The FSR debriefed the crew at every stop and was there until the aircraft departed. They made sure everything was OK.”

– Ken Maxwell
In 1963, the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation hired me to be a crew chief on the Grumman E-2A Hawkeye. The Hawkeye was a tactical Airborne Early Warning airplane that was flown from aircraft carriers. Our work began when a fully assembled aircraft was delivered to Plant 4 at Grumman’s Bethpage, Long Island, manufacturing facility. Our job was to make sure the craft was airworthy. Grumman test pilots would perform engine run-ups, then conduct the first flight. When the airplane checked out, we would prepare it for delivery to the U.S. Navy.

Four years of training in the U.S. Air Force prepared me for the job. After leaving the service, I worked for Republic Aviation for a year, readying the Republic F-105 Thunderchief for delivery. The Thunderchief was a fighter-bomber with Mach-2 capability.

Then it was on to Grumman. I chose Grumman because it was a stable company that offered steady work.

I was working the afternoon shift on Oct. 2 when the Grumman Gulfstream II was getting ready for its first flight. The crew started with taxi tests or run-ups. The Federal Aviation Administration had asked Grumman to do 15 “jump-offs” with the airplane before conducting the first flight. That meant the airplane would accelerate, lift a few feet off the runway and land.

At 3:11 p.m., Grumman test pilots Bob Smyth and Carl Alber taxied the blue and white business jet out for its first flight at the Grumman airfield in Bethpage. They taxied into position, waited for clearance and then applied full power.
Gulfstream II N801GA s/n 0001 accelerated down the runway, lifted off smoothly and climbed to 10,000 feet. Then it headed out over Long Island Sound.

About halfway through the flight, the flight crew engaged the autopilot. For the first time in aviation history, an autopilot guided a business jet during its maiden flight. Fifty-two minutes after wheels up, the airplane landed at Grumman’s flight-test facility at Calverton, Long Island, some 40 miles east of Bethpage.

After the successful first flight, it was time for the certification phase to begin. Grumman added two more “green” aircraft to the certification test program. By this time, we were working 12-hour shifts on the flight-test program. There was a lot to learn about this airplane, and we were eager to learn as much as we could.

When the flight-test program ended and the GII was certificated, I returned to Bethpage from Calverton and worked on the final prep and delivery line for the first 18 GIIIs assembled at Grumman Bethpage. After they were painted, the airplanes were flown to several outfitting agencies for completion.

In my next assignment, I was appointed a crew chief with the Grumman corporate fleet. At the time, the fleet consisted of the two flight-test GIIIs and three GI aircraft. We were using our corporate GIIIs to evaluate service changes. We installed and prototyped several new service changes, including the first EPA can systems, the first Hush Kit Reversers and the new Task boost pumps.

After earning my airframe and power plant license, I was assigned to manage the night shift at Plant Four at Bethpage. A year later, I joined John Mapes and John Montalto as Northeast field service representatives. Our largest concentration of aircraft was centered at Westchester County Airport north of New York City, so that’s where we maintained our office.

For the next 15 years, I focused on serving Gulfstream operators in the field. Goldie Glenn, who had been involved in the flight-test program at Grumman, had formed the first Gulfstream field service operation years before. He taught us to emphasize customer support above all. He was our mentor; we learned from him.

In 1978, a year before the first flight of our next new model, the GIII, Allen Paulson bought what was then Grumman American and renamed it Gulfstream American. That was a significant development. It marked the first time the name of the company was synonymous with the name of the airplane.

In 1987, I relocated to Los Angeles. Today, I’m a senior field service representative doing the work I love. We are the link between Gulfstream and the customer. Most of our work involves providing hands-on technical support in the areas of general maintenance and troubleshooting the Gulfstream business jets based in our area.

Being a field service representative is one of the best jobs in the company. We’re on call seven days a week and that takes some getting used to in the beginning. But the satisfaction of helping our customers and supporting their needs is very rewarding. We have a highly trained group of field representatives stationed around the world, all serving as the interface between our customers and our company. We continually strive to keep Gulfstream field service and product support number one in the industry. So far, we’ve been successful.

Walt Wendelstein is a senior field service representative for Gulfstream, stationed near Long Beach, Calif. He has devoted 47 years to Gulfstream and its predecessor, the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation. He intends to retire in 2013 after rendering 50 years of service.
pride
respect
teamwork
integrity
stewardship

TAKE PRIDE IN THE INTEGRITY, QUALITY AND SAFETY OF OUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES
TREAT EVERYONE WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT
WORK TOGETHER SUPPORTIVELY AND SAFELY IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
CONDUCT BUSINESS HONESTLY AND ETHICALLY
COMMIT OURSELVES TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS—OUR CUSTOMERS, SUPPLIERS, EMPLOYEES, STOCKHOLDERS AND COMMUNITIES