

Ely Air Lines –

The Airplane Was The Answer

by Mike Ely and Linda Street-Ely

Martin C. Schow knew nothing about airplanes when he made a promise to God.

His young wife was in labor with their first child when something went terribly wrong. He lost them both.

In his grief, Martin prayed. He promised God that somehow, someday, he would find a way to help people get emergency medical care when they needed it. He did not yet know what that way would be. God's timing is not always ours.

A few years later, Martin discovered airplanes. Not content merely to fly, he built one in 1927. And since there was no instructor sitting beside him when it came time to learn what his creation could do, Martin



taught himself. He taxied back and forth, getting the feel of the machine. Then he let it leave the ground just a little. Next time, a little higher. Bit by bit, he learned how his homemade airplane behaved until he was finally flying it.

There were practical lessons along the way. Martin used a glass bottle filled with water as ballast. That worked fine until

North Dakota winter presented the obvious problem with water, and he switched to kerosene.

Eventually, Martin understood that the airplane he had built and learned to fly could fulfill the promise he had made years earlier, and he began using airplanes to help people. He flew emergency missions when someone needed medical care. He flew children to school when weather made getting there by ground impossible. When ranchers couldn't reach their cattle, he dropped hay from the air. And when a flight was over, he didn't just push the airplane back into the hangar and go home. He cleaned it and made sure it was ready to fly again, because someone might need it.

That little detail says a lot about Martin C. Schow. For him, an airplane was so much more than a machine or even an adventure. It was something that could be put to work for somebody else.

God eventually brought Martin a second wife and family. His daughter Geneva inherited his love of aviation and learned to fly from him. She would go on to become a prominent North Dakota aviator herself, and, like her father, earn a place in the North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame.

But Martin's second wife never asked him to erase the life that came before theirs. She honored Olga's memory and kept it present in the family, like preserving a clock that had belonged to her.

There is something so apt about that clock. Time moved forward. Martin remarried. He raised a family. He built an airplane and taught himself to fly it. He discovered that wings could overcome distances that, on the ground, might mean the difference between help arriving and help coming too late. But the promise born in that terrible moment of loss remained. Martin C. Schow had found his way to the sky. And when he got there, he used it to help others.



Mark Bush (center), Liberty's airport manager, is flanked by Ed Seymour and Sherial Lawson at the HCA AirLife Community Open House last week.

Sign up now for Patriot Day Golf Tournament

DAYTON - American Legion Dayton Memorial Post 512 is hosting its 13th annual Patriot Day Golf Tournament Saturday, October 24. Registration will be held from 8-9 a.m. followed by a shotgun start at 9 a.m. The tournament will be a four-man scramble format and will be played at the Chambers County Golf Course in Anahuac.

Along with an outstanding and exciting round of golf, there will be on-course activities. Plenty of beverages, door prizes and lunch will be provided. There are cash prizes for the first, second and third place winning

teams, as well as door prizes and designated hole prizes.

Post 512 welcomes and extends an invitation to all players who would like to participate in this year's tournament and to hole sponsors who would like to showcase their business on a golf hole tee-box. The tournament supports The American Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) by donating 10 percent of net income to OCW. OCW contributes to the special needs of wounded servicemen and servicewomen during rehabilitation.



To date, donations total \$12,000, with a goal this year of \$13,000 in total donations. The remaining funds will support The American Legion programs, help our veterans and benefit our children and youth.

For player or hole sponsor forms or information or to show your support by making a donation, contact Jerry at 936-402-0741.

Hardin Methodist celebrates 150 years, *Continued from Page A-1*

and four buildings.

The church was first established in 1876 with Rev. J.R.D. Taylor under the name China Grove Methodist Church. Worship services were held in a log church building on skids, and the church moved to different locations depending on weather conditions.

A chapel was constructed in 1886 on land donated by Liberty businessman William F. "Bee" Hardin, which is the church's present location.

The chapel was originally named Smith's Chapel Methodist Church to honor Rev. John A. Smith, who served as pastor from 1884 to 1886. In 1910, the church changed its name to Hardin Chapel Methodist Church, and renovations were carried out on the building.

The congregation began holding regular services and established a Sunday school in 1916.

A new church was built in 1939, but a fire destroyed it in 1958. While the church was being rebuilt, services were held in the Hardin schoolhouse, remaining there until the new structure was completed in November 1958.

Property for a parsonage was deeded in 1960, and a brick building was completed soon after. Additional land was donated in 1994.

Through the years, the

church saw 76 pastors, and Watson holds the title of longest-serving pastor with 33 years.

About 13 months ago, the congregation welcomed Pastor Michael Martin, a Louisiana native who quickly found a home in Hardin.

Martin said it was a bit intimidating but an honor to be a part of a church with such a long history.

"I'm part of Hardin's rich history now, and I'm honored to be the pastor here and to be part of that rich history," Martin said.

Martin added that they are praying, not just for the church, but for the community and the nation.

"I do pray that the church be filled, but more than that, I pray

that our church be known for the love of Christ," Martin said.

The church offers multiple programs, serving a cross-section of its members and the community at large.

Every Wednesday evening, the congregation enjoys dinner before breaking into groups for Bible study, youth programming, Kids Korner, and the women's class. Senior Fellowship Friday is held once a month on Fridays.

All are invited to visit the church at 1005 FM 834 W., Liberty. Services are held every Sunday at 10:55 a.m.

To learn more about the church, visit hardinmethodist.com or facebook.com/HardinUMC/.

Order 4-H holiday pecans now

LIBERTY - Good for snacking or holiday baking, either way, Liberty County 4-H has begun its annual 4-H Pecan Sale fundraiser. The pecans come shelled in one-pound bags and can be purchased for \$12. Choose pieces or halves. Contact your local 4-H Clubs: 4-H Hot Shots, Dayton 4-H, Dolen 4-H, Forever 4-H, Hardin 4-H, Hope 4-H, Plum Grove 4-H, Tarkington 4-H, Trinity Trail-

blazer 4-H or contact the Liberty County Extension Office at 936-334-3230. Proceeds from sales will support the 4-H program.



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