

George's Aircraft

Don Aydelott and his brother Lynn Hooker have owned George's Aircraft since their stepfather retired more than 20 years ago.

Aydelott says his career began at the ripe age of twelve when he stepped off the school grounds for the last time before summer.

"I remember the last day of seventh grade, everyone ran out the doors like 'FREEDOM!' Aydelott said. "All I could think of is how much fun we were all going to have at the two-month long party that everyone was invited to...summer break!"

He remembers staying up late that first night of summer thinking he could sleep in until he decided to hit the town with his friends. He was wrong.

"Monday morning rolled around and there was George, kicking my bed at 6:30," Aydelott recalled. "'Get up' he said. I was like, I'm not even in school today. 'You have work today,' he said. But I was like, man, I ain't got no job!"

Reluctantly, Aydelott got dressed and made his way to the shop with George.

"That was when we worked for my grandfather, Shivers Flying Service, before George's ever existed," Aydelott said.

"George told me on the way to work that morning that we needed to come to an agreement," Aydelott continued. "I realize that all your friends are goofing off all summer, and that's what you would like to be doing but they're not going to learn anything, and you are. We can do this two ways; you can get up every morning, go to work, and be happy about it, or we can get up every morning and I'll whip your *** and you can go to work and not be able to sit down all day.' I told him, let's go to work, you've inspired me!"

Aydelott said he didn't get paid to work those summers but he did learn valuable skills and gain the experience he needed to operate the business today.

George's Aircraft works on primarily AirTractor brand planes which are manufactured in Olney, Texas. Their exclusive relationship began in the 1980s when Don worked for George at the Wilbarger County Airport out of a single hanger.

"Our business has grown enough that we don't have to work on anything except Air Tractors," he said. "It is a niche market that is worldwide. There are between 4,000 and 5,000 in service worldwide. Most people call me before they call their insurance company and ask me what to do.

"I say, call the FAA, you've got 30 minutes. Then, call your wife and tell her you're okay. Then, call your insurance company tell them you've spoke to me and that I will take care of it.

"We are a full service shop equipped with a sheet metal department, weld department, paint department, general maintenance department, all of that and it will roll out looking like it did the day it left the Air Tractor factory."

Aydelott travels all over the world to service Air Tractors and to educate companies on their plane and maintenance and repairs.

