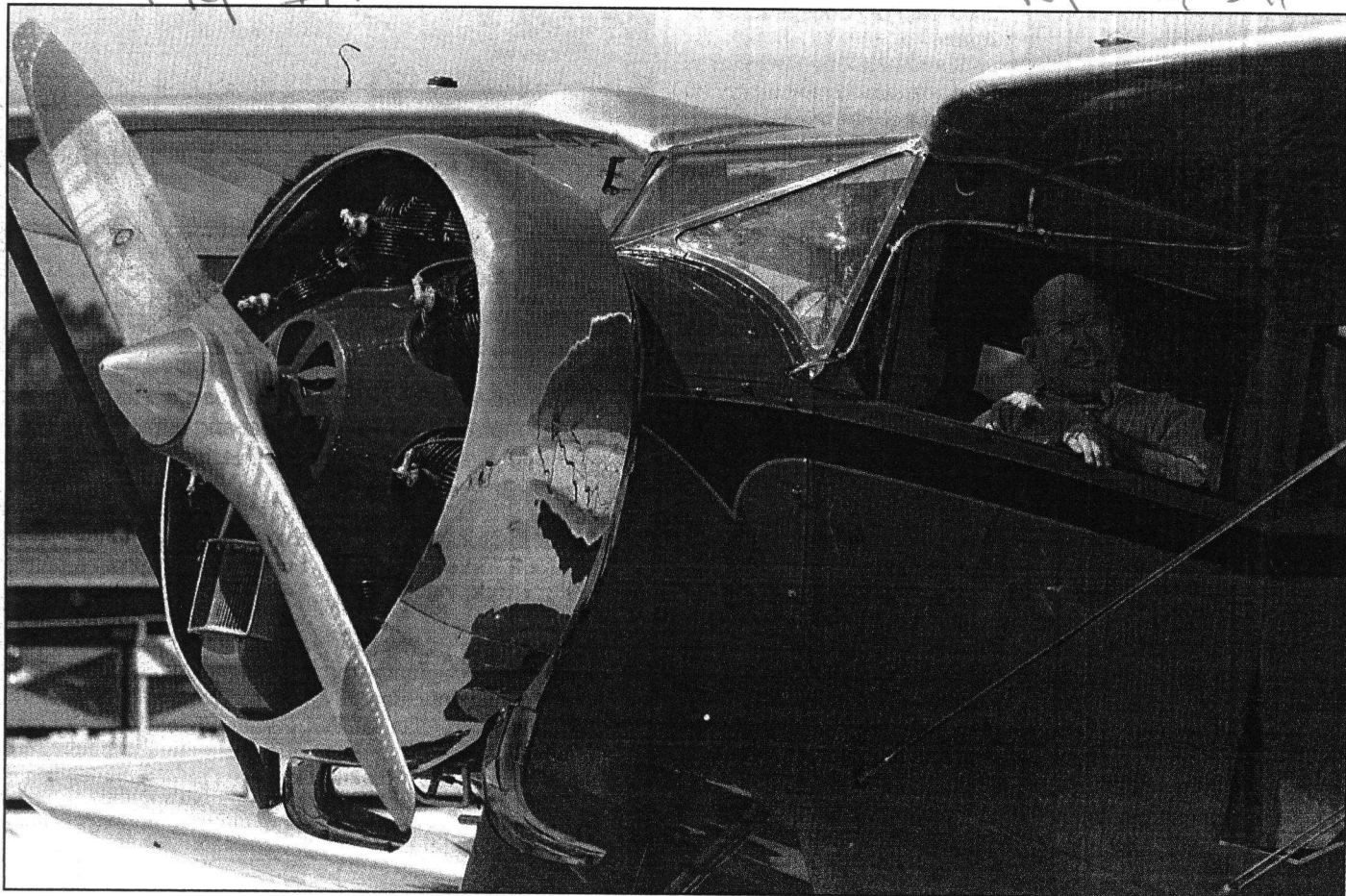
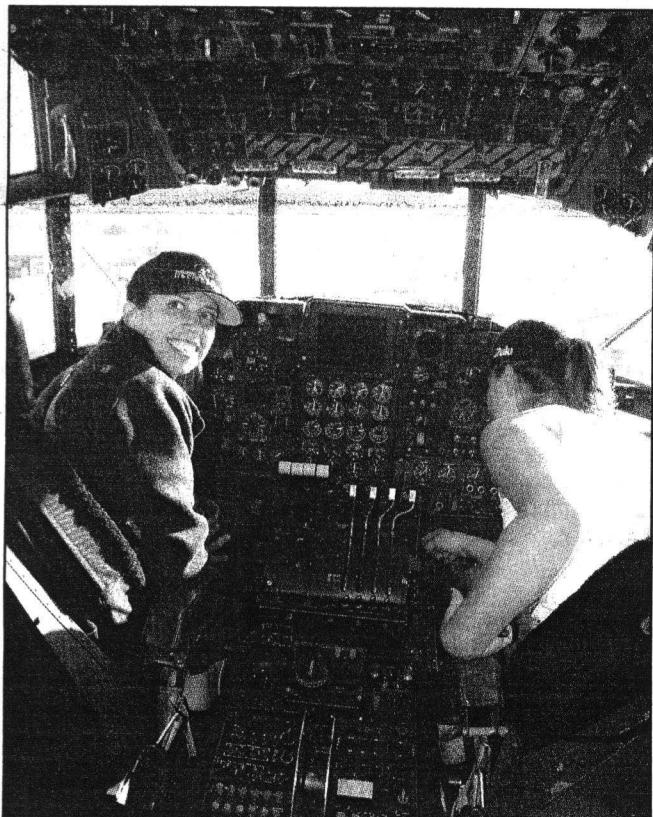


# Aircraft take to the skies



Alan Buchner arrives at the 47th annual Watsonville Fly-In & Air Show Friday from Fresno in his 1932 Waco QDC. The biplane, which in its day, sold for \$5,985, claimed first place at the 2010 Fly-In. Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

Ivona Redlinska (left), a flight instructor with Specialized Helicopters of Watsonville, enjoys her perch in the pilot's seat of a MC 130P combat rescue airplane Thursday.

## Old favorite, new gems appear at Watsonville Fly-In & Air Show

By TODD GUILD

OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

They arrived in droves Friday, a patchwork armada of aircraft ranging from hand-made, single-seat propeller-driven planes to gargantuan military transport planes whose tails tower above the tarmac.

The 47th annual Watsonville Fly-In & Air Show will feature many old favorites, such as the U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III. At 174 feet long and boasting a wingspan of more than 160 feet, the plane is the largest plane ever to land at the airport.

The airshow will also feature aerobatic performers such as Vicky Benzing, Eddie Andreini and Tim Decker.

But attendees will also find new aircraft sitting on the tarmac and flying through the air.

Eric Preston of Sonoma will be showing off a plane he built as a replica of a Bleriot XI, the first plane to cross the Atlantic.

Nothing more than a metal frame covered by wood and fabric, the simple airplane is contrasted by the contemporary models sitting nearby.

Preston said he built the plane in 29 days with the help of his wife and two sons.

Finding planes such as the replica Bleriot is exactly the point of coming to airshows for Chester Davis, who recently moved to the area from St. Louis.

"You almost always see something new," he said.

Davis said he prefers the "warbirds," a term for aircraft that were flown during World War II.

A member of the St. Louis wing of the Commemorative Air Force, Davis said he appreciates the history represented by restored and preserved planes.

"That's what the Commemorative Air Force is all about," he said.





Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

Jaime Comilang and her son, Ben, 3, view a port war Grumman F8F-2 Bearcat.

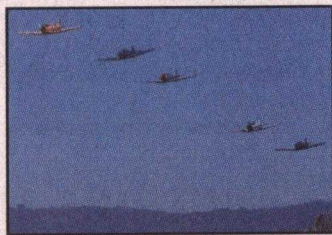
## FLY-IN

From page A1

This year's fly-in falls on the 100th anniversary of naval aviation.

Jason Somes of Los Angeles said he flew to Watsonville in his 1945 Grumman F8-F Bearcat, a plane designed for the U.S. Navy to replace the Hellcat during WWII.

Somes said the Bearcat fleet never made it to combat because the war ended just before



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

**Five models of the North American T6 line up for landing at Watsonville Municipal Airport Friday.**

it was deployed.

"It's too bad, because this plane would have kicked ass,"

he said.

Randy Comilang said he came to the fly-in last year with his now 3-year-old son Ben, who left wanting to be a pilot.

"I guess we're going to make this an annual thing for the family," he said.

...

*Gates for the Watsonville Fly-In & Air Show will open today and Sunday at 9 a.m. The airshow will begin at noon.*

*For information, visit [www.watsonvilleairshow.org](http://www.watsonvilleairshow.org).*