

Last 1 out, hit the throttle

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By Joseph Hopper, Daily Reporter Staff

Ultra-rare aircraft to land in Spencer



Ed Newberg's 1943 Timm N2T-1 will be on display at Sunday's flight breakfast at the Northwest Iowa Regional Airport.

Photo submitted

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Despite living approximately 100 miles away from Spencer and its airport, Ed Newberg, of Minnesota, has been a fixture of one of Spencer's longest running and popular scenes, aviation. A fixture for many of the Northwest Iowa Regional Airport's airshows in the 1990s, the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Famer will be flying into Spencer on Sunday for the airport's flight breakfast in an aircraft which is the last of its kind still flying. The 1943 Timm N2T-1 that Newberg will be flying into Spencer was at one time used by the United States Navy to train pilots.

"The 'N' stands for Navy, the 'T' stands for trainer. It was used for primary training and for formation flying," Newberg explained. "There was 262 (Timm N2T-1 aircraft) built, all delivered to the Navy in 1943, and this is the only one left flying. There's quite a few left in museums, but none of them are flying. (My aircraft is) all in original condition. This is America's first composite airplane."

Newberg said that his passion for aviation has led him to collect some incredibly rare aircraft over the years and that the challenges required to pilot such aircraft are part of the allure to him.



Ed Newberg as he sits in the last flying Lockheed Vega, which he shared is owned by a friend.

Photo submitted

“I’ve bought and sold a lot of antique airplanes over the years and probably have sold about 200,” Newberg said. “(I’d) compare (flying antique aircraft) to (driving) a Model A or a Model T, where you have to shift the gears to know what you’re doing. (Antique aircraft) take more skill to fly than modern airplanes do, so that part to me is fun, the challenge. It’s just fun to have rare airplanes, just like collecting antique cars, they generally hold value well, (and) it’s just fun to share that with people. ... You learn a lot about how (aircraft) work by learning about where we came from.”

Gayle Brandt, director of airport services, explained that rare aircraft don’t typically show up in Spencer, and aviation events like the flight breakfast are a way to be able to see pieces of aviation history and their pilots.

“(There’s) typically not a lot of rare airplanes (coming in) other times in the year other than a flight breakfast or an airshow. That’s when we invite some rare airplanes, unique airplanes. (It’s) something that is an attraction for the community to come and see ... the refurbished airplane or home built airplane or something like that,” Brandt said. “(Newberg) has had many (aircraft) brought down to our airport, many rare airplanes he’s been involved with over the years.”

Newberg shared his advice for venturing into the aviation hobby and subculture, noting that owning aircraft in general is an expensive journey and requires some serious math skills.

“Well, I would say learn about (aircraft) in books, and then study them on the internet. Nowadays, you can just study things so easily. Build model airplanes, get into models real young, but when you are old enough to fly, work hard and make some money. It takes money to fly, and math is important,” Newberg said. “I just love aviation, and the more you know about it, the better off you’re gonna be at it. I’ve always enjoyed bringing young people out at the airport, taking them for rides. Get out to the flight breakfast, check out these airplanes.”

Newberg and his aircraft will be in Spencer at 7 a.m. Sunday along with many other pilots and aircraft as a part of the Northwest Iowa Regional Airport’s flight breakfast during Flagfest.