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Aero Charter, Part 135 Flying Safety Award Winner, Adds FBO Services

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Aero Charter owners Ray Van de Riet, Bob Thomas and John Morgenthaler Jr.

Each year, the National Business Aviation Association recognizes member companies with superb safety records. Once again, Aero Charter is honored in this category. Ranked third out of 235 member companies who have flown three or more consecutive accident-free years, Aero Charter has accumulated more than 71,000 hours in its 30th year of operation.

“Safety is our No. 1 company core value,” Aero Charter president John Morgenthaler Jr. said. “We teach all of our team members that safety comes before anything else. We have a safety officer, a safety committee, and we hold regular in-house pilot meetings that include safety panel discussions.”

Aero Charter, based at Spirit of St. Louis Airport (SUS), provides a number of aircraft for charter. The fleet includes jet, turbine and piston aircraft and currently comprises Hawkers, Sabreliners, King Airs, Chieftains and Barons. The company also flies organs for medical transplants.

In addition to charter, Aero Charter’s aircraft management division provides flight crews, maintenance, avionics, FAA-compliant record keeping, dispatch, fuel, catering and ground support for aircraft owners. Its avionics department specializes in custom installations and retrofit systems. In 1995, it introduced Aero Travel, a full-service travel agency.

"It's the personal service that we offer and our relationship that make us stand out," co-founder, co-owner and CEO Bob Thomas said.

Aero Charter employs 20 pilots, six mechanics, four avionics specialists and eight linemen with a total of 40 people. Included in the pilot pool are two of the three owners, Bob Thomas and John Morgenthaler. Jeff Thomas, Bob's son, is also in the pilot pool.

The third and equal owner, Ray Van de Riet, joined the company on July 1. "He brings to us his valuable experience in finance and business administration — fine tuning the development of our infrastructure to make us outstanding in the field and on the field!" Bob Thomas said.

The company has completed a major concrete ramp extension, remodeled its facility and acquired two new fuel trucks. "We have become a full-service FBO, able to sell fuel and services to outside clients." Morgenthaler said. "We have a strong base of employees who are dedicated to customer service. We look forward to being the FBO of choice at Spirit of St. Louis."

Aero Charter plans to further expand its FBO facilities, its aircraft management, charter, avionics and maintenance departments "while maintaining our family-style environment and all our common core values," Morgenthaler said.

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