



Story by Hannah Elliott

### ***Once there was a little boy who wanted to fly***

and now he does every day. Whether he is in the sky in his Air Tractor, or on the ground with the love of his life, in his heart he is always soaring. Stan Ferguson is not your average ag pilot. As pictures and stories tell, he has a passion for life, and he lives life to the full. Anyone who knows Stan sees the love he has for God, his sweet wife and family. They also know he and his family are enthusiastic Razorback fans. His support as a fan has even spread as far as his wings. Stan's AT602 "Susie Q," named after his wife, Sue, sports the Razorback colors as well as logos and other Razorback artwork including the words, Woo Pig Sooie, under her wings.

The story of how Stan came to have such a unique Air Tractor is one worth telling. Stan began his career as an ag pilot in 1976 working in Shelby, Mississippi. Then, in 1980, Stan established Southern Aire, Inc. in Cotton Plant, Arkansas, and has been owner/operator since. He has a crew of several men, including his son Robert, that fly many hours and love the job they do. As for his aircraft, Stan owned two other "Susie Q's" before his AT 602. His first was a Cessna Ag- Husky, and his second was an AT502. In all his years of flying, he has been able to see many amazing wonders of nature and some rather unusual and funny things of interest. From storms, flooding, and even seeing a llama in the middle of a wheat field, he enjoys the many perks of being in the air. Stan has even been blessed with a message on a roof from friends, just saying hello.

In 2008, Stan told Sue he was flying too many hours and needed to cut back. He was flying around 600-700 hours

each season. He decided it was time to sell the 502 and buy his last plane. He bought the 602 from Randy Gibbons of Marvel, Arkansas. When he bought the 602 it was bare, as it was basically just the central portion of the aircraft. Due to the fact that this would be his last plane, he spent his money wisely to ensure the aircraft would last. The main portion of the aircraft was a 1997 model. The wings were rebuilt from another 602 with only 54 hours on them. He put in a reconditioned PT6A-65 engine. An M3 Hemisphere GPS provides the guidance. Much of the aircraft was fitted with new Air Tractor parts.

When the delivery of his 602 was delayed by three months, well after the 2008 season began, Stan had to make alternate plans for his workload. He finally received his 602 and took her out for her first job. Stan ended up in the middle of a soybean field due to the engine cutting out. There was very little damage to the aircraft and he was able to make repairs to fly her out of the field. It was back in to the



Stan and wife, Sue





*"Like father, like son." A picture Robert took flying with his dad, Stan.*



*Some of the crew, from L to R: Stan, Shea, Robert Clinton, Mike, & Kenny Ray*

Go to **SearcyLiving.com** for a link to the video of Robert's unique marriage proposal to his wife Tori!

shop for his 602, so he flew the 502 for the remainder of the season. The next two seasons Stan was able to fly the 602 and logged 1,179 hours. As he wasn't slowing down much in hours, his new "Susie Q" was showing signs of needing a new paint job. This, of course, is where the Razorback fans were able to show their loyalty in the air for all to see. Robert and Sue worked on the paint theme and sent it to Mrs. Crider at Crider Aircraft Painting in Mena, Arkansas. Stan is very pleased with the artwork, and it only helped that the Criders are Razorback fans as well.

The new and improved "Susie Q" displays the pride true Razorback fans have in the state. She is just one more testimony of how Arkansans support each other and work together to make our state a better place to live. Stan, "Susie Q", and the rest of the crew work hard to help our area farmers. At the end of the day it is all worth it to Stan, he gets to do what he loves and then come home to the one he loves, his Sue. 🐾



*Message from friends: It says, "HI STAN F> JB,(JOHN BUCKNER) NU,(NEWT BUCKNER), and BO." "These three guys are local carpenters that left me a salutation on top of the Police Station!! Ha! Ha!"*





Stan as a boy



Stan's AT602 "Susie Q," named after his wife, Sue, sports the Razorback colors as well as logos and other Razorback artwork including the words, Woo Pig Sooie, under her wings.



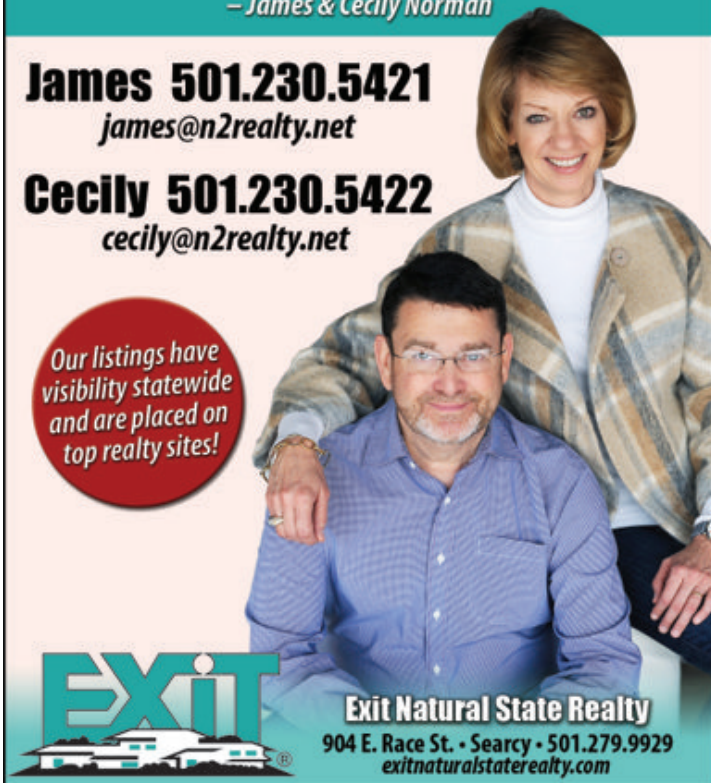
*"With 32 years of experience of buying and selling and a strong background in the agricultural industry, we are ready to help you with any real estate need you have."*

*— James & Cecily Norman*

**James 501.230.5421**  
james@n2realty.net

**Cecily 501.230.5422**  
cecily@n2realty.net

Our listings have  
visibility statewide  
and are placed on  
top realty sites!



**Exit Natural State Realty**

904 E. Race St. • Searcy • 501.279.9929  
exitnaturalstaterealty.com



Stan trying to out run a fast moving storm.

Sue's photo on  
the airplane's  
dashboard.



#### How They Met:

Stan was flying low over a swimming pool and there was a lady waving her arms at him. He landed the plane thinking that she wanted to meet him, when in reality she was teaching swimming lessons and his low flying was interrupting her lessons. That lady was Sue and the rest, as they say, is history!