

# King Air

A MAGAZINE FOR THE OWNER/PILOT OF KING AIR AIRCRAFT

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## Family by Flight

King Air unites pilot, owners, service providers



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# DREAM

## Veteran pilot spends career in the King Air



Teton Aviation L.L.C.'s King Air 200 in Jackson Hole, Wyoming with the Grand Tetons as a backdrop. (Inset) Teton Aviation's Chief Pilot Bert Bollar before a flight to Denver for a Broncos game. (TETON AVIATION)



# JOB

by MeLinda Schnyder

**B**ert Bollar has been flying Beechcraft King Airs since 1983 and has flown N88JH, a 1989 King Air B200, for the past 19 years. He calls the airplane a member of his family and considers its owners part of his family, too.

“I have a dream job because after this long, I’m treated as family by my bosses just as they are treated as my family,” the chief pilot said of the aircraft’s owners, who hired him to fly the B200 when they purchased it in July 1997.

And landing at Elliott Aviation in Moline, Illinois, is like returning to their avionics home for the B200 and Bollar. “To me, these people are a big family and they fit me right into that family,” Bollar said of the Elliott team that installed a Garmin G1000 suite in N88JH this year, 14 years after installing a Universal EFI-550 system in the airplane.

Five key project leads who worked on the 2002 retrofit were on the Elliott Aviation avionics team that installed the G1000 in March. They hadn’t forgotten Bollar or the airplane.

**Even though it’s an ‘89 model, I’ll put it up against a brand new King Air 250 as far as speed, performance and carrying capability because of the excellent shape we’ve been able to keep it in.**

– Bert Bollar, Chief Pilot  
Teton Aviation L.L.C.

“I remember what a big job it was,” said Brandon Brown, a senior project manager at Elliott. “It was the first of its kind in the King Air – a full Universal upgrade – and Bert was the testbed for that project. It was a large STC project, a lot of man hours, a lot of pre-planning.”





N88JH's Universal EFI-550 avionics system, installed in 2002, was a big undertaking and cutting edge for that time.

(ELLIOTT AVIATION)

When Bollar was ready for another large avionics install, he knew he wanted to work again with family. N88JH became the 200<sup>th</sup> G1000 retrofit completed by Elliott Aviation.

“With upcoming ADS-B mandates, we were faced with making a decision to put a lot of money just to update our current avionics, or to completely upgrade our system,” Bollar said. “It just made sense cost-wise and weight-wise to go with the G1000. We gained 276 pounds of useful load and we have more capabilities with the G1000.”

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## The making of an aviation family

Three families formed Teton Aviation L.L.C. in 1997 to acquire the B200 for Part 91 operations based at Jackson Hole Airport in Wyoming. Commercial service from Jackson Hole is limited so the King Air was purchased primarily for business travel within the state and westward. The owners are semi-retired now, and the airplane is flown mostly to visit family throughout the western United States and to bring family to Wyoming. They currently fly the B200 between 300 to 350 hours a year. Typical missions are less than 600 nautical miles with two to five passengers, although they've transported as many as eight in the cabin and they make occasional trips to the East Coast, Canada, Mexico or the Bahamas.

Bollar was hired just before the aircraft was delivered, and had recently retired from the Army with 4,500 hours in King Airs.

“I spent 28 years in the Army,” Bollar said. “I flew helicopters initially, and then fixed-wing qualified the last portion of my years of my service. I flew the C-12, the military version of the King Air.”

He's been Teton Aviation's only chief pilot and now has 12,000 hours of King Air time. In August 2014, he began flying with a full-time copilot. They attend FlightSafety every six months and Bollar said they are continuing to work through the nuances of learning the G1000 system. “We love the G1000,” he said. “It's an excellent upgrade for any airplane with the older style avionics. It's really an awesome system.”

## Two decades of upgrades

Of course, in nearly two decades of ownership, avionics isn't the only upgrade Teton Aviation L.L.C. has made to its King Air.

“One of the primary reasons me and the bosses get along so well is that they allow us to maintain the ▶



Bollar shows enthusiasm on his first flight with the new Garmin 1000 avionics, with Jon Young of Elliott Aviation.

(ELLIOTT AVIATION)





The Elliott Aviation team with Bollar (center), who says he feels as if he's part of their family.

airplane to the standards it needs to be," Bollar said. "Even though it's an '89 model, I'll put it up against a brand new King Air 250 as far as speed, performance and carrying capability because of the excellent shape we've been able to keep it in."

to 7,000-foot elevation airports on 90-, 100- or even 120-degree days out of Scottsdale. The performance of that bigger motor helps with speed, weather avoidance and gives us the ability to be safety oriented where you have full engine power on a hot day at high field elevation. It's a no-brainer in the long run."

Bollar reserved a Blackhawk engine upgrade before the STC was awarded and had the Pratt & Whitney PT6A-61 engines installed when they became available in 2008. Combined with RVSM, the B200 was able to fly 4,000 feet higher and cruise 30 KTAS faster with the same total fuel flow.

"We can get the boss there faster and while on a typical hour-and-a-half mission that's only five or 10 minutes, it adds up over a year's time and saving the boss money in flight time that they have to pay to operate the airplane for the same amount of fuel," Bollar said. "It's an economic payback over the long haul, plus the performance is outstanding for hot and high conditions where we fly into 6,000-



Tom Clements has 43 years' experience flying and instructing in King Air aircraft and authored *The King Air Book*

# KING AIR

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**-Tom Clements**



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The aircraft had a full interior overhaul at Western Aircraft in Boise, Idaho, in March 2014 and although Elliott Aviation last painted it in 2004, the orange-and-blue striping looks fresh and the scheme featuring a bucking horse and rider, a Wyoming state flag and an American flag turns heads. “I still have people regularly ask me when we got our airplane painted and they can’t believe it when I tell them it was 12 years ago,” Bollar said. “It’s called elbow grease and taking care of the product.”

Before each upgrade, Bollar and the owners have asked and studied: do we want a newer airplane, do we want to step up to a King Air 350, do we want to step up to a jet?

“The bottom line is that our B200 is well-maintained, it’s reliable and it meets our mission requirements,” Bollar said. “The way we maintain it and keep it up, the one we’ve got is just as good as a new one. It’s a comfortable, dependable, lovable airplane. This airplane is family to me.” **KA**



Teton Aviation’s King Air 200 got the Blackhawk engine upgrade, Pratt & Whitney PT6A-61 engines, when it became available in 2008.

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