

# AMERICAN BONANZA

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*BRADY*  
*THANKS FOR*  
*A GREAT JOB!*  
*Paul [Signature]*



1959 Bonanza K35



# Bonanza of the Month

N628T

*"In 23 years, I've logged more than 5,700 hours in N628T. There were many times I properly questioned my own judgment and pilot skills—but never the integrity of the airframe."—Clark Staggs, Dallas, Texas*



*Marlyn and Clark Staggs and their K35.*

## **K35 Bonanza**

**F**ew Bonanza owners can boast an association with Beechcraft from the day they were born! Mom and dad met and married while working at Beech in 1944. The classic V-tail and I both made our debut in 1947. By the second grade, I was fascinated with the Bonanza. Three years later, dad brought home an Owner's Guide for me and I remember reading it from cover to cover!

By the time I was 12, my dad had renewed the license he originally got when he was 18. The Beech Flying Club had an F model Bonanza and during the summer of 1960 our family was off to California. I was in the right front seat in charge of maps, and I was hooked. That was the first of several memorable trips with dad and other Beechcrafters.

My excuse for an airplane came in the fall of 1973 as a result of the 55 mph speed limit. I had developed my own

business and drove weekly from Wichita to Oklahoma City, Kansas City, Dallas or Denver. Overnight, my two-hour trips at 80 mph became three hours-plus, at what seemed a snail's pace. The following spring, Pat Downey, a flight instructor at United Beechcraft, was my companion twice a week.

Halfway into my training in Muskeeters, I began shopping for an airplane. *There was no doubt as to what kind. Just how much of a Bonanza I could justify.* My banker assured me that his bank's slogan of "We'll finance anything with a motor on it" was true. N628T, an NDH,

K35 with 2,070 hours on it, came to my attention through a dealer at Wiley Post. A "Bonanza-qualified" friend and I brought my new possession back to Wichita, with him in the left seat. The *next* day I went from student to pilot—and my long-term affair in the air began.

Within a year, I began my association with the ABS and met other members and great people in the Bonanza business. In '77 I delivered 28Tango to Allen Peterson at his shop in Newton, Kansas, for the baggage extension and third window mod. In '83 they provided

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stocked with all the essentials for a wilderness stay. The cluster of three cabins in which we stayed were the only ones available on an American plan, providing us with the full service of a chef-caretaker. What a treat! (And they call this roughing it?) Aside from the dock, the view from our cabin consisted solely of lake and trees.

### ***First day's outing***

Although not part of the package, Rob volunteered to go with us on our first day's outing. He showed us the local fishing techniques and hot spots. We returned to the cabins at about 1:00 p.m. with all the catch (Walleyes and Northern Pike) that we could take home, as well as sufficient fish for the day's repast, prepared by our chef, George. It was a feast for both the eye and the palate.

Thursday was just as peaceful and productive. While out fishing, though, I wished we hadn't left the GPS in the airplane back in Sioux Lookout. It seemed all too possible for us to get lost for good in the dozens of interconnected lakes we were navigating. In the wilderness, the reliable information of the GPS beats guessing.

We greeted the new arrivals at the cabin as we prepared to leave on Friday via the Beaver. On the return flight to the base camp, we spotted a few moose and a black bear. Although short, these two days in the wilderness were a tonic. Everything, from the setting to the service, was calculated to foster relaxation.

### ***Sioux Lookout to International Falls to Chicago***

We flew on Friday from Sioux Lookout to International Falls, Minnesota, where we cleared customs, to DuPage Airport in West Chicago. Although we could have cleared customs (for a fee) at DuPage (International Falls does not charge

a fee), it has always been my personal preference to clear customs as soon as possible after I cross the U.S. border. This practice minimizes the time my aircraft is "tagged" in the system, and leaves me free to deviate my routing as necessary without worrying about having to clear customs along the way.

Upon arrival at DuPage, the general aviation terminal looked like a deserted Taj Mahal: spacious and well-equipped. The service was impeccable, and included keeping our fish in their freezer for the night and providing an AOPA fuel discount. That night, we shared a lovely dinner with old friends in West Chicago. The persistent thundering throughout the evening hinted at the next day's challenge.

### ***Chicago to Washington, D.C.***

Early on Saturday morning, we faced a line of thunderstorms from Milwaukee to Peoria. Unlike the weather we encountered on Monday, this line was supported by an upper trough. Navigating in this weather required use of a laptop computer to make continuous inquiries into American Weather Concepts' real-time Doppler radar before leaving DuPage, as well as use of a Stormscope on board. Based on the information we received, we left DuPage heading south for about 80 miles before turning east toward home. While the procedure was safe, it demanded all the equipment and information we could commandeer.

Being tired, we skipped our last planned stop, at the Dayton Air Force Museum. We arrived at GAI after 2,300 miles and 15 hours of flight with an elated sense of how marvelous general aviation can be—particularly when flying a Bonanza.

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*Itzhak Jacoby, ATP, CFII is on the instructor staff of the BPPP, Inc. His S model Bonanza was featured in the January 1996 Magazine.*

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their very complete kits for the half-inch speedslope and their full panel replacement. Both internal and external ruddervator stiffeners have been installed.

Additions in the past 12 years include Beryl D'Shannon's front and middle side windows, "S" wing tips, a spin-on filter, air-oil separator and forward and rear side scoops. Inside, there is a Microline "short stack," new internally-lit engine and flight instruments, an S-Tec 60 and a great six-probe CHT/EGT from Electronics International.

Three years ago I was determined to find a great paint shop and a leather in-

terior shop without chasing halfway across the country. I was quite successful. Grady O'Neal at Northwest Regional, north of Ft. Worth, did a "factory perfect" custom job with the exterior. The craftsmanship of Bob Macey and Certified Aircraft Interiors, based in Lancaster, just south of Dallas, is shown in the photos with this article.

The Bonanza serves as an excellent platform for aerial photos in my commercial real estate business. I specialize in foreclosed bank properties and also represent companies considering new retail or industrial sites in Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. The advantages of having your own plane in this competi-

tive business are numerous. First and foremost, it helps me get quickly to the *location, location, location!* I've flown as far as Newark to convince national credit retailers that I would be their best representative in Houston.

In the past 23 years, I've logged more than 5,700 hours (nearly eight solid months) in N628T. There were many times I properly questioned my own judgment and pilot skills, but never the integrity of the airframe. With a certain amount of pride, I make this long overdue submittal of N628T as Bonanza of the Month.

—Clark Staggs, Dallas, Texas