



The Beacon

The newsletter of Chapter 54
Lake Elmo, Minn.

MAY 2004

MAY 2004

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

MONDAY MAY 17TH, 2003

- 6:00 PM, BANQUET AT
MANCINI'S CHAR HOUSE IN
ST PAUL (531 W 7TH ST)

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ARIZONA ADVENTURE

BY: DALE SEITZER

On our Arizona vacation Bettie had her adventure in an aerobatic plane—my adventure came in a little red Champ. At a flight school on Falcon Field in Mesa Arizona, along side the Cessnas and Pipers was a dark red 1940's era Champ with an 85 horsepower engine, just waiting to fly again. The plane was well worn; painted surfaces that would be touched by pilot or passenger were rubbed shiny down to the steel or aluminum... There was plenty of oil on its belly and signs of fabric patches around all the typical spots—scars from an active colorful existence.

They charged just \$48 per hour—the instructor was \$25 per hour so flying was very reasonable. I needed a pillow because the seat was very thin from many hours of many butts. I really liked that plane from the first—there were very few instruments and not laid out like the traditional six-pack instrument set up. The seat was just right for me—the stick fit right and the throttle was on my left—just in the right place. The window on the left slides open so you can stick your hand and arm out in the breeze. There was a trim lever on the ceiling. The brakes were not in the best position for me—my feet are not big enough to keep on the rudder and push the brakes with my heel at the same time. The rudder pedals are the inverted L shaped steel tubes that were very slippery to me—I suggested wrapping them with some of that adhesive stair tread material so wet or oily shoes do not slip.

Starting is very simple—all the check lists were very short—3 toggle switches to the left and a radio and we were ready to start. Starting this engine was like starting an old tractor—you pull a t handle on the dash to engage the electric starter. The engine started immediately and was very smooth and quiet. We taxied from the flight school to the runway. This airport has planes actually crossing a

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN
BY PAUL HOVE

May brings the EAA work party season as we get ready for another AirVenture this fall. Chapter 54 had three volunteers and one prospective member show up for the work party this year. There were small parties from two other chapters this year. Our party was split up with three of our members going to the seaplane base area and our other volunteer ending up painting in the EAA Merchandise Building. The seaplane base crew removed the windows from the pump house and roofed one of the storage buildings.



Pictured to the left are Paul Hove, Dick Stright and Jesse Black on the roof with one of the paid staff standing on the truck.

One of the EAA office staff complimented us on how fast our chapter was growing but wondered why we could only conscript three workers for the weekend. We were treated to a guided tour of Pioneer Airport on Saturday evening.



We got to view the Spirit of Saint Louis replica up close and learned to appreciate how difficult flying this plane to Europe must have been. There is zero forward visibility from the pilot's seat.

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Jesse Black checks out the Spirit of Saint Louis replica.



The meals served by the EAA cooks at the chow hall along with the home made deserts were as filling as ever. The site continues to grow as several more nearby properties seem to have been added to the complex.

Since the Chapter banquet is this month there won't be meeting at the club house. The banquet will be held on May 17th at Mancini's. Not May 10th as previously published in this column. EAA Awards will be presented to the Officers and Directors.



Chapter 54 Directory

President
Paul Hove
Paul.Hove@quintan.com

Vice President
David Cross
DavidL.Cross@yahoo.com

Treasurer
Paul Linnerooth
aplino@aol.com

Secretary
Bettie Seitzer
BJSeitzer@Landolakes.com

Education Director
Art Edhlund
aedhlund@hotmail.com

Events Director
Tim Reberg
651-730-8574
tm2485@juno.com

Housing Director
Dave Fiebigler

Membership Director
John Renwick
JKR@vici.com

Newsletter Editor
Ian Edhlund
ian.edhlund@dot.state.mn.us

President
Bill Schanks

Young Eagles Director
Al Kupferschmidt

Chapter member meet on the second Monday of every month at the Chapter House, Entrance B at Lake Elmo Airport (21D). The House is at the base of the airport beacon. The newsletter is printed on the first Monday of every month. Parts of the newsletter may be reprinted with appropriate credit.

21D RCO 118.625
21D Unicom: 122.8
TPA: 1932'
Runways: 4-22 (2497' x 75')
14-32 (2850' x 75')

RV6 TRANSITION TRAINING
BY: BOB PITTELKOW

My building partner, Mark Olson, and I (RV7A/180/slider) recently traveled via the aluminum tube to Vernonia, Oregon (just outside Portland) to undergo RV6A transition training with Mike Seager CFI, etc., etc.

Mike is an instructor authorized by Vans Aircraft to supply such transition flight services to builders nearing completion and first flight of their RVs. Also, transition training or equivalent experience is required by insurance companies.

In spite of the constant rain, I got in about 7+ hours of flying over the four days we were there. Portland + Winter = Rain therefore if you can't fly in rain, you can't fly in Oregon. Thursday we were rained out completely but were able to make up missed flights on Saturday morning.

Mike worked us hard as evidenced by the sweaty T-shirts in 50 degree weather! Mike took us through all manner of stalls, 360 degree turns left and right, climbs, emergencies, along with the now famous "RV approach" landings. I completed (more or less) 30 landings at the excellent Scappoose, Oregon airport.

Vernonia Municipal Airport is another matter with a grass runway of 2900 feet, of which about 1500 feet is usable, but still rather lumpy. NWA wouldn't like it. Flat-Lander Minnesota flyers should be aware that Oregon is mountainous. The single Vernonia runway is different in that there are 1800 foot hills just off the western end of the field requiring a circular "carrier" approach" to landing. By the way, look out for the elk herd! A person just doesn't have enough eyeballs to monitor everything plus that low rain cloud drifting across the runway but Mike always had it under control. After all, he's got to get in there every night to



get the dinner served by his lovely bride!

I recommend that anyone intending to fly an RV airplane get transition training from Mike prior to first flight. Not only is this required for insurance but is just common sense for safety conscious flyers. The RV is a high performance airplane; Champ or Cessna/Piper habits just won't hack it. The experience gained is well worth the travel expense and certainly peanuts compared to the investment already in the airplane.

Mike either has or has access to all RV models if you let him know. Mike Seager can be reached at 503/429-5103 (home).

After being signed off by Mike, be sure to get your new T-shirt "I SURVIVED RV TRANSITION TRAINING AT VERNONIA, OREGON". You will automatically award yourself the "RV Grin"!

RIB STITCHING INSTRUCTION

BY: BILL SCHANKS

PICTURES BY: KIRK HUIZENGA

On Saturday, May 1st, Bill Schanks, with his usual aplomb, instructed a group of Chapter 54 members on how to rib stitch the wing of an Aeronca L3. The meeting was held at the EAFB Hangar 25B, on Fairchild Lane on the north side of 21D. An egg, sausage, and cheese hot dish fortified the workers and instructor.



The project, belonging to Jack Blais, has been completely covered and now requires about 450 rib stitches before continuing with further dope coats. Jack and others have been working on the L3 for about twenty years, with most progress being Jack's recent efforts.

Three or four ribs were completed, and there are many more to go. Breakfast will be served again at 0830, on Saturday, May 8th for continued practice by those trained last Saturday, and for anyone else who would like to learn and/or assist in finishing the stitching.

Members attending were Kirk Huizenga, Neale Povey, Henry Heimlich, Dave Holmes,



Arizona Adventure (Continued from page 1)

regular road. The traffic lights are turned on when a plane approaches to cross and cars and trucks stop to allow the planes to cross to the runway. Falcon Field has 2 parallel runways and a control tower. Winds are usually so light most airports do not have cross wind runways. I demonstrated poor radio communication with the tower—I had to be asked if I had information Romeo. The plane was easy to taxi; my first ultralight was a taildragger so it was pretty easy to get it around the airport. We did the run up and were given clearance to take off, so I taxied to the end of the runway—I swung the plane around so I could see base and final clearly. The instructor asked why I did that and I said that I trust the air traffic control but I still want to look to make sure no one is trying to land. With plenty of clearance, we rolled out onto the runway and gave it full throttle. Within about 3 seconds the tail was up and a couple more seconds the plane was off the ground. The engine was spinning about 2200 rpm—the instructor said that was normal. The oil pressure seemed low—the instructor said the instrument may not be accurate. The ammeter was in the green. The oil temp was also low and the instructor said the instrument may not be accurate—at that point he assured me the air speed indicator is accurate.



We were climbing about 400 feet per minute (if I can believe the vertical speed indicator) and I



leveled out at about 1200 feet above ground level. I asked what rpm we should cruise at and the instructor said they generally do not reduce speed—they just fly all the time wide open. The engine seemed to like about 2100 rpm so we flew over the Arizona desert at a calm pace. We flew around a large reservoir near Mesa and then flew close to Superstition Mountain. The instructor suggested flying over some small mountains but I could not see any emergency landing areas so I suggested altering the path to keep some roads within gliding distance.

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Arizona Adventure (Continued from page 6)

The instructor said I would live a long time by keeping safe landing areas within landing distance. The plane had made an engine out landing in the desert and was torn up pretty well from the brush and small trees and required recovering.

The plane handled perfectly—it has well balanced controls. It maneuvered with just the right amount of rudder and stick movements. The cabin is large with tremendous visibility—I could see out the front sides and back almost 360 degrees around. We were cruising at about 100 mph and it was very comfortable. I was in shorts and a t-shirt and the instructor had a light coat.

We headed back to the airport for some touch and goes. One nice thing about air traffic control is we got right in the pattern on base. The plane does not have flaps so landing is simple—carb heat and reduce power. There was a slight cross wind—the instructor thought about not letting me land but I just lowered the wing into the wind and kept the plane straight with the rudder. The first landing I flared a bit too early and did the bounce and hop—oh good I can count it as 2 landings. I gave it power and took off after the tail wheel settled and the plane was under control. I was happy the instructor suggested a small pattern—I want to be able to land on the airport from any point in the pattern in case of an engine out. The second landing was a bit faster but smooth as silk. The 3rd landing was more of a semi stall landing that was pretty good and the instructor agreed. He liked the fact that I did not insult the plane—most people go for the shiny newer planes and he respected my interest.

The whole experience was better than expected. I enjoy seeing the earth from the air—it gives me a unique perspective—a lack of boundaries. This plane quickly seemed like part of me and it the cost was very reasonable.

EAA CHAPTER AWARDS

NOMINATION MAILING

FROM: BRENDA ANDERSON

EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2004 will be launching the next century of flight. Your Chapter has an opportunity to make AirVenture an even more memorable experience for some of your key Chapter members by nominating them for one of the special Chapter Awards that are presented each year at AirVenture:

Nomination packets containing an explanation of each award, and nomination forms, were sent to each Chapter President for the following awards:

EAA Major Achievement Award
EAA Newsletter Editor Award
EAA Web Editor Award

IMPORTANT: Deadline for nominations is May 31, 2003. So don't delay in sending in your Chapter's nominations.

Nomination materials may also be downloaded from the web at:

http://www.eaa.org/chapters/programs/award_s.asp

If you have any questions on the awards, please send an e-mail to Brenda Anderson in the Chapter Office at banderson@eaa.org.

TREASURER'S REPORT

BY PAUL LINNEROOTH

April's Financial Summary

Cash on hand	\$ 40.00
Checking Acct.	\$ 6,626.93
Investments	\$ 4,000.00
Total	\$10,666.93

Income in March consisted of \$260.00 in individual dues, and \$15.00 in calendar sales for a total of \$275.00.

Expenses for the same period were \$240.70 and consisted of \$103.54 for utilities, \$68.34 for newsletter publication, \$61.82 for ground school expenses, and \$7.00 in administrative expense.

ATTACKS ON GA

BY: IAN EDHLUND

In last month's newsletter, I put in a column about Northwest's attack on General Aviation. Their CEO, Richard Anderson, wrote an article in NWA's World Traveler magazine. The article basically stated that Northwest pays too many taxes and fees, while GA gets away with paying way to little. It is not my intent to take up several pages again on this topic in this newsletter, but you may wish to read AOPA's response, located at http://www.aopa.org/whatsnew/newsitems/2004/04-2-002x_response.html.

Also, I've posted an email from Bob Worthington to NWA at <http://www.eaa54.org/Newsletters/bobworthingtonemail.pdf>.

On a similar note, USA Today published an editorial on April 14th that supported Northwest's stance on fees and taxes. That editorial can be found at http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2004-04-14-our-view_x.htm.

AOPA's response to the USA Today editorial can be found at <http://www.aopa.org/whatsnew/newsitems/2004/04-2-025x.html>.

The EAA also responded to the editorial at http://www.eaa.org/communications/eaanews/040415_editorial.html.

It is great that AOPA and EAA are backing us on this topic, but as Robert Pittelkow points out, the work can't stop there.

"It is fine that AOPA has responded to NWA's claims. They seem to have legitimate answers to NWA. But, how many people in the General Public read the AOPA magazine? If the General Public doesn't have a chance to read it in the (Red) Star Tribune, etc., it might as well not exist. Likewise the TV "News" broadcasts. The general media is where NWA is publishing their complaints and that is what the General Public then believes. NWA is counting on that."

CHAPTER 54 BANQUET

BY: TIM REBERG

The details for this years Chapter 54 Banquet are:

Date - Monday, May 17th.

Location – Mancini's Char House. The address for Mancini's is:

531 W. 7th

St., St. Paul, MN.

Cost - \$20.00

Social hour will begin at 6:00 P.M. and the meal will be served at around 6:30 P.M.

The dinner menu is your choice of steak or chicken. The meal also includes a setup featuring an hors d' oeuvre table with two hot appetizers, assorted cheese and cold cut tray, crackers, relish tray with Italian cherry peppers and pickles marinated with special oil and vinegar. Salad, choice of two dressings, baked potato, bread or garlic toast. Choice of coffee, tea or milk. Cake is also served after dinner. You will place an order for you meal preference the night of the banquet.

The speaker for this year's banquet is Chuck Larsen. Chuck is from EAA Oshkosh and is the Director of the Air Academy. Each year Chapter 54 provides one or two student scholarships for young people who attend the EAA Air Academy sessions conducted during the summer. I encourage you and a guest to come out and hear how our Chapter's money is being spent at the EAA Air Academy. Some of you may remember Chuck because he is a past member and past president of Chapter 54.

Please submit to me by e-mail or phone an RSVP so I have an idea how many people plan to attend the banquet.

If you need further information, please call me at 651-730-8574.

F-14 RIDE

FROM RICK REILLY OF SPORTS ILLUSTRATED

"Now this message is for America's most famous athletes:

Someday you may be invited to fly in the back-seat of one of your country's most powerful fighter jets. Many of you already have ... John Elway, John Stockton, Tiger Woods to name a few. If you get this opportunity, let me urge you, with the greatest sincerity...

Move to Guam. Change your name. Fake your own death! Whatever you do ...Do Not Go!!!

I know. The U.S. Navy invited me to try it. I was thrilled. I was pumped. I was toast! I should've known when they told me my pilot would be Chip (Biff) King of Fighter Squadron 213 at Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia Beach.

Whatever you're thinking a Top Gun named Chip (Biff) King looks like, triple it. He's about six-foot, tan, ice-blue eyes, wavy surfer hair, finger-crippling handshake -- the kind of man who wrestles dyspeptic alligators in his leisure time. If you see this man, run the other way. Fast.

Biff King was born to fly. His father, Jack King, was for years the voice of NASA missions. ("T-minus 15 seconds and counting ..." Remember?) Chip would charge neighborhood kids a quarter each to hear his dad. Jack would wake up from naps surrounded by nine-year-olds waiting for him to say, "We have a liftoff."

Biff was to fly me in an F-14D Tomcat, a ridiculously powerful \$60 million weapon with nearly as much thrust as weight, not unlike Colin Montgomerie. I was worried about getting airsick, so the night before the flight I asked Biff if there was something I should eat the next morning.

"Bananas," he said.

"For the potassium?" I asked.

"No," Biff said, "because they taste about the same coming up as they do going down."

The next morning, out on the tarmac, I had on my flight suit with my name sewn over the left breast. (No call sign -- like Crash or Sticky or Leadfoot ... but, still, very cool.) I carried my helmet in the crook of my arm, as Biff had instructed. If ever in my life I had a chance to nail Nicole Kidman, this was it.

A fighter pilot named Psycho gave me a safety briefing and then fastened me into my ejection seat, which, when employed, would "egress" me out of the plane at such a velocity that I would be immediately knocked unconscious.

Just as I was thinking about aborting the flight, the canopy closed over me, and Biff gave the ground crew a thumbs-up. In minutes we were firing nose up at 600 mph. We leveled out and then canopy-rolled over another F-14.

Those 20 minutes were the rush of my life. Unfortunately, the ride lasted 80. It was like being on the roller coaster at Six Flags Over Hell. Only without rails. We did barrel rolls, snap rolls, loops, yanks and banks. We dived, rose and dived again, sometimes with a vertical velocity of 10,000 feet per minute. We chased another F-14, and it chased us. We broke the speed of sound. Sea was sky and sky was sea. Flying at 200 feet we did 90-degree turns at 550 mph, creating a G force of 6.5, which is to say I felt as if 6.5 times my body weight was smashing against me, thereby approximating life as Mrs. Colin Montgomerie.

And I egressed the bananas. I egressed the pizza from the night before. And the lunch before that. I egressed a box of Milk Duds from the sixth grade. I made Linda Blair look polite.

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EAA CHAPTER 54
3275 MANNING AVE. N. SUITE #7
LAKE ELMO, MN 55042

F-14 Ride (Continued from page 9)

Because of the G's, I was egressing stuff that did not even want to be egressed. I went through not one airsick bag, but two.

Biff said I passed out. Twice. I was coated in sweat. At one point, as we were coming in upside down in a banked curve on a mock bombing target and the G's were flattening me like a tortilla and I was in and out of consciousness, I realized I was the first person in history to throw down.

I used to know cool. Cool was Elway throwing a touchdown pass, or Norman making a five-iron bite. But now I really know cool. Cool is guys like Biff, men with cast-iron stomachs and freon nerves. I wouldn't go up there again for Derek Jeter's black book, but I'm glad Biff does every day, and for less than a rookie receiver makes in a year at a home stand.

A week later, when the spins finally stopped, Biff called. He said he and the fighters had the perfect call sign for me. Said he'd send it on a patch for my flight suit.

What is it? I asked.

"Two Bags."