



# Chapter 54 News

Lake Elmo, Minnesota

November 2002

## Program

- Monday November 11
- Social Hour at 7 p.m.
- Meeting at 7:30 p.m. Chapter House, Entrance B, Lake Elmo Airport
- Program: "Preventive Maintenance and Logbook Entries".
- Speaker: Gatos Valters owner/operator of Valters Aviation at Lake Elmo Airport .

## On Wings of Mercy

by Bob Collins

Some years ago, Mr. Peter Vanden Bosch, a retired businessman in Holland, Michigan, was asked to fly a person in need to a distant medical facility for treatment. Mr. Vanden Bosch realized that many other people had similar needs, and he and others had resources that could help meet that need. As a result, Mr. Vanden Bosch formed the original *Wings of Mercy* chapter in 1991, and established the framework for the organization's operations.

Dr. David Van Nostrand, a Saint Cloud, Minnesota, physician, learned of *Wings of Mercy* from a colleague. Intrigued, Dr. Van Nostrand volunteered himself and his aircraft for a week in November of 1994. He was so impressed with the quality of the *Wings of Mercy* operation that he asked Mr. Vanden Bosch for permission to establish a chapter in Minnesota.

*Wings of Mercy* Minnesota was established in January of 1995, and incorporated as a 501(c)3 organization. A Board of Directors controls the organization, with additional support provided by an attorney, an accountant, a financial advisor, a safety officer, a secretary, and a chief flight nurse. A Flight Director is the nerve center of the organization, coordinating all patients, crews, aircraft, flights, and documentation. Flight duties are performed by over 40 volunteer pilots, 30 volunteer nurses, and 25 aircraft.

Several of these pilots are members of EAA Chapter 54. Gary Miller, for one, has been flying mercy flights for several years. "I started

Mercy flights because I felt lucky and grateful and I wanted to give something back. Others, that fly Young Eagles, must feel the same," says Miller, who flies a 1960 M35 Bonanza and took his first flight lessons in the mid-'50s.

Like most *Wings of Mercy* pilots, Gary has his share of memories. "One was when Al Kupferschmidt was with us and the nurse told us the tiny baby we were transporting to Fargo, had stopped breathing. Al and the nurse were working on the baby as we were going full bore for the waiting ambulance. They got the baby stabilized just as we were about to land, my knees were shaking on that one.

On another flight as we were bringing a man with a brain tumor to St. Paul. He was getting violent Viet Nam flashbacks from his days as a helicopter pilot. It was all the co-pilot and nurse could to restrain him as Minneapolis approach cleared us direct to St. Paul across MSP. The man was having a reaction to a change in his medication that was given to him for this flight. I sometimes hear of patients that didn't make it after we had given them flights, and that hurts. However it's always the children that have serious problems that will keep me awake all night.

Our flights are usually less than 400 km in all directions. If someone needs to go further we will relay with another group.

All services are performed by volunteers; aircraft owners/operators are reimbursed for fuel only (about 1/3 of the actual cost of operating an aircraft), and many refuse even that. *Wings of Mercy* is funded entirely by charitable contribu-

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### President's Column

## Don't Give 'em a Hand

by Dale Rupp

**H**and propping has been around since the Wright Brothers. We have all seen pictures of the Wright Flyer being started by two men pulling the two props through to start the engine. It was the only way they could get the engine started, and it had to be done just right so no one got hurt.

Hand propping is still used today, and it is still dangerous activity if it isn't done properly. In recent years we have had three bad accidents with airplanes that were based at Lake Elmo. All can be attributed to lack of respect for the damage the propeller can do. In the first case a high time ATP pilot's battery was dead so he decided to start it by hand propping a three blade propeller. He did not tie down the engine or have a qualified person in the cockpit. The engine started, he jumped out of the way and the airplane flew in to a building destroying itself. The Pilot was OK. He is lucky. Three blade propellers are closer together than two blade propellers and it seems to me that it would be difficult to get your hands out of the way when the engine starts.

The second is another high time pilot that had landed at an airport as he ran out of fuel. He was unable to taxi to the ramp so a few people helped him push it to the ramp. The next morning he was going to move the airplane and grabbed it by the propeller. He did not check the position of the mag switch or throttle. As soon as he moved the propeller a little bit, the engine started and the plane started to move. He ran around to get in to the cockpit and the propeller hit his arm in a number of places. The airplane was damaged and it took him many months to regain the use of the damaged arm.

The third accident happened last month when a pilot had propped our L2-B with the throttle full open. There was no one in the cockpit and the airplane was not chocked or tied down. When the engine started it knocked down the pilot and flew into some trees and a small building. The airplane was destroyed and the pilot only got a few bumps and cuts. He is OK today but the airplane isn't.

So what is to be learned from these accidents? The first is that a propeller is very dangerous. It can kill you. When I fly Young Eagles, I stress that they should never touch a propeller because it might start the engine.

In the best of all possible worlds you should only prop an engine with another pilot in the cockpit. Then both of you should have a clear agreement of what the starting procedure will be. The starter first asks the pilot if the brakes are on. The pilot must respond affirmatively. Then the starter asks the position of the magneto switch and the pilot responds as to it's position. If the engine is cold you might want to prime it and pull the prop a few times to charge the cylinders with the **magnetos off**. When you pull it through after priming, treat the propeller as if the magnetos are hot. The P lead on one of the magnetos could be broken which would make the magneto hot and the engine could start. If the engine is warm it should start with no priming. The last thing to check is the position of the throttle. It should be cracked 1/8 of an inch or what is proper for your airplane.

Now comes the fun part, pulling the propeller. I recommend using gloves as the trailing edge of the propeller is sharp. The first thing to do is check to see if your feet are firmly planted. Then tell the pilot "contact" which he should repeat. Both of you are now prepared for the engine to start, you hope. When the engine starts move out of the way. If it doesn't start talk to the pilot about what to do next, and then follow the same procedure all over again. Brakes on, magnetos, throttle cracked and "contact". The problems start when the engine will not start

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## EAA Chapter 54



### President

Dale Rupp  
DaleRupp@email.msn.com

### Vice President

Paul Hove  
Paul.Hove@guidant.com

### Treasurer

Paul Liedl  
liedlp@ifi.net

### Secretary

Nick Stolley  
AIRPLANEIT@aol.com

### Education Director

Art Edhlund  
aedhlund@hotmail.com

### Events Director

Tim Reberg  
651-730-8574  
tim2485@juno.com

### Housing Director

Dave Fiebiger

### Membership Director

Scott Olson  
scotto0125@hotmail.com

### Newsletter Editor

Bob Collins  
bcollins@visi.com

### Past 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'



TECHNICAL COUNSELOR REPORT

## An Ode to Elvira

by Bill Schanks

Perhaps some of you may have noticed the absence of the Tech Counselor column in last month's newsletter. The reason for that was that I was in an emotional funk over the loss of the Holman's Hoboes L-2B Taylorcraft. The airplane was destroyed in a hand propping accident at Little Falls Minn., and I was not in any

kind of mood to write an article about airplanes. Besides which, it was necessary for us to get a trailer and drive up to Little Falls to retrieve what was left of the airplane and I wasn't back in time to meet the deadline. It was a sad day.

That airplane has been a part of my life for the past 27 years. Our flying club purchased the airplane from a farmer in Elk River, Minn. He had owned it for a number of years and flew it off the farm and taught his son how to fly. He and his son maintained it and did the repairs for several years using, for the most part, John Deere parts. There was no record in the logbooks of any annual inspection by a certified A&P with inspection authorization during that time except for one time a little over a year before we purchased it. It had been signed off for an annual by Nick Flynn in Monticello about a year and a half before we bought it and the farmer said it cost him \$600 and that was too much so he just flew it for that one year and then decided to sell it. That was when we bought it for \$2,600.

The farmer got a ferry permit for it to fly from Elk River to South St. Paul and I got a ride up to the farm from Lee Alexander and Bob Hilliard to pick up the airplane and fly it back. After a thorough pre-flight, the farmer cut a path in the hay field to provide me with a runway suitable for a take-off, and I took off. I climbed out and circled a couple of times to make sure every thing was working right and then gave him a low pass for a fly by, wagged the wings and headed for South St. Paul. We obtained permission from the Confederate Air Force guys to park it in their hangar until Earl Frances, the local mechanic, could do the annual. Earl was very busy at the time and was unable to get at it so the Confederate Air Force guys said we had to move it out.

I did a high-speed taxi at about 800' AGL over to the Lake Elmo airport (no ferry permit). We then agreed to have Joe Michaud do the annual inspection. Joe inspected it and gave us a long list of stuff to do. A lot of John Deere hardware had to be replaced with AN stuff. In one case there were about 12 washers on the bolt for the upper landing gear attach fitting. There were worn bushings in hinges,



cables were frayed, but all in all, she was a pretty airworthy ship. After we had Jim "The Toolmaker" Olson manufacture new parts — hinge bushings made from bronze — we called Joe to take another look. He

came and looked and gave us another long list, which included a compass card. We went down the list and completed all the chores and gave Joe another call. He had me fly the airplane over to Benson "International," and there he gave me the signed logbooks.

For the next few years I proceeded to get everyone in the club, who needed it, tail-wheel qualified. In some cases club members received the majority of the training required for the Private Pilot's license and completed the cross-country requirements. I especially remember Chuck Larsen as a student of mine. Chuck did go on to obtain his license but we had to finish up in a C-150 to meet some of the navigation and radio communication requirements as well as simulated instrument training. Gene Frank and Norm Schwietz also did a lot of their training in the L-2 using Darryl Lemire as a flight instructor, but I think I finished Norm up in a C-150 but I don't remember what happened with Gene. I remember checking out Jim Olson and Jerry Laundry but being that a lot of time has passed us by I don't remember all the others. It would be interesting to go back in my logbook to see who all is in there. We started out with 10 members in the club and I'm not sure of all the names and how many of them I flew with. I do know that I had quite a bit of flying time in the airplane because I was the flight instructor and was required to do the check flights. I did damage the old girl once in an off airport landing at my brother-in-law's farm. I had my oldest daughter with me and we hit a big rock during the landing rollout and damaged the right landing gear. Again, Jim "The Toolmaker" Olson came to the rescue and we built a new landing gear assembly for the right side and Dave Glowarts gave me a ride up to Cozy Corner Wi. to help me install the new landing gear so I could fly the airplane back to its home. Gene Frank then did the fabric work to finish the landing gear.

We flew the airplane for about 10 years and liter-

*(Continued on page 5)*

Under the Cowling

## Aircraft Wheels and Brakes

by Jim Montague

All aircraft need wheels and brakes. A homebuilt aircraft could use wheels and brakes from a salvaged certified airplane or complete kit can be purchased from several suppliers.

The most common installation on certified airplanes and homebuilts are the Cleveland wheels and brakes. Almost all modern certified aircraft use them except Cessna, which use McCauley Brakes, which are a direct copy. Other wheel and brakes used on homebuilts are the Hegar, Mateo, and Bodell. Older aircraft use brakes by Goodyear, Hayes, Cleveland, Goodrich, Firestone and Shinn. Many of these manufacturers no longer sell parts for out of production brakes, so many times it is prudent to install a Cleveland conversion kit. I heard a guy complain once about the price of a Cleveland kit, about \$800. All he needed was a wheel half for his Goodyear brakes. You can buy a wheel half for Goodyears, but the price is about \$800!

That may be a slight exaggeration, but the point is, it is not economically feasible to repair many of the older hard-to-get wheels and brakes. The common J-3 Cub is an example. These use an older Goodyear expander tube brake and a 4" wheel. Parts are very expensive but available.

The 8.00-4 tires and tubes are expensive too. We recently put together a basket case Swift for Mick Supina. We were looking at buying a Cleveland wheel and brake kit, but stumbled on to a complete set of Goodyears for \$200, so we bought them. Eventually, Mick will probably need to buy Clevelands. The price of linings is about \$500 and 8 clips to hold the disk in place is about \$650, for the Goodyears.

If used parts from salvage can be found, it is one way to keep using the old brakes. Master cylinders are also getting to be a problem for older aircraft. Many old airplanes used Scott master cylinders which are no longer

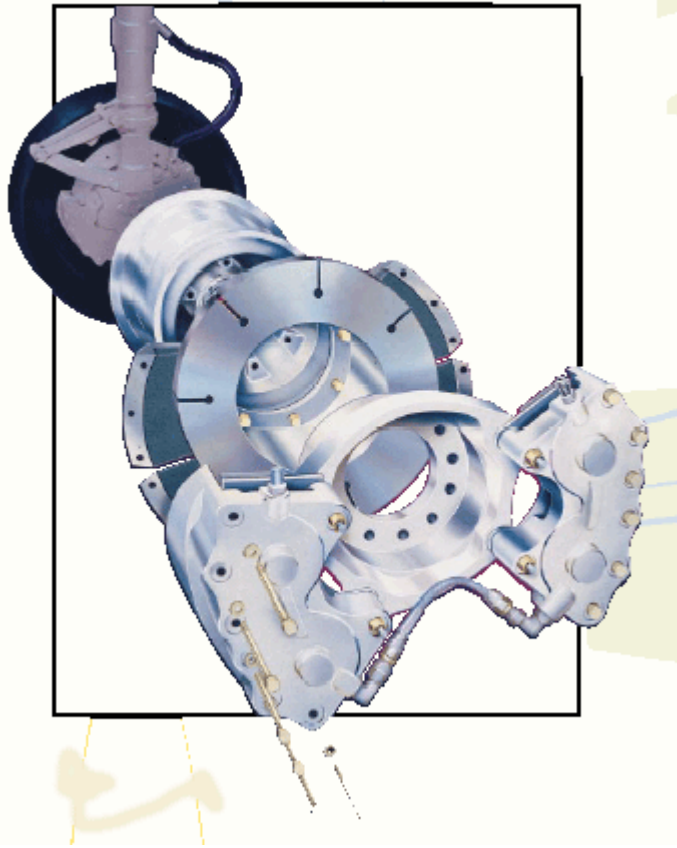
available. There are several types of Cleveland master cylinders and a set can be found which can be adapted. Years ago, we found the brake master cylinders on an aircraft were Plymouth car parts! We adapted some aircraft master cylinders which worked quite well and were

also a lot lighter than the cast iron Plymouth parts! When adapting master cylinders it must be determined that the master cylinder volume exceeds the wheel cylinder volume!

If Cleveland wheel and brakes are adapted to several post WW2 aircraft you will be going from mechanical brakes to hydraulic brakes, so you will be faced with installing master cylinders. If you are following an STC, the kit will include full instructions. If you are working on some rare one-of-a-kind bird you will have to do a little engineering. If you are building a homebuilt, I recommend using whatever brakes called for in the plans. Ultra-lights and very light airplanes have some specialty brakes available.

For anything in the neighborhood of, or over 1000 pounds gross weight I recommend Cleveland brakes. Big airplanes, like airliners use multiple disk brakes. Even some of the bigger classics and warbirds multi-disk brakes. When overhauling or repairing these brakes it is mandatory to use the Manufacturers Overhaul Manual. These are complex brakes and require certain assembly procedures.

For most of us, the common Cleveland brakes serve just fine. They are trouble-free and can be easily relined. Parts are available and they are easy to work on. If you burn the brakes on every landing and fly 100 hours a year, you will probably be due for new brake linings at annual inspection. If you just use the brakes to hold the aircraft for runup, the brake linings will last indefinitely.



(Continued from page 3)

ally wore it out. It flew several times in the AC Spark Plug Rally to Oshkosh; three times by me and once by Chuck Larsen. Those were really fun times. Dale Rupp and his wife flew it up to the source of the Mississippi and back; I will leave it to him to write an article for the newsletter about that trip. And, incidentally, if any one else would like to write a little tribute to the old girl, we would certainly welcome that. Included in this article you will be able to read a poem that Jim "The Toolmaker" Olson wrote. I was very touched by that. Great job, Jim!

After determining that the airplane needed restoration, we disassembled it and began the restoration. There were several attempts that fell by the wayside until Dale Rupp retired from his day job and took charge. He organized the project and began to delegate the work. Some years ago the club had purchased another airplane, a Piper Colt. We decided to sell that airplane and use the money to finance the rebuild of the L-2. That worked out quite well. It took about six years and based on the research that Dale did, it was restored to better than new authentic configuration. It flew as good as or better than it ever had and was just a joy. From the picture you can see it was a real beauty.

The L-2 provided us a lot of history. It spanned a quarter century and gave all of us many pleasant memories. You may wonder where the name Elvira came from. As you know, Chapter 54 is the Speed Holman Memorial Chapter, named in honor of Charles Holman, the famous Minnesota aviator. The flying club was made up within the chapter of chapter members. The club was named "Holman's Hoboes Flying Club."

Charles Holman's wife's name was Elvira. Hence, the airplane was named Elvira in her honor. The artwork for the Chapter logo, the one with the Laird biplane flying around the checkered pylon, was designed and drawn by Clayton Richards. He also designed the logo for the flying club; it shows a hobo flying on a stick with his little kerchief carrying his belongings. Each logo shows the number 54.

I will miss the old girl, her and I were just getting started flying Young Eagles and those kids were really enjoying flying in the "old Army airplane." The last batch of kids I flew with included my grandson and I know it was quite a thrill for him. I guess this will be farewell "Elvira," we'll miss ya. Take a look at Jim Olson's poem, it sums it up pretty well.

**ODE TO ELVIRA**

She was borne to fly in the sky so blue  
 Back in the turmoil of forty-two  
 In olive drab, the colors she wore  
 Borne in the family of The Army Air Corps

And then she met a group of ten  
 Who called themselves The Hobos then

As one by one she nurtured them  
 And they all knew they had a gem

There was David F. and David G. and Lee and Gene and  
 Bill

There was Raymond W. and Jerry L. and Jimmy O. and  
 Gil

There was also Chuck who took some time to learn about  
 her ways

Who now spends his time in Oshkosh, at Air Academy  
 Days

While at a breakfast in old St. Cloud  
 I heard a man boast, as he said out loud  
 I flew your plane, and he began to strut  
 I flew her east to Connecticut  
 A timely flight, as his smile did swell  
 A beautiful flight and all went well

Now her last flight was made alone  
 With throttle full she headed home  
 She hit a building and then a tree  
 A shocking sight for one to see

Now a flight thru air she will never bore  
 Because Elvira is no more.....

**Treasurer's Report** *By Paul Liedl*  
October's Financial Report

Cash on hand	\$ 35.00
Checking Acct.	\$1570.87
Investments	<u>\$6000.00</u>
Total	\$7605.87

Income in October consisted of \$410 in individual dues, \$200 in calendar sales, and \$16 in "Change for 54 Fund" for a total of \$626.00.

Expenses for the same period were \$416.07. They consisted of \$34.60 in chapter house expenses, \$80 on pancake breakfast expenses, \$71.76 for newsletter publication / distribution, \$210.07 in expenses for the

**Young Eagles Update**

I would like to give all my ground support and pilots a BIG "attaboy" and THANK YOU for your work with the boy scouts that received their aviation merit badges and YE flights. A special thank you to the Adult Scout who came dressed in his scout uniform from our chapter membership. Thank you Jesse Black!  
 - Al. K.

ON WINGS OF MERCY (Continued from page 1)

tions; since there are no paid staff, all donations fund operations. Overhead of *Wings of Mercy* is confined to fuel reimbursements and office expenses (phone/fax, postage, paper, etc.)

Pilots of Wings of Mercy are subject to FAR Part 91, and shall have a pilot certificate, current medical certificate, recency of experience, ratings and endorsements for the flight and aircraft flown. Pilots must be approved by the Safety Officer or designee prior to being assigned to a WOM mission.

PICs are required to meet one of the following annual review conditions: Completion of a Biennial Flight Review, Completion of FAA "Wings" program, Completion of an approved flight clinic/safety seminar.

The PIC shall have demonstrated proficiency in the aircraft flown, possess an instrument rating, and be current therein. The PIC must have a minimum of 600 logged hours, 400 hours as PIC, 100 hours composed of actual or simulated IMC and night, 50 hours in type, 25 hours at night, and 5 hours in the N-number used for the mission if night or IMC may be encountered.

The SIC must have a minimum of 300 logged hours, possess an instrument rating and be current therein, and appropriately rated for the assigned aircraft. Two pilots are required on ALL WOM flights. Gary Miller says "anyone interested in contacting our great dispatcher, Glen, can call 1-800-98mercy.

DON'T GIVE 'EM A HAND (Continued from page 2)

and the safe starting procedure is forgotten. Remember that propeller can kill you if you give it a chance.

The above procedure is best. But what do you do if there isn't a pilot around to man the controls. The safe method is first stand behind the propeller. Put chocks under the wheels with a short line on the left chock that will allow you to pull it away from the wheel once the engine starts. Then go over the same procedure with yourself, brakes, magnetos, throttle cracked and "contact". Check the magneto and throttle positions every time you pull through the propeller. When an engine refuses to start it is easy to forget the safe starting procedure.

A number of years ago at the Pioneer Airport ski plane fly-in the pilot of a J3 had trouble starting his 65HP engine. The last thing he tried was to turn the engine in reverse with full throttle in order to clear a flooded engine. When he made the magnetos hot to start he forgot that the throttle was full on and the J3 ended up in some trees. He was not hurt but the airplane sure was.

Sorry. No minutes of October's meeting were available for publishing this month.

## SCOTT HUTCHINSON'S FUEL TANK DAUBER

Homebuilder and gadgeteer extraordinaire Scott Hutchinson has built a remotely operated brush with a miniature TV camera to insure a perfect seal of the integral fuel tanks of his RV project. Shown holding the device at the EAFB Flying Club breakfast on Nov. 2, Scott has regularly made useful gadgets ranging from wing frame jigs for the RV to synchronizer pickups for the Bamboo Bomber model. The remote end is on the top of the rod held by Scott in the picture.



The business end of the "Remote Dauber" consists of a brush which can be rotated and swept back and forth by a handle on the other end of the concentric tubes while watching on a TV set. The TV camera is on the bottom in the detail photo. Scott says that the sealing compound is thick and difficult to apply.

No doubt the device has other applications. Talk to Scott if you have any questions or ideas. — Jim Anderson

SHUTDOWN (Continued from page 9)

checked that airplane?" "Oh boy, have we checked it!" "You say TWA checked it, and American checked it?" "Yeah." "If I'm not asking too much Lieutenant," he says, "will you come out and look at the airplane with me?" They go out and the chief says, "Just look at it."

"Yeah, well ... ?" He couldn't see anything wrong. "Lieutenant, will you please step over and pull the engine through?" The minute he put his hands on the propeller, he lit up! He knew! His hands were curled over the rounded leading edge of the propeller! The SMITH was perhaps the only propeller in history where you could get the blades in backwards!

The pitch of the blades had been set accurately at Philadelphia, on the big steel surface plates with big protractors and everything, but they were 180 degrees around! And this thing had flown across the continent with the sharp trailing edge plowing ahead and the rounded part on the back.

Of course, in the Navy, every incident gets written down on a piece of paper. The form was known as a Trouble Report. Roy (Grumman) had this thing, this Trouble Report saying, 'Propeller blades in backwards' framed and displayed for many years. His wonderful new airplane had just crossed the country with the propeller blades on backwards! Don't you love a good flying story? - Bob Waldron

## Chapter 54 approves KidVenture plan

Congratulations to all the Chapter 54 members who voted YES to the formation of our new KidVenture program. KidVenture at Oshkosh has attracted thousands of participant's young and old alike with its hands-on, educational—and fun—aviation-based demonstrations and presentations. At AirVenture kids get to build their own gliders and rockets, fly simulators, see aviation legends tell their stories, ride in a tethered hot-air balloon, and so much more.

I have heard so many of the old-time pilots around the country say “Oshkosh is too big”, “Oshkosh is too commercial”, “Oshkosh sucks today”. It is getting bigger. It is getting more commercial, but it doesn't suck today. Anybody that talks like that isn't thinking of his or her children or grandchildren.

“It is obvious KidVenture provides lasting experiences for young people. “To see the smiles from young kids and volunteers alike is what we are all about. KidVenture is truly an experience for the family. There is something for everyone at KV54, from the tiny tot to mom and dad and grandpa and grandma.”

Chapter 54 has 10 new Membership and Education volunteers to help launch KidVenture and other education and membership activities. EAA and Oshkosh is changing and so is Chapter 54. In fact our new motto for the next 14 months is CHANGE 54. This means we are changing literally to include the needs of our new members young and old. We are also taking the change (pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters) out of our pockets at 54 meetings and funding our youth events with our “change” from 54.

We have new members that may never attend a meeting, yet they support the Chapter monetarily and participate in volunteer activities such as the annual picnic, Young Eagle flights and special projects. It is not clear until the new Education committee meets to propose our 54 KidVenture as a single event, like the annual fly-in, ongoing youth activities like Young Eagles or special projects like the building of the model Wright Flyer to participate in the commemoration of “The Countdown to Kitty Hawk”.

KidVenture is officially part of the Education committee and is only the beginning to educating the youngest tot, to the young Eagles, to the Flying Start participants, to adult continuing education and even ground school activities here at 54. We hope to form valued partnerships with various other organizations such as: local banks, companies, government, and schools, colleges & universities, each connected by a common goal: that the future of aviation lies in today's youth. Once again, thank you all for helping CHANGE 54.

—Scott Olson

## Classifieds & Notes

### FOR SALE

#### 1947 35 Bonanza

TTAF: 4850, SMOH: 790

Prop overhauled two years ago. Substantially less than 100 hours on it. Has speed slope windshield, and added window in back (third window) Original navigation equipment I have a new ICOM A200 VHF air band transceiver that I will include but buyer will have to install. Standard David Clark headset available My mechanic said on a scale from 1-10 the interior rates an 8, the exterior a 7. It is a corrosion free Mid-western aircraft that has always been hangared and is mechanically sound. *Harriet Sarracco, 651-429-1049*

### FOR SALE

#### 1979 7ECA Citabria

TTAAF: 2530, SMOH: 360

Garmin 90 GPS

760 Radio

KT76A transponder and blind encoder

PS Eng intercom

ICOM A200 VHF air band transceiver

Wide back seat

My mechanic said on a scale from 1-10 the interior rates a 10, the exterior a 8-9. It is a corrosion free Mid-western aircraft that has always been hangared and is mechanically sound. *Harriet Sarracco, 651-429-1049*

### WANTED

A&P to conduct annual condition inspection on Rotax 582 equipped Avid Amphibian. Contact Grant Radinzel at 715-549-6314, or e-mail radinzel@redwing.net

### FOR SALE

Aeroshell 65W, 80W and 100W in case lots of qts. = \$24.25/ case or \$2.03 per qt.; 120W in gallons = \$52.54/ case or \$8.76 per gal.; 100W in gal = \$50.40 per case or \$8.40 per gal.; W100+ in qts = \$33.10 per case or \$2.76 per qt.; all weights mineral oil = \$28.60/ case or \$ 2.40 per qt.; 15W50 gal = \$92.40 per case or 15.40 per gal.; \$48.56 per case of qts. or \$3.85 per qt.; Exxon elite 20W50 = \$51.20 per case of qts., or \$4.30 per qt.; if you have your own container, I have 100W in bulk, preferably by the gallon, for \$8.00 per gallon.

I also have Champ filters: 48103, 48108 7 48110. I'm trying to get them cheaper thru a Chicago jobber, but with my shipping costs now they are \$16.00 each. I hope to get them cheaper soon. Jim Rusch. Home(715) 248-7071, hangar 246-9571. I will drop stuff off at the clubhouse when I can get to meetings, or Saturdays, or whatever.

## Asleep in Sleepy Eye

by Bob Collins

This is the kind of story that you read about in the “Never Again” section of AOPA magazine or Flying and say, “boy, what an idiot, I’d never do something that dumb.

In late September, I got a good lesson in complacency; it’s one that could’ve killed me, my son, and a few other people. It’s one I’ll never forget. It’s also one of those life events that makes you cringe just thinking about it; probably for years after.

I’m a Type A. I try to do the best I can no matter what the situation; that applies to my flying. I’m as hard on myself as anybody. Busting my private pilot checkride a few years ago still makes me wince, but it also makes me continually prove to myself that I’m better than that. It worked until this recent Sunday.

It was a fine day for flying, with a little bit of chop. But the Vikings were playing and people were still thinking they were worth watching. The roads and the skies were empty and my son had a high school project to do about any town in Minnesota. He picked Sleepy Eye, “because I liked the name,” he said.

It seemed like a good opportunity for some quality time and to get some hours in under the 90-day deadline, so we planned to fly to Sleepy Eye and — using the spirit of Jerry Sarracco — drop down and see who we could meet.

We set off armed with a digital camera and tape recorder and the flight planning was perfect. We don’t need a GPS.

Just past New Ulm, we spotted Sleepy Eye, did a 360 around the town, then headed south to find the airport. It was about 3 miles away, close enough for a walk to town. Our planning had told us that Sleepy Eye had intersecting turf runways of 300’ wide. Because of the width of the runway, you guessed it, we were too high on our first attempt so we went around and made a nice landing; gosh, I love landing on turf strips.

Sleepy Eye “International” was empty; a sign announcing that this was the home of the 2000 EAA champion greeted us. We pulled into a paved, but grown over with weeds, ramp and disembarked. A gentleman in a car drove up and said “is this your car?” “Well, no,” I said, “you drove up in it, isn’t it *your* car?” Seems a friend had asked him to drive it to the airport to leave it for a guy who was flying in for a wedding from Owatonna. The driver’s wife drove up a few seconds later. We explained what we were doing there. He drove us into town and told us all about it.

This was our first fortune of the day. My son had the interview he needed for his project and we got a little tour of downtown Sleepy Eye. After a nice conversation, they dropped us off on Main Street and we looked around.

Sleepy Eye is named after a Native American leader who had “lazy eye,” but it could’ve been named for the pace of life. It was dead.

I love to walk. My son doesn’t. But we walked around town for a couple of hours snapping pictures. After lunch, we



It’s pretty hard to miss this runway!

started back to the airport, figuring this nice little town will pick up a couple of hitch-hikers.

We figured wrong. First, there were few cars there. Second, forget everything you’ve heard about small-town Minnesota. Folks there—at least in Sleepy Eye—aren’t all that thrilled about helping anybody out.

We walked for about an hour, and then it dawned on us that maybe we were on the wrong road. The already tense relationship between a teenage son and his father got more strained. The only thing we heard was the wind through the corn tassels and it seemed to be whispering, “Bob, you’re an idiot.”

We looked for a landmark — the manure lagoon just off the runway; the one that forces you to do a thorough pre-flight. The horizon yielded nothing. Finally, we discovered it and realized it was north of the airport—not where we were looking. We dashed through somebody’s soybean field and finally made it to the airport. We were bushed.

I tell you this for one reason: to tell you not to fly when you’re bushed. The preflight, launch and flight back was fine. We made contact with Flying Cloud tower and reported we were 3 1/2 southeast. The tower told us for our reference that we were actually 6 out. “I have to get a GPS,” I told him. “I have to win a million dollars,” he replied. “What fun! What a great pilot. How proud my son must be of me!

The tower told me to make left traffic for Runway 27L and I confirmed, then turned left for the downwind. Did you catch it? I turned LEFT for the downwind. Left traffic.....left. Stupid rookie mistake!

I pulled a little power, threw in some flaps, turned base and, since I hadn’t heard from the tower, I asked for confirmation that I was cleared to land on 27 right, the runway just ahead of me. “Confirmed to land on 27 LEFT,” she said; a new controller taking over. So I pushed over to the left.

As I monitored other traffic, I heard a pilot say “looks like we’ve got traffic ahead of us,” so I turned around to see if I could see him. I couldn’t. Then I heard him say, “we’ve got traffic just ahead of and we’re turning.” He was taking off directly toward me. At the same time I heard him, I realized my mistake. “Tower, we screwed up and we’re on final for 9L—we’re on approach to the departure end,” I said as I banked hard left. “Turn right immediately,” and head for downwind, cleared to land on 27 right,” he said; the other controller taking over.

As I muttered “stupid, stupid, stupid” over and over, I landed flawlessly and expected to hear “call the tower.” I never did. The cabin was quiet as we shutdown. “That ruined a good day,” I said to my son. “Yep,” he said.





EAA Chapter 54  
3275 Manning Ave. N. Suite #7  
Lake Elmo, MN 55042



## Shutdown: A closing word

**E**AA Chapter 44 in Rochester, New York had the good fortune to have Slim Reddig as one of its members. A veteran of the early days of aviation, his engineering expertise made him one of the Golden Age of Aviation's best known designers. A shining example of his work is the classic Fleetwings Seabird amphibian. Jim was an active member of Chapter 44, and Hugh Jones and fellow members recognized what a treasure they had in their midst.

In the mid-'30s the navy was supporting development of three types of variable-pitch propeller: the Hamilton-Standard hydraulic controlled system, the Curtiss Electric propeller, and the SMITH propeller that was operated entirely mechanically. The pilot had a manually operated control in the cockpit by which, through mechanism, he could vary the pitch of his propeller blades. Early Grumman biplane fighters joining the fleet were equipped with SMITH propellers. Remember those pregnant looking fat-bellied airplanes with retractable landing gear? And one of these, taking off from an aircraft carrier out of San Diego suffered loss of power on launch and went down into the sea directly ahead of the oncoming carrier.

They had the good fortune to be able to get a line to the floating aircraft; legend leaves some doubt that the pilot even got his feet wet. The airplane was hosed down and brought ashore, and was soon shipped to the Naval Aircraft Factory at Philadelphia Navy Yard for cleaning, repair and refurbishment, inspection, flight test and return to the fleet. This included complete teardown examination of the SMITH propeller

and re-assembly with the blades carefully reset to their proper pitch. The reassembled airplane was test flown at Mustin Field, inspected and signed off for return to San Diego.

The assigned Navy ferry pilot had never flown one of the new Grumman fighters, but no one seemed to have felt concern in the matter. Wa-a-ay off schedule, he staggered into the Great Lakes Naval Air Training station in Chicago and plunked the thing down. Everybody was saying, 'Where the hell have you been?' "Guys, this is the first Grumman I've ever flown, and if this is the 'GREAT Grumman' I've been hearing so much about-it stinks," he said.

"Well, now, Ensign, what's the trouble?" "It won't take off, it won't climb, it's got no ceiling, it runs hot and it vibrates like hell." "Well, obviously, you don't know how to fly a Grumman, 'cause that's a great airplane. You stand down and get the Lieutenant here to take it onto the West Coast." So again, way behind schedule, he made it on into San Diego, but he had the look of being wrung out when he checked in. "Guys, that airplane is all wrong. I have had it checked at five airfields on the way out here. TWA mechanics were good enough to come over and they went over it. And I've been in and out of it and there's something definitely wrong. It stinks! I had to land on the road and taxi across the Rocky Mountains! It didn't have enough ceiling to get over!" he said.

They turned to some old aviation chief there and said, "Go look at the guy's airplane." He's back in 10 minutes, lit up like a lamp and he says, "Excuse me Lieutenant, you said you

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