

# **LIBERTY FIELD FLYERS**

## **April Newsletter**



**USUA Club #3 EAA Chapter #106**

### **Officers:**

**President:** Les Goldner  
**Vice Pres.:** Harry Torgovitsky  
**Secretary:** Mark Johnson  
**Treasurer:** Vic Bologna

### **April 9, 2011 MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT**

Our meeting will take place at 1:30-PM at our Club hanger (12C) after our morning flyout. The club will order plenty of Pizza at 1 PM for those who attend the meeting. The agenda was to include a guest speaker from the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, who cancelled today. Instead, Chris Rampoldt will lead a discussion of our 2011 summer flyout calendar and we will discuss (1) future fly-outs, (2) our projects, (3) happenings, and (4) things that you would like our club to do in the coming months.

If any of our non-flyers wish to hitch rides on the morning flights, please show up at 10-AM (weather permitting) or call the guys who fly... and if you do hitch a ride, please stay for the meeting.

### **February 12, 2011 Meeting Minutes**

UNAPPROVED MINUTES *by Mark Johnson*

With 20 people in attendance and PLENTY of pizza for all to enjoy, Les called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM. Les announced that today's LFF meeting would be short because have a special guest speaker. However, time was taken to allow two new members to introduce themselves. Greetings and a warm welcome were given to Mark Sturges and Jim O'Neill.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

- There was no old business

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- The election of new officers took place. All the incumbent officers were reelected unanimously to their posts.
- Various fly out destinations were discussed, but none agreed upon. Les mentioned that where an LSA flight was planned to central Nevada in mid May and asked if anyone wanted to participate. He also mentioned that the annual May Quality Sport Plane

flyin/BBQ at Cloverdale would take place on May 8<sup>th</sup>, and we would participate in place of our May meeting.

Les then introduced Brien Seely, of the café foundation. Brien came to the meeting to describe the Café Electric Aircraft Symposium (EAS) on April 29-30, 2011 and the Green Flight Challenge (GFC) in Mid July.

The EAS will include an outstanding group of attendees and speakers from NASA, industry and academia who will present the technologies necessary to inaugurate the Age of Electric Flight. Among other things, Brien described the possibility of emission-free, 2-4 seat electric aircraft. The EAS will discuss the latest breakthroughs in energy storage, motors, quiet propulsion, powered lift, electronic pilot assistance, autonomous flight and aerodynamics along with a vision to transform air transportation so that small quiet electric STOL aircraft could carry passengers from pocket airports near one's home to major air hubs.

Brien said that the GFC will have thirteen contestants, all with state-of-the-art aircraft, vying for \$1.5M in prize money. The winner will have to demonstrate their aircraft can obtain a fuel efficiency of 100 passenger miles/gallon (or a kilowatt equivalent) while maintaining a speed of 100 MPH. Wow! Other speed and distances tasks will have to be performed.

At the conclusion of Brian's very interesting presentation, Les announced that we have a NOAA Gulf of the Farallones naturalist/ bird observatory speaker at the next meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.

## **Oakland FSDO, a Roadblock to Progress**

*by Les Goldner*

For two-and-half months I have been trying to get the Oakland FSDO to approve my building of my Cumulus Electric Powered Motor Glider. I need to register the plane an Experimental Amateur Build Electric Motor Glider (E-ABMG) because I can't pass a medical and you don't need one to get a glider license. A motor glider (Powered Glider in FAA vernacular) is a type of glider in the regulations.

Finally, after 2 months of procrastination I got to visit Denny Pollard and Eric Lenz at Oakland FSDO to present my case to proceed. I had prepared a justification for E-ABMG registration, but this was quickly dismissed and Pollard and Lenz told me with authoritative certainty that:

- I can't build the plane before it is inspected for 51% (found to be untrue).
- As a sport pilot, even if my motor glider were gas powered, I could not fly it since the E-LSA window passed and I can only fly planes designated LSA (not true and irrelevant since I was planning to get a E-ABMG designation).
- I won't be able to register my glider as E-ABMG because there is no check-box for this category on the Airworthiness application (found to be irrelevant)
- An Electric glider, because of its untested power, can only be certified as an "Exhibition" airplane, with very restrictive flying privileges (found to be untrue)... and since I would need a GA license to fly Exhibition, I could not fly it.

As the end of my meeting, I commented that this means I can't build the Cumulus. Pollard smiled and replied, "You can build it, you just can't fly it!" The meeting ended on this note and I was devastated.

Following this meeting I called and wrote to everyone I knew who could offer ideas and assistance to move ahead. Among the suggestions was one from Harry Torgovitsky. He

suggested I call a helpful FSDO guy in Sacramento. This turned out to being the key to certificating my Cumulus as an E-ABMG without need of a medical. There is some more red tape ahead, but now I can start the easier part, building the plane.

At Sacramento FSDO, Richard Dilbeck (Dilly) spent the time to look into the situation to find a way forward. There was a night and day difference dealing with Dilly as opposed to working with Denny Pollard and his supervisor Eric Lenz at the Oakland FSDO. Oakland was very negative, never looked carefully at my justification, acted very slowly, didn't return phone calls or emails, and obviously did not to give a dam about the needs of one of their "customers".

My advice from all this is to stay away from Oakland FSDO if at all possible!



Cumulus single seat Motor Glider

### **Ace of the Month Comments**

You may notice in the next article just how shy and full of humility Mark Johnson really is. Instead of calling himself "Ace of the Millennium", he settled for only "Ace of the Century". Also note that previous Ace of the Month article took about much less space.

Marks failed to note below his just re-built Rans S-5 almost went the way of his other planes a few weeks ago when he took off with crossed ailerons. About 10' up on his maiden flight he pushed the stick one way and it went the other way, causing his plane to stand on a wing. With Marks usual cat-like perpetuity, the upper wing stalled and he made a 3-point landing off the runway. All he had to do to get back I the air was attach the controls properly and clean off the mud.



Mark taking off for the first time after reattaching controls and cleaning the plane.



**MARK JOHNSON**

*(Being editor has its advantages!)*

**LFF: What got you into small plane flying?**

I could never afford a big one!



**LFF: When was your first actual flight?**

October 1999. It was a crow hop and I broke my landing gear after the first 30 seconds of flight. I hear the Wright brothers lasted longer in flight than I did.

**LFUF: What was your most harrowing flight?**

How much time do you have to read this? The photos below show a few of my unscheduled stops.

**LFF: What was your best flight?**

I am hoping to have one in the very near future!

**LFF: Can you tell us about your aircraft?**

I have had 3 ultralights so far. An old orange Hawk that kept changing colors as I replaced parts. Another Hawk started out Yellow but ended up mostly black with all the duck tape on it. *(Eds note: Club members volunteered funds to replace this dangerous plane and thus embarrassed Mark into getting rid of it)* And my present yellow Rans S-5 which is still yellow because I am getting the hang of this flying thing.

**LFF: What do you see as your future plane?**

It will definitely be electric powered. With only one moving part, that engine should be harder to screw up.



Never did get it off the ground.



Looking for my front landing gear



Never did understand why vultures would swarm my plane every time I went up.



Note the prop is not turning. I think I missed the camera person on this occasion. I don't know why everyone was ducking and running. I wasn't that close.



Actually, I didn't miss the runway by much that time.



Les and me looking for my front landing gear again.



I forget how I broke the rudder and elevators but I managed to find some yellow ones somewhere.



My daughter used to sit on my lap while flying which made it somewhat difficult. It would have been her 21st birthday this month.



One Christmas Day I hit an unidentified object.

### Other Pics



Andre, in flight to Cloverdale (his favorite destination)  
with Mike (his favorite copilot) onboard



The new Devil's Slide tunnel (Seen by Les flying back from Watsonville)



Pigeon Pt Light, between Half Moon Bay and Watsonville (by Les)