

February 2008

Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 33

A monthly publication of the Dr. Alexander M. Lippisch Chapter of the Experimental Aircraft Association, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

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## Falling in Love

By Todd Millard

When I sold my first company, I celebrated by getting my private license after 18 years of taking lessons on again and off again. After a year of renting, I made the plunge and bought a new Cessna 182 with a full Garmin panel that was state of the art for 2000. N380MA (for My Airplane) was a great plane, especially for family trips and those long flights from Cedar Rapids down to Iowa City to work on the biplane with Jack Rezabek. During the last 7 years there has been a revolution in avionics and Cirrus and Columbia started cranking out some fast and sexy new planes. (Note: While Columbia was formerly Lancair and is now Cessna, I will refer to them as Columbia in this article.) So for something that loves the latest and greatest gadgets and electronics, it is understandable that I was getting a little bit of plane envy. Last year I sold my second company and decided to continue the tradition (it must be a tradition if you do it twice, right?) of buying a new plane after selling a company. So began the rounds of shopping, comparing, and flying a Piper Saratoga (not a sexy plane, more like a truck), the Cirrus SR22 (nice), and the Columbia 400 (wow). Needless to say I chose the Columbia 400 for its sexy looks, great handling, and the incredible G1000 avionics and placed my order around Memorial Day.



Then began the interminable 10 week wait for the plane to be ready to be picked up at the factory. I know 10 weeks is nothing compared to the years that many of you have spent building your planes, but it still seemed like forever to me this summer. I took 380MA to a broker (JA Air) in Chicago in June, was planeless for most of the summer including Oshkosh. The whole family loves to fly in to AirVenture and camp with the plane, so they were a little upset with me that we had to drive in this year.

When I bought my Cessna 182 from a dealer in Wisconsin, I received about 5 hours of training which mainly consisted of flying the plane back to Wisconsin and spending a couple of hours doing touch and goes. The transition training for the Columbia is a little more in depth with 20 hours of classroom training and 8-10 hours of flight training conducted at the factory in Bend, Oregon. In early July I received a huge manual with over 100 homework questions to ensure you actually read the manual before you arrive. Being more than a little excited and anxious to get the new plane, I tore into the manual with a vengeance and read the whole thing several times over. I also decided to get a head start on the flying portion and worked with Tim Busch to get checked out in the Columbia 300 that PS Air has available. While the Columbia 300 has traditional gauges and is slightly different than the turbocharged 400, it handles very similar. After 5 hours with Tim, I flew the plane another 5 hours or so and was starting to feel like I had a pretty good handle on the speed and landing characteristics. Okay, at I was only a little bit behind the plane by then instead of being in the previous county.

August rolled around and the time finally came to fly out to Bend. It was an uneventful commercial trip, but I spent the last leg of the flight in the last row of a turbo prop squeezed in with 4 other passengers. I was so glad I would be in my own plane for the ride home.

Monday morning I was at the plant early and got my first view of N28PD (the PD standing for the name of my last company, Planet Discover). It was love at first sight as the plane is drop dead gorgeous! I just stood there running my hand over the silky smooth finish and sensuous curves. With these lines the plane is definitely a she and I often refer to it as "her" and "she". (Fortunately I have an absolutely fantastic wife who is not jealous of her, yet.)

They finally tore me away and sent me to the classroom. I was the only owner picking up a plane that week, but met the two instructors who would be going through the training to get their certification as Columbia instructors. The entire first day was devoted to ground school. We went through weight & balance, performance, normal procedures, engine management, oxygen system, physiology. The last couple of hours were spent in the cockpit going through all the buttons and systems to get as familiar as possible before our first flight. By the end of the day I was tired, but even more anxious to take her flying.

Tuesday morning the weather was perfect as we rolled N28PD out of the hangar for my first flight in her. After a thorough preflight and with many butterflies on board, she roared down the runway and leapt into the sky. Wow! What an incredible rush. The next few hours were spent getting acquainted with the basic flight characteristics and going through a long series of stalls. For the first flight we loaded weight into the back seat and luggage compartment to achieve an aft CG. We then ran through a series of 18 stalls. First we did straight ahead, power off stalls for no flaps, takeoff flaps (12 degrees) and landing flaps (40 degrees). This was repeated in 20 degree turns right and 20 degree turns left. Then the entire series was done with power on. While the low speed handling of the plane is incredible and the plane gives you plenty of warning, the stall does

occur with a sharp break. Nothing scary, but definitely a sharper stall than a Cessna or Piper with their big fat wings. Also, aft CG stalls are always sharper, so they were showing her worst side first. We finished with some touch and goes to start working on getting adjusted to the relatively fast approach and landing speeds, 90 knots on final. While her stick forces are higher than something like an RV, when you move the stick she responds immediately and does exactly what you ask her to do. I was even more in love now. That afternoon it was back into the classroom for more avionics and cockpit operations. Another long day, but I had a perma-grin on my face.

The weather was perfect again on Wednesday morning for our second flight. (Actually the weather was perfect the entire time I was in Bend, what a great climate for flying). We started the flight by taking off and climbing to 17,500 feet on oxygen. I was used to flying at about 8,000 ft normally, so boy did you really feel high the first time you look out the window from that altitude. After a short time at 17,500 we kicked out the speed brakes and simulated an emergency descent back down to 10,500 feet. For this flight we removed the weights for a forward CG, so we ran through the entire series of 18 stalls again. The stalls were noticeably tamer at a forward CG. A significant portion of the flight was spent working through more of the avionics and autopilot with some simulated IFR approaches thrown in. Finally we worked on more touch and goes. I was slowly starting to feel at home in the plane. Wednesday afternoon it was back to the classroom to go through systems and emergency procedures. We also took an extensive tour of the factory and got to see close-up the incredible quality and strength they build into the plane.

The final flight Thursday morning focused on emergency procedures and more touch and goes. Then it was back to the classroom to receive our certificates and head for home.

After a long three and a half days of training, I felt very comfortable in the plane and knew her systems well. Columbia built a beautiful airplane and did a great job providing the initial training needed for this fast and complex bird. The long trip back home across the Rockies was the next adventure. I will share that one with you in the future.



# Annual Iowa Soaring Seminar and Banquet

By Don Gurentt

EAA Chapter 33 members are invited to attend the Annual Iowa Soaring Seminar and Banquet which will be held at the Clarion Hotel in Cedar Rapids on March 1, 2008. You don't have to be a glider pilot to attend. But if you think you might be interested in flying gliders some day, this is an event that you should attend. The seminar starts at 11:30 and continues all afternoon, followed by a banquet at the hotel in the evening. The featured speaker will Don Ingraham from Fairbault, MN, who last summer won the Hilton Cup, which is a very prestigious invitational soaring competition held every year at Baron Hilton's ranch in Nevada. I can't wait to hear if he got a kiss (or more) from Paris. Another speaker will be Don Gurnett, who has over 2000 hours in sailplanes and has won seven regional contest, as well as holding numerous Iowa soaring records will give a talk on the challenges and techniques involved in cross-country record and competition flying. Terry Edmonds of Iowa City will describe his experiences flying a motor glider. Other talks are being organized to discuss glider training, FAA license requirements, safety and other topics that would be useful to those interested in getting into soaring.

A fee of \$25 will be collected for the seminar. This fee covers the lunch at noon and pays for various costs involved in providing the room and projection equipment at the hotel. Those that want to stay for the banquet will order from the menu at their own expense. If you plan to attend the seminar, please contact Tom Burns, the president of the Blackhawk Soaring Club at [tburns@pcsis.net](mailto:tburns@pcsis.net). He needs to have a head count for ordering the lunch.

One final thing that I might mention is the connection that soaring has with Alexander Lippisch, who our chapter is named after. After World War I Germany was forbidden to produce powered aircraft, so much of their aeronautics development was focused on gliders. During this era Lippisch became the leading designer of gliders in Germany. This put Germany in the forefront of high performance glider development, a lead that it still holds today. Almost all modern high performance gliders are produced in Germany. Many of you probably know that his most famous aircraft, the Me-163, became a glider after the rocket engine ran out of fuel. Only glider pilots were recruited to fly the Me-163. The Me-163 is often regarded as the predecessor of the Space Shuttle, which always lands as a glider.

Blackhawk Soaring Club Rates: Full membership (includes SSA dues) \$515.00 Family + \$75/member

Equipment: Krosno 2 seat glider, PA-12 Super Cruiser tow plane

Our club has 1 glider instructor and 2 glider and powered flight instructors. We can do Tailwheel endorsements and Towing endorsements. Plus Glider instruction for Private, Commercial and CFGI. Also add-ons.

<http://blackhawksoaring.com/index.php>



# 90th Anniversary of the Airmail

By Jay Honeck

The 2008 theme for the Antique Aircraft Association's fly-in, held annually in nearby Blakesburg, IA, will be the 90th anniversary of the start of airmail in the U.S. To commemorate this anniversary, the owners of 34 original airmail aircraft have been invited to participate in reenactment flights from Blakesburg to Ottumwa and Iowa City. The flights will be carrying real mail that will be cancelled by the post offices in each city. Commemorative envelopes, postage, and cancellation stamps will be used, and will be made available for sale. Watch for announcements of advance sales.

At this early point AAA has received confirmation from seven pilots, including Addison Pemberton in his newly restored (and yet-to-fly) Boeing 40, all the way from Washington State. At this point they are scheduled to land in Iowa City on Friday, August 29th and Saturday, August 30th, at 1:30 PM, and stay for about an hour before departing.

There are some things we're gonna need help with! Items we'd like to see at the Smith Field (AKA: Iowa City Airport) stop include:

- A historic display showing the history of the airmail in Iowa City
- Reenactors dressed up like the early airmail pilots
- Historic vehicles (mail trucks?) from the airmail period to meet the plane(s)
- Any other ideas?

Jon Ockenfels and Jay Honeck are coordinating activities at the Iowa City stop, so if you're interested in getting involved, please contact us.



# The American Barnstormers are coming to Iowa City

By Jay Honeck

June 15-16, the American Barnstormers Tour will be kicking off their national tour at the Iowa City Airport. With 15 - 20 unique "Golden Age of Flight" aircraft participating, this two-day event will feature barnstormers from all over the country, selling rides and reenacting the Golden Age of Flight! Planned events include a hangar dance, custom car show, and pancake breakfasts!

Mike Tharp, Iowa City's airport specialist, is the point man for the event and I know he's going to be looking for as much help as he can get. Email Mike directly at [Michael-Tharp@iowa-city.org](mailto:Michael-Tharp@iowa-city.org) if you can help!

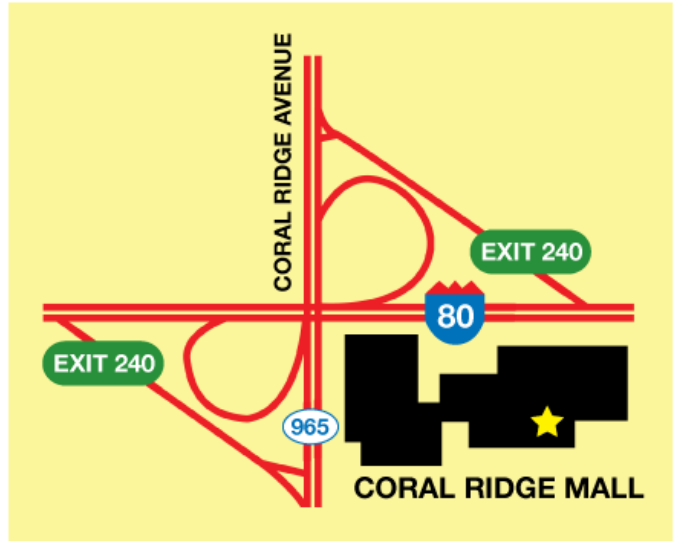


# Next Meeting – Iowa Children's Museum & Polished Prop

As promised in our January newsletter our next meeting will be Friday, Feb 1st at 7pm (social time from 6:30 to 7) We will meet at the Iowa Children's Museum in the Coral Ridge Mall. (see map right) {BTW guys here is a chance to get in good with the Misses; let her shop at over 120 fabulous stores while you attend the meeting!} Deb Dunkhase, Executive Director of the museum will present their plans for an aviation exhibit <http://theicm.org>

Also we have arranged for Mark Mumaw from Polished Prop will discuss aircraft cleaning and polishing <http://polishedprop.com>

It should be a fun meeting at a new venue for us so I hope to see you all there.



## Membership Survey

Thanks to all of you that participated in our online membership survey. Your input will be helpful in shaping the direction the Chapter takes over the next couple of years. I'll hit the highlights in this article and post the full results on the Chapter Web site.

We had 24 members complete the survey and 4 partially complete it. The Chapter has about 75 active members and another 50 that have been active in the past few years, so this is a good sized sample of our membership. Of those taking the survey, 89% have been members for more than 3 years with 61% being members more than 5 years. While this sample may be a little more skewed towards the long-time members, this probably isn't too far off as we have a large core group of members who have been active for a long time.

Overall the participants feel the Chapter is doing either okay (52%) or pretty good (44%). About half (46%) attended two or less meetings in the past year, but on the flip side, 31% attended more than six meetings. The most common reasons for not making the meetings were too busy (25%) and wrong time/night (25%).

The bulk of the participants are active pilots (88%). Over a third (38%) are currently building, which I found surprising given the large number of completed planes we already have in the chapter. RVs and Zenith models were the most



common planes being built. When asked to rate their interest in building, 62% were very interested and 19% love it. The interest in flying was even higher with 23% very interested, but 73% said they love it.

The interest in meeting activities was similarly balanced with 88% interested in flying topics and 80% interested in building topics. Project visits was the highest rated meeting activity with 92% interested. Fly out/in and ride-sharing were also highly rated at 80% and 68% respectively. One person added that the survey missed the best part of meetings though, socializing and catching up with old friends.

I appreciate all of those that took time to fill out the survey. Your feedback confirmed my belief, that Chapter 33 is really all about creating a sport aviation community for those that love airplanes,

## Membership Renewal Dues

It is that time again. Dues are \$15/year, \$25 for 2 years, or \$35 for 3 years. Add \$10/year for paper newsletter (electronic newsletter delivery is free)

You can check your dues status on our Chapter website in the Members section. You need to login to see your status. Click the "Sign In" link at the top of the members page. Or use this link <http://www.eaa33.org/members/index.php?login=1>. Enter your last name and your EAA#, click "Login" then you can go to your name in the member list and check out your membership status at the bottom of your individual page. Don't worry only you can see your status. Also take a minute to check your address, phone# and email address and update them if needed.

If your membership is paid only thru 2007 then Please send your completed application for 2008 and check to: EAA Chapter 33, c/o Thomas Meeker, 440 N. Troy Rd, Robins, IA 52328

If you have any questions about your status you can contact Thomas Meeker 319-899-0037 or [tomomeeker@msn.com](mailto:tomomeeker@msn.com)

## Fly Market

**FOR SALE** Garmin 96C in at \$450.00. I think they sell new for around \$495 but I've included the auto kit which is another hundred or so. This is a small battery operated color display with obstructions. It will run for 12 to 13 hours on two AA batteries. I've got a 496 now and have to use my gell cell to keep it running! Jim Zangger 712-477-2230 (home) 605-370-1139 (cell)

**FOR SALE** GOLD WING aircraft in flying condition - Ken Dodson 319-629-4669

**FOR SALE** Wing & tail parts for UltraLite type airplane. Any Offer - John Banes 319-846-2033

**FOR SALE** P-38 Lightning ultralight for sale. - Dan Knoll at 848-4406 for details.

**FOR SALE** 2000 Phantom X1 Ultralight, 125 total hours, Rotax 447 engine, BRS 750 parachute, 10 gal tank, Great Flying Aerobatic Airplane, More info available at [www.phantomaeronautics.com](http://www.phantomaeronautics.com) \$7000 or make an offer, - Jerry Maxwell Phone (319) 393-8560

## Chapter 33 Calendar

**Feb 1 6:30 pm** Chapter Meeting, Iowa Children's Museum, Deb Dunkhase presenter & Mark Mumaw from Polished Prop

**Feb 1-2** 17th Annual Midwest Aviation Maintenance Symposium and Trade Show. The Hotel at Gateway Center Ames, Iowa Sponsored by the Iowa Chapter of PAMA

**Mar 1 11:30am** Annual Iowa Soaring Seminar and Banquet which will be held at the Clarion Hotel in Cedar Rapids

**Apr 23-24** Iowa Aviation Conference. Sheraton West Des Moines Hotel, for more information visit [www.iawings.com](http://www.iawings.com)



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