

EAA CHAPTER 1128

Two Harbors Helgeson Airport

www.1128.eaachapter.org

It's a moonless, cool night at the lake and you can feel winter creeping in. Cutting firewood is on the top of the to-do list. We won't need a fire at our next get-together, we will be meeting in the cozy **Community Room** at **THHS** on **Thursday, November 3**. The board will meet at 6:00 and the meeting will start at **6:30**.

Last Meeting

It was cold and windy with occasional sprinkles for our last BBQ meeting of the year. Dave fired up the grill inside the hangar and threw on the patties. It wasn't long before we had to crack the door. Scott created some great chili and brought fixins for chili dogs. Mike convened the meeting with news of our Holiday Party. He had made the reservation for our usual room at Blackwoods Duluth on Thursday January 12. If we arrive by 6:00 we can put in our orders at 6:30 so every one can be served at the same time. He will buy gifts for the raffle as usual, donations are welcome. He asked us to call him if we plan to attend so he can get a good count before the event. Jon reported \$4024.38 in chapter coffers and reminded us that membership dues are due. Ashlee told us the renewal of our 501(3)c nonprofit paperwork needs to be done as well. Dave talked about the new C180 in his hangar and we heard Matt Ferrari had just purchased an AcroDuster homebuilt biplane. Bud is very close to finishing his Sonex project, Mike is almost done putting his F-1 Rocket back together and Rooby (my girl) is just days away from an Airworthiness Inspection. Chapter Officer elections are slated for November's meeting but we heard no nominations. Mike told us he had a long chat with Charlie Becker at EAA HQ and they agreed that the "Association" in EAA is what it's all about, people working together for the common good. Renewing our Chapter status makes us a very important part of that whole.

It was so cold I skipped the DQ dessert.

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I was happy to see our friends from 272 and 1221 at the Jimbolaya event even though it was a non-flyable day.

ETC,

Some updates on our member's accomplishments since last month: Scott and Seth are ever so close to check ride time for their Private Pilot Certificates, Bud is nearing Airworthiness Inspection on his Sonex. Matt has been taxiing his AcroDuster. Mike called just today to say all 310 Continental horses under his Rocket cowl came to thundering life for the first time in more than a year. He has spent so many long days in his hangar working toward this moment I could hear the relief in his voice.

I am intimately familiar with that sense of relief, my own long slog towards my aviation dream has come to a brilliant climax. Rooby earned her Airworthiness Certificate on October 11th. Through four years of dedicated effort I always envisioned this successful outcome but I was never really sure until it happened. Mike was equally dedicated to his part of the process as DAR and I'm sure it would have been infinitely more difficult without his patience and expertise.

The day was sunny and unseasonably warm so when the signatures and handshakes were done there was only one thing left to do. I re-installed her cowling and, reasoning that she had probably just had the best pre-flight inspection possible, I pulled her out into the sun. It was breezy but the wind was straight down the grass strip and we had been rehearsing this moment for days so I had no trepidations about going for it. Well, a couple maybe but my resolve outweighed my doubt. Rooby was as anxious as I and fired up immediately, purring like a kitten. I elected to use the hard surface for departure just because the extra length would give me more options should a problem occur on take off. Magneto check done I ran my pre-launch mnemonic and swung out onto the wide tarmac. I was struck by how beautiful the world looked through Rooby's brand new windshield. The throttle went forward and so did we, like out of a catapult. I pushed forward on the stick to raise her tail as we had done so many times before but it wasn't necessary, we were already flying! Her controls came to life in my hands and under my feet and we were one instantly. The crosswind conspired to interfere with our embrace but Rooby stood firm and lifted me gracefully. A quick panel scan showed RPM a bit high but not emergency high. Temperatures were all good so I just concentrated on the climb. At 2000 ft I reduced power to level off and saw the EGT (exhaust gas temperature) rise past the red line. I have enough experience with two stroke aircraft engines to know moving the throttle a little either way would lower the reading and it did, a little. Finally relaxed enough to look down I found the view extraordinary. The fall colors were brilliant in the afternoon sun and the lake was baby blue. Miss Chaos has always inhibited my view of the ground with her wings at my shoulder level so I was enraptured with the unobstructed vision. We did some easy turns to get acquainted and Rooby gave me no surprises. I kept a close watch on the EGT gauge so when I checked our vertical speed I was delighted to see it nailed at zero. When I entered the traffic pattern and began to descend I was dismayed to see it still at zero. In daytime visual flight a vertical speed readout is not critical, just convenient so I continued the approach. Rooby followed my lead to the grass and set me down as gently as a feather. I was elated! A moment so long anticipated had come to pass with very little drama and I realized I was already feeling less like commander of a machine and more like a partner in a beautiful relationship.

I knew how to adjust the carburetors to lower the EGTs so we taxied back to the hangar. I may have uttered a happy exclamation upon dismounting, I may have screamed it. After the carb work I couldn't wait to get back in the cockpit and the love story continued to evolve. We did some more elaborate dance moves at different speeds and attitudes. I checked one notch of flaps and then two noting the response I was expecting. Rooby seemed a bit tentative until I remembered that I have been flying an aerobatic airplane for twenty years and the light controls and quick response is not something I should expect in her behavior. Our first landing had been such a blissful reunion with the planet I wanted to try it again, so I did, five more times! Every single one was just as sweet and I knew I couldn't take sole credit. She likes me. I couldn't be more thrilled.

Miss Chaos is not so thrilled. As soon as Rooby took over a large part of her room she threw a fit. And maybe a crank bearing. Still wonder why I see them as women? Her motor sits on the bench in my shop now and I will delve into the situation with all the respect Miss Chaos deserves and has earned over the years. I hope I can eventually convince her that she will always be a treasured part of my life even if I dance with another from time to time.

An epic chapter in my life has come to a happy conclusion and I can't wait to start the next. Love is where you find it and I am so fortunate to have found it, again.

I hope you find something as rewarding and refreshing in your life, just stay open to the possibilities and you will.....

.....Happy Landings!.....