

# The Flypaper

Promoting Sport Aviation in Central Illinois for More Than 58 Years



## August Meeting -

Our August meeting featured burgers and dogs by chef Paul and a host of food brought in by members. Our speaker for the evening was Warren Smith, FAA Safety Program Manager for Illinois on the topic "FAA - Friend or Foe?" Warren provided us with a very entertaining and informational discussion on FAA operations and safety groups. We learned about the many programs in place at FAA to collect incident data for prevention programs and their safety programs to help pilots with better decision making. Warren discussed the many statistics involved with accidents but the number one accident cause is fuel exhaustion, running out of gas.



## You Have Information August!

### August Membership Meeting

We will be barbecuing burgers and hot dogs for our September meeting

Thursday, September 15 at 6:00 PM

Our Speaker will be Ric Woldow, a Designated Airworthiness Representative, authorized to perform airworthiness certification of light-sport aircraft



Bring a dish to share!

## Wilbur L. Smith, Inducted into Illinois Aviation Hall of Fame



Doug Reeves presents a plaque to Chapter 129 commemorating his uncle, Wilbur Smith's induction into the Illinois Aviation Hall of Fame

### *~Story by Doug Reeves*

**Wilbur Smith** was a Bloomington local aviation pioneer, inventor, aircraft builder/restorer, mentor and founding member of two local EAA chapters.

Wilbur had earned the reputation as someone who would help anyone with an aviation project. He surrounded himself with other aviation minded friends who helped build, repair, and service private airplanes and just tell aviation stories. Many of these friends became prominent in the Illinois aviation history; Rudy Frasca, Marion McLure, Rene Durenleau and Paul Poberezny (National President of EAA)

Shortly after Paul Poberezny founded the Experimental Aircraft Association in 1953, Wilbur was building his first Experimental all wood aircraft in the family basement. His aviation friends helped him carry the parts to the

back yard where it was assembled. Wilbur flew his plane to the EAA events in Milwaukee to share his

woodworking skills with others. Wilbur attended the national EAA events regularly volunteering with organizing the fly ins and sharing his knowledge of aircraft design and construction at member seminars.

In 1956, Wilbur, along with his other local aviation friends felt a need to establish a local chapter of EAA. Together with friends like Marion McClure, Vern Harris, Rudy Frasca and Rene Durenleau, a French Canadian Air Force member stationed at Rantoul Air Force Base, plans were created and work necessary to achieve certification as a chapter of Experimental Aircraft Association were completed.

In March of 1957, Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 29 based in Champaign Illinois was approved. Wilbur Smith is listed as one of the charter members and later served as President of Chapter 29. Wilbur, being an officer for the chapter and a charter member was a lead volunteer with pancake breakfasts, fly ins and fly outs sponsored by the chapter. When there was an event for EAA, Wilbur Smith was there to help.

When the national EAA Fly In was moved from Milwaukee to Rockford Illinois in 1959, Wilbur volunteered for two weeks each year to help with planning, set up, the fly in activity, holding training seminars and wrap up. Wilbur flew his home-built planes to Rockford each year to show examples of

his workmanship.

Many of the members of Chapter 29 lived in the Bloomington area and regularly drove the hour drive to Champaign to attend meetings and volunteer to help other members with their aircraft projects. In 1962, working with the Bloomington members, Wilbur and others from the Bloomington area fulfilled the requirements to start another chapter of EAA at Bloomington. Since many of the members were prior members of Chapter 29, the new chapter was designated EAA Chapter 129. Wilbur was their first President and served in all leadership positions through the years. For over 40 years, Wilbur helped with every project the chapter sponsored; pancake breakfasts, airshows, or fly ins.

Wilbur learned aircraft building as a young man from a friend and mentor, Claude Sessions of Waynesville Illinois. Wilbur developed an expertise in woodworking skill that allowed him to be sought out nationally for repair work and construction of wing ribs, full wing assemblies and tail surfaces for sport aviation participants.

*See Wilbur Smith, Page 4*





## Chapter 129's YE Notes



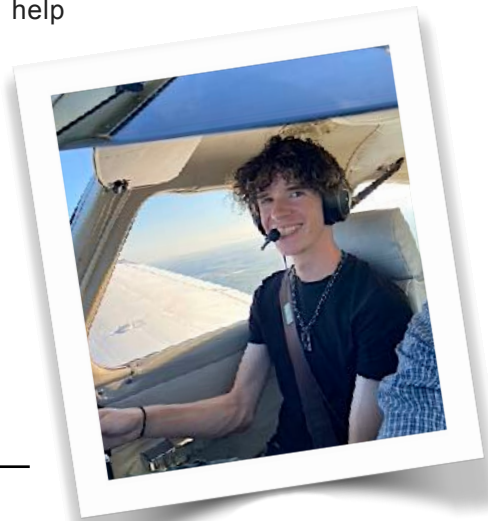
**Rachael Henderson YE Coordinator**

We have just 1 YE event remaining for 2022. T h e

September 17 event is scheduled to be held in Mattoon. Mattoon was a great venue that we held a few years ago. They have a nice FBO that offered us a large open hangar with restrooms and fuel. Make sure to attend that event. We will likely stay for lunch and conversation immediately following all flights. Our final event will be held the third Saturday in October with the destination to be determined. Currently the date is set as a rain

date for Mattoon. We would like to offer flights to another region of interested young pilots which is why we are headed to Coles County. We hope you can join us as we wind down the season. Hopefully the weather will cooperate.

**YE Challenge:** Please consider flying 30 young eagles to celebrate 30 years within 1 year. Let me know if you need paper work and/or logbooks to do just this. And you don't need to wait for a YE rally to take kids up, it is fun to take them individually for a more personal experience. I can also help connect you with kids to fly.



### EAA Young Eagles 30th Anniversary

2022 marks 30 years since the Young Eagles program was launched at EAA Oshkosh 1992. EAA will be kicking off the Young Eagles 30th anniversary at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2022, which will include a number of special AirVenture activities, and year-round recognition of volunteers.

#### 30 Flights for 30 Years

Volunteer Young Eagles pilots who fly 30 youths between August 1, 2022, and July 31, 2023, will be awarded a commemorative polo shirt. Once pilots reach this milestone, EAA will contact pilots to request their shirt size.



## Chapter 129 Builders Update

Jim Hazen is adding framework to his LEXL so he can fold his wings following the Leonard Milholland's plans so the plane can be stored in a space no wider than the landing gear. Prototype is complete, he still has some bolts to source and parts that need painting.



### Wilbur Smith from Page 2

Only the highest quality spruce and high grade epoxy met Wilbur's standards and his quality of craftsmanship was apparent in his finished products. Although Wilbur could have established a profitable business with his skill, he was very generous with his talent and often provided his service to friends and members at material cost only. To share his expertise, Wilbur passed his knowledge to Dave Houchins of Bloomington in the 1980's helping him become an expert woodworker as well. In 1975, Wilbur and members of the EAA Chapter 129

were asked to rebuild a classic airplane from the 1930's.



Starting from scratch with only a metal fuselage and landing gear remaining, the team rebuilt the Tilbury Flash. Wilbur was selected to rebuild the wings for the Flash because of his woodworking expertise in wing construction and spent over 500 hours volunteering for the task. The Tilbury Flash is now hung in the Central Illinois Regional Airport terminal for all to see.

Wilbur designed and built many experimental airplanes that he flew. One example, the Smith Termite, is currently hanging in the Oregon Air and Space Museum in Eugene Oregon with its fabric removed to display the quality of woodworking skill that Wilbur exhibited.

After four years of submitting

documents for the nomination of Wilbur Smith to the Illinois Aviation Hall of Fame, he was selected as a member of the 2020 inductees. However, because of Covid, the ceremony was postponed until October of 2021 and combined with the inductees for 2021.





## FLY-IN/DRIVE-IN WINGS SEMINAR & LUNCH



Synergy Flight Center, Prairie Aviation Museum, EAA Chapter 129 and Crosswinds Flying Club hosted a FAAST WINGS pilot proficiency safety seminar on August 13. PAM opened the museum prior the event and a grilled hot dog lunch with side dishes was provided.

The FAAST event entitled **"Engine Out After Take Off! A real life survival story"** was organized by Warren Smith, FAA Safety Program Manager for Illinois. Local pilot and Aviation Safety Inspector Dan Amolsch presented his first-hand encounter with an engine failure shortly after takeoff and shared real world advice on how to survive such a situation. The discussion included a review of engine failures experienced by John Barnes, director of maintenance at Synergy.

All attendees are eligible for WINGS credits.





## Wanted

Your pictures, stories, events, travel adventures, builder updates for our next issue of The Flypaper.

Email them to: [cmbates50@gmail.com](mailto:cmbates50@gmail.com)

## 2022 Calendar of Events

**Sep 3** - Pancake Breakfast 1C1 Paxton

**Sep 17 - Young Eagles - MTO Mattoon (Oct 15 backup)**

**Sep 15** - EAA Chapter 129 Member Meeting

**Oct 1** - Pancake Breakfast 1C1 Paxton

**Every Saturday 7 to 9 AM** - Gathering of Eagles at EAA Chapter 129 hangar F-15

## 2022 Annual Dues

Thanks to members who have paid their 2022 dues. If you haven't paid yet, please send your check to:

EAA Chapter 129  
2825 E Empire St  
Bloomington, IL 61704

Join us at the EAA Chapter 129 hangar for our Gathering of Eagles breakfasts Saturday mornings 7:00 am to 9:00 am for some great food and some hangar flying at its best.



**EAA CHAPTER 129**  
BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL, ILLINOIS



## Chapter 129 Officers

Charlie Bates-President, Treas  
Jason Jording-VP  
Josh Andracki-Sec'y, Social Media  
Ben Schneider-Board Member  
Don O'Neill-Board Member  
David Pfister-Board Member  
Rachel Henderson-Young Eagles Coord  
George Wilts-Tech. Counselor  
Mike Todd-Web Editor  
Wayne Aldrich - STEM Coordinator