

The Flypaper

Promoting Sport Aviation in Central Illinois for More Than 58 Years

EAA Ford Tri-Motor Returns to Bloomington



Chapter 129 will host Captain Bill Thacker and crew for a Ford Tri-Motor weekend at BMI June 16 to 19. Last year's event was shortened with weather but we had lots of interest and managed to get some flights in. Chapter members, get these dates on your calendars and look for opportunities to volunteer as we get closer to the event.



Bill refueling Tri-Motor 5-AT-B NC9645



RAY AVIATION
SCHOLARSHIP



The EAA Ray Aviation Scholarship Fund is a scholarship program that is funded by the Ray Foundation, managed by EAA, and administered through the EAA Chapter network. Through the generous support of the Ray Foundation, EAA provides up to \$10,000 to deserving youths to cover their flight training expenses, totaling \$1,550,000 in scholarships annually. The original goal of the program was to mentor prospective pilots ages 16 to 19 to achieve an 80% completion rate. This year the goal is 90%.

For 2022, EAA will provide 164 scholarships, 129 regular, 32 will be 50/50 where the chapter pays for half of the expenses and 3 are funded by Microsoft.

Chapter 129 has sponsored three Ray Aviation scholars in recent years, all of whom have received their PPL certificates. Our chapter applied for the 2022 scholarship program and we have been awarded a scholarship for a candidate of our choice. More to come as we work through the paperwork.

You Have Information March!



March Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 17 at 6:00 PM

In honor of St. Patrick's Day, we will be serving corned beef and cabbage

Join us for dinner at 6:00, some hangar flying and our speaker at 7:00 TBA

Bring a dish to share!



Jim Anderson Retires (again)

On Sunday December 12th, our local 129 chapter (EAA) hosted a retirement party for our member Jim Anderson. It was his second retirement. After 25 years at ISU and then 16 years at Lab-Corp, Jim finally decided to hang it up. The party was a huge success and just under 95 people came through the hangar to wish Jim well. Jim plans to travel and work on several projects. Rumor has it that we will be seeing more of Jim at E-18 working on his airplane build project. More to come on that. Good luck to him and his future endeavors.



Last month we featured a story on Havana Regional airfield. I happened to fly over her on a trip back from Kansas City. Certainly more attractive on that warm summer night.



Midwest Flyer magazine has gone digital. Copy and paste the following URL into your browser to get access:

<https://midwestflyer.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/MFM-Feb-March-2022-Web-Interactive-PDF.pdf>



Congratulate member Burke Wettstein on his first solo flight. He took advantage of a rare warm day in early March to get it done.

Lake Bloomington's Mysterious Tower

Many area residents mistakenly assume that the steel tower standing alone near the southwest end of Lake Bloomington is an abandoned fire watch platform erected by the U.S. Forest Service or another government agency, presumably in the distant past. It has even become a local urban legend of sorts.

In truth, the tower's purpose involved not terra firma but rather the wild blue yonder. Some 75 years ago the federal government erected the tower to support a revolving beacon used to help passing aircraft navigate the nighttime skies. This beacon, as well as others in Central Illinois and beyond, offered solace to pre-radio era pilots who sometimes found themselves hurtling through the inky blackness on a wing and a prayer.

Located off McLean County Highway 31 just north of East 2450 North Road, the tower stands along the west side of Lake Bloomington's slender southwest finger.

The Lake Bloomington beacon was one of a series installed along the St. Louis-to-Chicago air route in 1939 and 1940. In Logan County there was a tower on the T.C. Green farm north of Lincoln, and another one on Everett Bock's farm southeast of Elkhart. In McLean County, there was a tower in or near the tiny hamlet of Covell southwest of Bloomington.

Lake Bloomington's tower beacon carried the designation "14, SL-C Airway," meaning it was the fourteenth such beacon between St. Louis and Chicago.

On Sept. 22, 1939, the Bloomington City Council agreed to lease a patch of Lake Bloomington

ground less than one-quarter acre in size to the Civil Aeronautics Authority (later Administration) for \$1 per year. Federal officials then saw to the erection of the tower and installation of the beacon by year's end.

The idea to employ a series of beacons to mark air routes dates to an earlier generation of aviation enthusiasts and promoters. By the mid-1920s, to cite one early and ambitious scheme, there was a string of steel towers topped by "searchlights" spaced every 25 miles along the airmail route between Cleveland, OH and Rock Springs, WY, the combined 2 billion in candlepower courtesy of General Electric's Illuminating Engineering Laboratories. "What the lighthouse is to the ocean navigator, these beacons are to the conquerors of the air," declared GE.

The same could be said some 15 years later for the Lake Bloomington beacon, which by early 1940 burned bright each and every night like clockwork. On occasion this beacon tower would make local news. For instance, during an Aug. 1942 area-wide blackout drill (this being World War II) the beacon drew complaints from some local residents, as did the lights from the WJBC radio tower (though for civilian defense officials, the most galling lapse involved a Bloomington beauty shop and its neon sign left brightly buzzing for all but two minutes of the blackout!)

Although the Lake Bloomington tower has been a familiar, if lonely, sentinel for area residents over nearly three-quarters a century, it served as a beacon platform for a mere one short decade.

In the fall of 1950 the Civil Aeronautics Administration removed the Lake Bloomington beacon as well as all others along the St. Louis-Chicago route. Art Carnahan, manager of



**Lake Bloomington Beacon Tower
14 SLC Airway**

Bloomington Municipal Airport, explained to The Pantagraph that the beacons had become too expensive to maintain, especially since most nighttime aircraft were now equipped with radio, making these "inland lighthouses" mostly obsolete.

~See Tower Page 4

~Tower from Page 3

According to one account, the Lake Bloomington beacon ended up at Bloomington Municipal Airport (now Central Illinois Regional Airport, or CIRA), though how it was used and for how long is unknown.

The Civil Aeronautics Administration canceled its Lake Bloomington lease and the city took possession of the now-beaconless steel tower on June 30, 1952. There was talk of moving or even repurposing the tower, but with a cost estimate for such a job running upwards of \$1,500, city officials instead decided to leave the tower "as is," at least for the time being.

"As yet no one has come up with a use for the tower," noted The Pantagraph on June 29, 1952, "but city officials are confident they will find something better to do with

it than letting it remain a bird roost." Yet more than 60 years later the tower has remained little more than a bird roost—albeit one with an interesting story, whether real or imagined!

Local folks interested in seeing a revolving beacon firsthand are in luck. The Prairie Aviation Museum, located on Route 9 next to Image Air and CIRA, includes an outdoor working display of one such beacon on its "Air Park" grounds.

In Sept. 2013, volunteers completed the beacon's installation atop an ingenious miniature tower. This beacon, though, is newer than the one that for the better part of a decade promised safe passage to pilots coursing through the dark skies above Lake Bloomington.

*~Story by Bill Kemp
McLean County Museum*

Hello fellow chapter members. It is March and we are kicking off our Young Eagles season for 2022 this month. This year, both chapter 129 and chapter 29 will work more closely together at YE events to offer more flights and to continue to encourage youth in aviation-related fields. To get the year started, our first two events will be held at CMI. All members from either chapter are welcome and encouraged to attend all events at all locations. This familiar location close to home will help me get my feet wet and back in the groove of hosting events. Please put March 19th and April 9th on your calendar if you are willing to help out either on the ground or in the air and contact me to help plan the events. The month of May will bring us to Bloomington on the 14th. Fingers crossed we have beautiful weather to jump start the season. These events will run from 9am-11am but please plan

to arrive early for pilot briefing and a refresher on paperwork



Rachael Henderson
YE Coordinator

(which is always changing as EAA is trying to go paperless-minus the log books and certificates).

Stay tuned as we work through the schedules for your opportunity to support our efforts to bring aviation to our local youth.

And if you haven't completed your homework assignment from last month, see the details below.

Please contact me if you have any questions. 217-778-3900 or rhenderson797@gmail.com

~Rachel Henderson

Your YE Homework Assignment

- Log in or create and account (all adult volunteers)
- Click on your profile in the upper right-hand corner

Profile for Rachel Henderson

If you want to fly kids outside of a club, please provide this link to the parents. <http://>

Your EAA Membership expires on Nov 30, 2022.

Your Youth Protection Background Check was completed on Jan 20, 2020 and expires on Jan 20, 2023

Your Youth Protection Training was completed on Jan 18, 2020 and expires on Jan 18, 2023

- Check that EAA Dues are paid and current (all pilots, optional for ground crew)
- Youth protection training is complete and current (all volunteer pilots and at least 2 ground volunteers working the event must have completed training)
- Background check is completed following youth protection training
- verify you are current

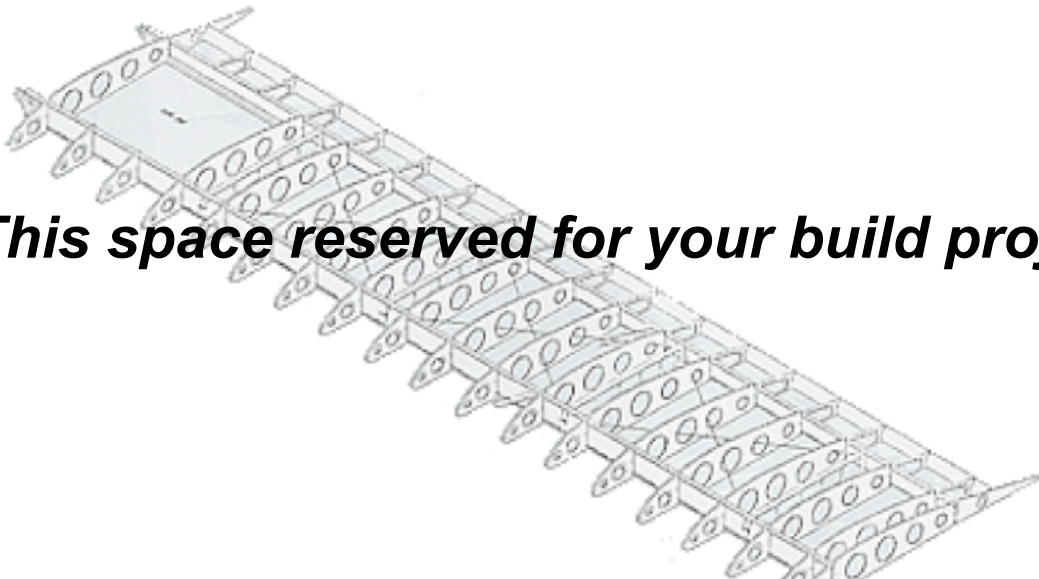


Builders Update

With the warmer weather setting in, Jim Hazen has removed the heated tent from his workshop and built a 'rotisserie' for his wing assemblies. Jim reports it is well balanced for easy wing rotation. He is currently doing some sanding to remove any rough edges.



This space reserved for your build project



Tidbits and Winter Reading

Be sure to check out these great podcasts!
Interviews with A10, U2 bush pilots and
astronaut homebuilders.

THE GREEN DOT

A podcast for those who fly for the love of it or are simply fascinated by the world of flight. The Green Dot features EAA news, general aviation topics, history, personal experiences from the hosts and a variety of guests, and anything fun, interesting, or cool in and around the world of flight. <https://www.eaa.org/eaanews-and-publications/eaanews-and-aviation-news/eaanews-the-green-dot-podcast>



Chapter Video Magazine

March 2022



What You Can Expect

In March's Chapter Video Magazine, Jack J. Pelton provides updates on:

- The new year-round Pilot Proficiency Center and Youth Education Center opening before AirVenture in July
- EAA's advocacy efforts, including the [lead-free aviation fuel plan](#) and the FAA Winter Summit
- EAA's presence at SUN 'n FUN, including the raffle airplane, One Week Wonder paint schemes, and B-25 *Berlin Express* flights
- AirVenture 2022's themes, highlights, and [aircraft anniversaries](#)

Find EAA's Chapter Videos at:

<http://eaa.brightcovegallery.com/chapters/detail/videos>



3/16/22 7 p.m. CDT

[International and Cross-Border Aircraft Transactions](#)

Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.

Buying an aircraft from another country has risks. Focusing on GA and experimental aircraft transactions, and current COVID issues, EAA Legal Advisory Council members Paul Herbers and Patrick Floyd will present examples of the problems that have arisen in such transactions.

3/23/22 7 p.m. CDT

[Home Flight Simulation for Private Pilot Training and Proficiency](#)

Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.

Home flight simulation is widely considered an essential training aid for pilot proficiency, avionics familiarization, and communication practice.

3/24/22 7 p.m. CDT

[Young Eagles Workshops – Bringing Youth Back to the Airport](#)

Join Chapter Field Representative Serena Kamps to learn more about EAA's Young Eagles Workshops program. This program was designed to help chapters engage in a successful youth aviation day camp program and bring local youths out to the airport.

3/29/22 7 p.m. CDT

[EAA Learn to Fly Day – Hosting a Chapter Flying Start Event](#)

May 21, 2022, is EAA Learn to Fly Day, and your chapter is invited to participate by hosting a Flying Start event! Join David Leiting from EAA headquarters, as he provides an overview of how your chapter can welcome new participants to the world of aviation.

3/30/22 7 p.m. CDT

[Taming the Tailwheel Shimmy](#)

Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit and AMT credit.

Wheel shimmy in aircraft landing gear is a problem that has been around as long as aircraft with wheels have been around and can range in severity from an annoying vibration to a destructive force that can cause structural failure and loss of control.

4/06/22 7 p.m. CDT

[Your Airplane's Report Card](#)

Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit and AMT credit.

You can learn a lot about your aircraft and your aeronautical skills by having your digital engine monitor data analyzed to see how it compares with other aircraft of the same make and model.

2022 Calendar of Events

March 17 - EAA Chapter 129 Member Meeting

March 19 - Young Eagles at CMI

April 2 - Pancake Breakfast at Paxton Airport

April 9 - Young Eagles Rally CMI

April 21 - EAA Chapter 129 Member Meeting

May 7 - Pancake Breakfast, Paxton Airport

May 14 - Young Eagle Rally BMI

May 19 - EAA Chapter 129 Member Meeting

June 16-19 - Ford Tri-Motor at BMI

July 2 - Pancake Breakfast at Paxton Airport

July 16 - Young Eagle Rally - TBD

July 25-31 - AirVenture at Oshkosh!

July 27 - Chapter 129 Gathering at Airventure

Aug 16 - Young Eagles Rally at Rantoul

Aug 18 - EAA Chapter 129 Member Meeting

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



Wanted

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

Email them to:
cmbates50@gmail.com

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



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