

February 2014



# EAA CHAPTER 145

SINCE 1962



**Chapter Meeting: Saturday, February 8, 2014 – 10:00 am  
Riverview Airport (08C) in the meeting room**

We will be hearing from Heb Harney, for our EAA#145 meeting in February. He will be giving us a follow-up report on the Riverview pilots that went on the Idaho Backcountry trip last fall.



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Prez Corner
- 2 P-51 in Paris
- 4 Website O.T.M.
- 5 Burt Rutan
- 6 Upcoming Events

Last month Arthur Deane visited EAA#145. Arthur gave a very interesting presentation about military airdrops. The videos were entertaining and sometimes scary – when the loads did not land the proper way.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

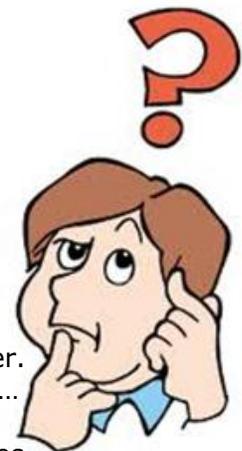
As the snow was filling in my driveway and the wind was blowing the top off the bird feeder, I thought it may be a good time to do indoor projects. One of my projects is to consider activities that you would like to have for your chapter.

In the past, many of you have had great times with various aviation activities... Boy Scouts, Young Eagles, B-17 tour, etc. I bet you would like to volunteer to be part of some of the aviation activities coming up this year. These Chapter activities not only give us a chance to help the aviation community, but are a lot of fun working with friendly people. Some of the activities that are being considered for this year are; STEM Aviation conference, Boy Scouts merit badge, Young Eagle rallies, movie nights at Riverview, and some other ideas that you can supply.

Yes, we need your ideas of what the members of the Chapter could do to help the aviation community. Please take a little time during these cold days to come up with some 'hot' ideas of thing you would like to see happen. Don't worry about the details, the Chapter members have a way of making it happen. Just let me know your ideas for having aviation fun...and keep warm.

## WEEKS RESTORATION HANGER

It's time to start thinking about EAA145 annual trip to the Weeks hanger in Oshkosh, WI. We will be going on a weekend in April (exact date T.B.D.). Please let Dick know if you would like to go with us. The details of the trip will be available next month. Questions, contact Dick



## P-51 in Paris

People on two continents mourn the death of 92-year-old William Overstreet Jr. He was a resident of Roanoke, Virginia, a retired accountant, and like many men from his generation, a veteran of World War II. And in the spring of 1944, Overstreet did something people in France and the U.S. still talk about.

Overstreet, who died Sunday at a Roanoke hospital, is remembered for being the U.S. Army Air Corps pilot who flew underneath the Eiffel Tower's arches in his P-51 Mustang during an aerial battle while in hot pursuit of a German fighter plane, which he ultimately shot down.

Even back in war-torn, Nazi-occupied Paris, that wasn't something you saw every day. Or ever. And it was an act that is said to have reignited the spirits of the French resistance fighters who witnessed it from the ground. The Richmond Times-Dispatch quoted the son of one fighter, who had this to say:

*One of those French Resistance fighters was the father of Bernard Marie. A French dignitary who has hosted D-Day events every year since 1984, Marie said he met Overstreet in 1994.*

*He knew Overstreet was well-known for his flight underneath the Eiffel Tower but didn't understand its true importance until he spoke with his father.*

*"My father began shouting at me — 'I have to meet this man,' " Marie said. Members of the French Resistance had seen his flight and it inspired them, including Marie's father, he said.*

*"This guy has done even more than what people are thinking," Marie said. "He lifted the spirit of the French."*

The website [Warbirds Express](#) has a pretty comprehensive summary of Capt. Overstreet's life and military career. Born in Clifton Forge, Virginia in 1921, Overstreet was a student at what is now the University of Charleston when Pearl Harbor was attacked. He enlisted in the Army with the goal of becoming a pilot, which landed him in the 357th Fighter Group, 363rd Fighter Squadron.

Overstreet was flying P-51s in the Atlantic Theater by early 1944; he named all of his planes the "*Berlin Express*." He had at least one close call where a burst of flak cut off the oxygen line in his plane, causing him to black out and disappear from his formation over enemy territory. But news reports at the time said he flew for 90 whole minutes "on reflex action alone" and only regained consciousness after slipping into a spin and nearly crashing.

His most famous mission came not long after that. According to Barnstormers, Overstreet was in hot pursuit of a Messerschmitt Bf 109 over Paris. The German pilot figured the anti-aircraft artillery on the ground would take care of the American, but that was not to be.

What happened next is kind of nuts.

*The German's engine was hit, and Overstreet persisted through the intense enemy flak. As a last resort, the ME109 pilot aimed his aircraft at the Eiffel Tower and in a breathtaking maneuver, flew beneath it. The unshakeable Overstreet followed, and scored several more hits in the process.*

*The German plane crashed and Bill escaped the heavy flak around Paris by flying low and full throttle over the river.*

*Overstreet describes the heroic event in his own words:*

*"I had followed this 109 from the bombers when most of the German fighters left. We had a running dogfight and I got some hits about 1500 feet. He then led me over Paris where many guns were aimed at me. As soon as he was disabled, I ducked down just over the river and followed the river until I was away from Paris."*

The audacious move stunned onlookers on the ground, and most likely, Overstreet himself.



After that, Overstreet and his group flew eight missions on D-Day, and he flew secret escort missions after that. Sent home in October 1944, he taught at the gunnery school in Pinellas, Florida. Following the war he became an accountant, and also worked with various charities and veterans groups.

And in 2009, Overstreet returned to France to receive that nation's highest award: the Legion of Honor. The Roanoke Star reported at the time that the award was given to him by Pierre Vimont, the Ambassador of France to the U.S.

*Ambassador Vimont was lavish with his praise of Captain Overstreet, stating that his valorous deeds helped liberate France from the Nazi Occupation. He also alluded to Eddie Simpson and all of the many brave Americans who never made it home from Europe after WWII.*

*Once Vimont had pinned the beautiful Legion of Honor medal to Overstreet's coat and given him the traditional two-cheek embrace, Captain Overstreet, standing straight, sans walker, made his way to the podium and issued a strong "Thank You" several times.*

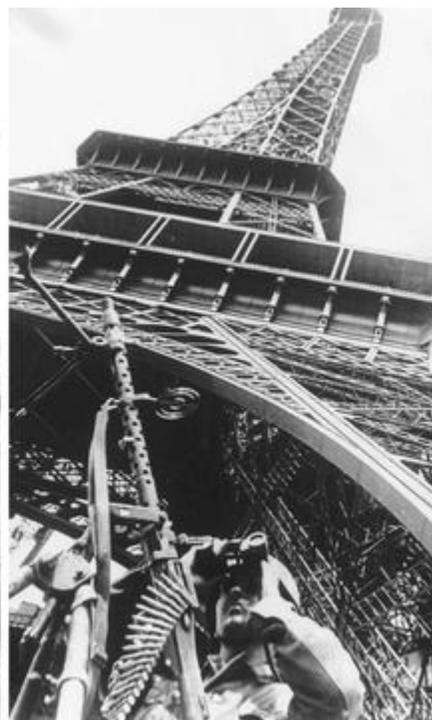
Overstreet had said that if he was awarded the Legion of Honor before he died — it cannot be given posthumously — he would have accepted it on behalf of his comrades who didn't make it home during the war.

*After shyly accepting the Legion of Honor at the age of 88, Overstreet said, "If I said, 'Thank you,' it wouldn't be enough," but then added, "What more than 'thank you' do you need?"*

Hopefully, people thanked him as well

(from Patrick George of Jalopnik.com)

For more information, see: [www.warbirdsnews.com/warbird-articles/wwii-veteran-aviator-bill-overstreet-p-51-mustang-berlin-express.html](http://www.warbirdsnews.com/warbird-articles/wwii-veteran-aviator-bill-overstreet-p-51-mustang-berlin-express.html)



**WEBSITE OF THE MONTH:**

[www.warbirdsnews.com](http://www.warbirdsnews.com)



**CLASSIFIED SECTION:**

Kel DeVries has VW engine conversion parts for sale: Slick 4216 mag w/harness, qty(4) Champion REL38B aircraft plugs, Mag coupling for Slick mag, Monnett shrink-fit prop hub, Monnett E-Lectro-X engine mount casting w/ spacers and rubber mounts POSA slide carb w/ mixture control Monnett intake manifold castings, 'Y' casting Intake piping, couplings, clamps. Contact Kel thru the classifieds at KITPLANES.com or catch-up to him at one of our meetings.

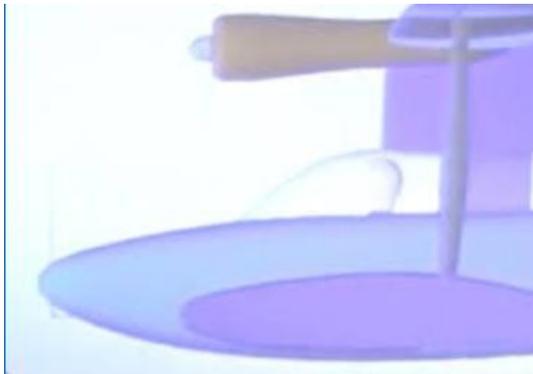


## Burt Rutan developing new seaplane

Two years after retirement, Burt Rutan is at it again, developing a new seaplane called the *Skigull* at his cabin near Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. At first he thought he had an original design, a tandem-seat twin-engine amphibian that rises from the water on skis but can land on snow, grass, and if you must, a paved airport. Then he found the 1950s Sea Dart on the Internet.

The *Skigull* is also a motorglider. It has to be if Rutan, who lost his medical in 1998, is going to fly it. An FAA friend told him that he needed longer wings if he wanted it to qualify as a motorglider. The definition indicates the maximum weight-to-wing-span-squared must not exceed three kilograms per square meter. So Rutan created a 43-foot wingspan that can be folded for docking, while still on the water, or for storage in a garage. The design may be sold as a kit, "...if it works," Rutan told a meeting of *The Old Bold Pilots* in California in January.

A video of that talk can be seen on YouTube. His explanation of the *Skigull* starts at minute 38. You'll notice the camera moves around the screen so as not to show the design, per Rutan's wishes. It was posted by *The Old Bold Pilots* on February 1.



If it works, Rutan will have himself a tiny amphib capable of making it from the cabin to Oshkosh with one stop. He won't need a medical. He has not chosen the engines because he does not yet know the power that will be needed, but they can be as little as 50 to 70 horsepower. Those two engines will blow across a high-lift section of the wing. With all that wingspan comes the tendency to float, so he will have big flaps to give him short takeoff and landing capability for small lakes—the kind he likes to explore.

When you must positively, absolutely land at a boring paved airport, roller-blade wheels will extend three-tenths of an inch below the skis. The skis are coated with the same kind of plastic used on recreational skis and Iditarod race sleds in Alaska.

The airplane is a trimaran, with 40 percent of its weight supported by the sponsons and 60 percent supported by the hull. The pilot's waist will be below the waterline. There are still questions to be answered, so a wooden model of the *Skigull* has been completed and will be attached to an old beater boat that will push it through the water to measure the power required. Designing the boat has given Rutan fits.

He also urged the aviation industry not to defend aircraft designs, but to question them constantly as a method of improving them. Defending what may be a flawed design is no way to treat customers, he said.

## S.T.E.M. – Science Technology Engineering & Math

EAA Chapter 145 has the opportunity to provide speakers for a STEM Aviation Conference sponsored by the Kent Intermediate School District. The conference will be on Wednesday, March 19, at the Kent Aviation Center at the Gerald R. Ford International Airport.

Students often ask why they should learn science, technology, engineering, and math or how these subjects are used in the real world. The purpose of this conference is to have community members from various fields provide teachers and 11th and 12th grade students with practical examples of how these subjects are used in aspects of aviation.

As a speaker you would select your own topic. Possible topics might be physics of flight, navigation, weather, avionics, mechanics, design, or another of your choice. You would give a ten-minute talk to four or five small groups at a morning session, an afternoon session, or both. Lunch is provided.

If you would like to share your aviation knowledge or have any questions, please call Dick Foster at 538-8849. Dick would need to know what topic you would like to speak on and when you can participate. He can also give you more details

**Note:** It's time to send in chapter dues (\$35). Major upcoming expenses for the chapter are \$2400 (Hangar rent), \$470 (EAA National Registration), \$460 (Hangar Propane). Only the propane can be deferred. Also, please complete and include the signup info below with your payment. It will help keep your contact information accurate.

**HANGER SPACE**

The chapter hanger is available for anyone who has an aviation project to work on. We currently have a couple of possible projects for the EAA hanger. We may have room for more, depending on the size and donations. Contact Dick Foster for details.

**YOUNG EAGLES**

The Young Eagle events for 2014 are starting to come in. The GAAA in Greenville has asked EAA145 to sponsor a Young Eagle event on Saturday, June 14, 2014.



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Feb 8	Riverview Arprt(08C)	Herb Harney – Idaho Backcountry Tour
Feb 8	Canton, MI	Frost Bite Chili Fly-In
Feb 8	Oshkosh, WI	EAA Skiplane Fly-In
Feb 14-15	Lansing Center, MI	Great Lakes Aviation Expo and Conference
March 8	Riverview Arprt(08C)	Dennis Wyman - Experimental Aircraft Engines
April	Oshkosh, WI	Weeks Hangar Work Weekend
Sept 26-28	U.S.A.F. Museum,Dayton	WWI Dawn Patrol Rendezvous

**If you know of events that should be on the event calendar, please e-mail them to me**

If you would like to be on the e-mail list for meeting and event reminders, or if you would like to receive the newsletter electronically, which is full color and delivered days before the print version... please send your e-mail address to: [randall.houtman@dematic.com](mailto:randall.houtman@dematic.com)

**The 2014 Officers for EAA145:**

- President, Dick Foster  
(538-8849 [c172foster@gmail.com](mailto:c172foster@gmail.com))
- Vice President, Bruce Whitman  
(897-9846 [bwhitmanpe@att.net](mailto:bwhitmanpe@att.net))
- Secretary/Treasurer, Bob Swietek  
6962 Bridgewater Dr. SE  
Grand Rapids,MI 49546  
(676-2951 [airdale69@aol.com](mailto:airdale69@aol.com))
- Newsletter Editor, Randy Houtman  
(913-5908 [randall.houtman@dematic.com](mailto:randall.houtman@dematic.com))
- Website Editor, Bill Willyard  
([wgwillyard@att.net](mailto:wgwillyard@att.net))

**Treasurer's Report:** (As of Feb 2nd)

Liabilities: \$3500.00  
 Cash: \$138.62      Checking: \$121.34  
 Savings: \$3959.56      Total: \$4244.52

**EAA CHAPTER 145 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM**  
 DUES ARE \$35.00 PER YEAR – JANUARY 1st to DECEMBER 31st

Name _____ Co-Pilot / Spouse _____ Address _____ City _____ State / Zip _____ e-mail address _____ Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ National Membership # _____	Aircraft Owned _____ _____ Projects / % Complete _____ _____ Bring this form to the next meeting or mail to:  EAA Chapter 145 Treasurer 6962 Bridgewater Dr. SE Grand Rapids, MI, 49546
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------