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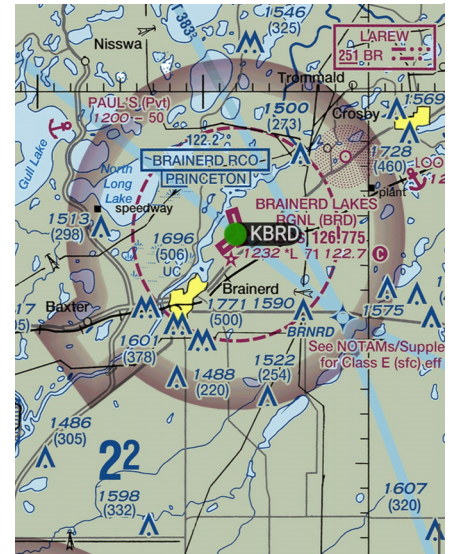


# CAVU Chronicles

## AITKIN FLYERS/EAA CHAPTER 965 ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST

On Saturday, August 5, the Aitkin Flyers EAA Chapter 965 held their annual Pancake Breakfast, Fly-In and Classic Car Show at the Aitkin Airport. Several members of the Brainerd EAA Chapter 1610 volunteered to help with various duties, enjoy the camaraderie, and have breakfast (of course!). The all-you-can-eat menu consisted of wild rice or regular pancakes, bacon and sausage, coffee, orange juice and milk.

The Aitkin Flyers have fine-tuned this event into a well-orchestrated machine, as these pictures will show. Terry, with his fancy-schmancy batter dispenser, and chefs at the stoves cooking bacon and sausage patties kept a continuous supply of food ready for the servers to fill plates for hungry customers.



### In this issue:

- Aitkin Flyers Pancake Breakfast
- Brainerd Aviation History
- Longster Update
- Aviation Events in September
- Mark Your Calendar
- Closing Remarks

## MORE ON AITKIN FLYERS PANCAKE BREAKFAST



Despite a cloudy sky, they did have a number of fly-in's. "Follow-Me" director Craig Rodamaker and the tarmac marshal Mike Petersen made sure they got to the right locations.



For those who drove to the airport, valet service made it easy for them to get to and from the parking lot and the breakfast hanger.



That's Joe Lambert at the wheel.



Once guests arrived the main hanger, the process from then on was pretty straight-forward. Just follow the crowd.

# THE AITKIN FLYERS PANCAKE BREAKFAST (con't)



## THE AITKIN FLYERS PANCAKE BREAKFAST (con't)



Once finished with breakfast, guests could wander to admire classic cars, classic airplanes, or take a "flight" on the simulator.



This history story is being contributed by Mike Petersen. Because of the breadth of content and the number of photographs, it will appear in consecutive issues of CAVU Chronicles as a “multi-part series.”

## **The Brainerd Cougar F9-F6**

### **PART TWO**



The last major roadblock to their success still lies ahead, the Chicago tollbooths. Missing the last exit before the tollway, he was first told that he could not proceed through the tollbooth. With limited options he was able to convince the authorities to let him try to get through, as according to his calculations he should have an inch or two on both sides of the airplane. After squeaking by very slowly he proceeded on, with the confidence he could get through all the others. When challenged at other tollbooths he simply asked them “How do you think I got here?” and there could be no argument to his logic. Their goal was in sight and soon they would arrive home. Nineteen days after they started Dick and Carla rolled into Brainerd. The airplane was first delivered to City Hall where photos were taken with Dick and several city dignitaries. Take a look at that historic day on the airport website: [www.brainerdairport.com/about-us/airport-history.html](http://www.brainerdairport.com/about-us/airport-history.html). The airplane was then delivered to the airport where over the next eight months it was re-assembled and painted to prepare it for permanent display. After all the challenges that had been met one hurdle still remained at the airport for Mr. Dean. Since he first committed to the project Dick had in mind that the airplane was a memorial to those who have served and are serving their country. As such he was determined to mount it on a rotating pedestal allowing the aircraft to turn into the wind. Perhaps his determination can best be summed up in this verse he wrote about the airplane in 1981:

## **Freedom: The Right To Choose**

As this aircraft ever freely turns, To face the unseen forces of the winds;

It stands here in Memorial of all The Armed Forces of the United States of America;

Who have in great boldness, Altered the course of their lives,

To turn in opposition to the enemies, Who would rob us of our freedom.

We citizens have the right to do as we please,

As long as we please to do right. God Bless America.

Twice the airport commission denied him approval to construct and mount the airplane on a rotating pedestal. His perseverance finally led to commission approval as long as he designed and built the pedestal at his own expense. Undaunted, Dick engineered and built this unique mount to complete the journey of the Cougar to Brainerd. In November of 1981, the Cougar returned to the air, up on it's mount and proudly looking over the Brainerd Airport.

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Originally placed on the pedestal out on highway 210 (the base of which still exists) the aircraft was moved to the inside of the airport complex in 1990. The Minnesota Department of Transportation felt that with the widening of highway 210 that the airplane was too close to the road. It was at that time that the aircraft was painted by a group of dedicated veterans. Unfortunately they also suffered from funding shortages and that paint job failed to stand the test of time and the vagaries of the weather. In 2008 the airport manager and the commission were unhappy with the condition of the airplane and rightfully so. In fact, there was some concern that the Navy would require us to refurbish it or dispose of it. Either option was a great expense but truly the aircraft had become an eyesore instead of the memorial it was intended to be. Even a couple of years prior to that the commission had all but decided to try to find a different home for the airplane. It was decided in 2008 that if a plan to refurbish it was not in the works within two years that the aircraft would be removed and disposed of. For two years a small but interested group of individuals attempted to find ways to get the project done. Extensive research was done hoping that knowing the history of the airplane might lead to greater interest. Because the serial numbers and bureau numbers on the paperwork do not match the actual serial numbers on the aircraft data plates, even the Navy is mystified and that research seems to have led to a dead end. Due to a change years ago in centralizing the administration of salvage equipment it appears that the previous history of the aircraft is lost. In the hopes of at least getting materials donated, grant requests were written to Valspar paint, and were turned down in spring of 2009, 2010 and 2011. Also a plea was made to veterans groups etc. but it seemed that there was not sufficient support to make the effort a reality. Over the winter of 2010/2011 the airport and commission came under fire from the Brainerd City Council for a number of items. That is a story for another day however from this dark cloud came a silver lining.

At an airport commission meeting in the spring of 2011 the Brainerd Dispatch was covering the various controversies going on at the time. It just so happened that a topic of discussion was the decision to dispose of the F9-F6. It seemed to all that the hope of saving the airplane at Brainerd was lost. This story made the newspaper, along with all the other news of the day, and then a wonderful thing happened - suddenly the public was upset about the possibility of losing this history and people began to call to see if they could help! Just when it was the darkest, some hope was beaming in.

While this public support was attempting to re-organize, two companies stepped forward with a stunning offer - they would finance a complete refurbishing of the airplane at a professional aircraft paint shop in Park Rapids. Don-delinger Automotive and Deerwood Bank pooled their resources for this project and that set the wheels in motion. A crane was needed and Rardin Construction stepped forward to provide their crane and operator. Spalj Construction provided the transportation to and from the paint shop in Park Rapids. Park Rapids Aviation/Northwoods Aircraft Painting helped out with providing services and materials over and above the scope of the project. Korby Construction provided all the rigging equipment for the lift.

**OUR SINCERE THANKS TO ALL THE SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS THAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE**

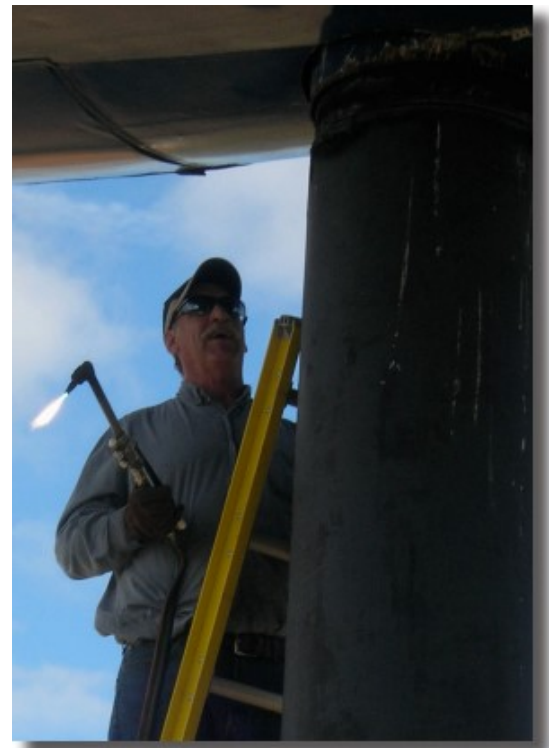
And so they say, “The rest is history-”



Top Left: Summer of 1981. Photo of Dick Dean and his “Airplane on a Stick” in its original placement out near highway 210.

Top Right: 30 years later, September 23, 2011. After hours of rigging and re rigging, the crane donated by Rardin Construction pulled hard and still the aircraft would not budge from the pole.

Bottom Right: The decision was made to cut the pole. That is Rick Adair on a ladder with the torch. The scary part was that he was unsure what would happen when it was cut.





With the pole cut off all the way around within 1” of the fuselage, the Rardin Construction crane finally broke the aircraft free from its mount. It balanced relatively well as rigged.

Once lowered to the ground, the aircraft had to be re-rigged to pick up flat for loading on the Spalj Construction trailer.



It was first transported to a nearby hanger to have the wings removed. In general, it was in a pretty sorry condition. Nevertheless, its next stop was to Park Rapids Aviation/Northwoods Aircraft Painting at the Park Rapids airport where renovation would take place.

TO BE CONTINUED...



## EAA CHAPTER 1610 LONGSTER PROJECT: STATUS REPORT

Not to sound like a broken record, but...progress continues. The photo below (left) shows where we were one year ago this month. Since then, as reported in previous newsletters, all fabric work on the fuselage and tail pieces is completed and sealed.

Once the fuel tank is fabricated, the next step is the paint booth. The photo below (right) shows the leading edge of one wing is completed. All the edges of the ribs and spars have been sanded smooth. This wing is ready to be covered with fabric.



This gives an idea of what that step in the process will look like.



For those who wish to help with this project, we meet at Paul's the first and third Thursdays of every month, starting at 6:00 pm. Paul's shop is very spacious and well-equipped to accommodate this endeavor. Please feel free to join us for the camaraderie and educational opportunity to learn new skills.



### ON THE 'LIGHTAIR' SIDE:



A student became lost during a solo cross-country flight. While attempting to locate the aircraft on radar, ATC asked, "What was your last known position?" Student: "When I was number one for takeoff."

A student in his primary trainer was flying a solo cross-country. He lost his way and before he finally ran out of fuel he decided to put it down on a road. With hardly any cars on the road he managed to coast his aircraft into a gas station and said to the attendant, "Fill 'er up!"

The attendant just looked at the pilot.

"I bet you don't get too many airplanes asking for a refuel," said the pilot.

The attendant replied: "True, most pilots use that airport over there."



## ITEMS OF INTEREST ON THE SEPTEMBER CALENDAR.



### **SEPTEMBER 2: EAA 1658 ANNUAL SWEET CORN & BRAT FLY-In or DRIVE-In.**

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Glencoe Municipal Airport (KGYL). Serving sweet corn, brats, famous prepared sauerkraut, and cookies. PICs eat free. Meal \$10 advance, \$11 at the door, under 12 is \$6, under 3 is free. Welcome classic cars and vintage tractors. Free Young Eagle rides from 8-10 a.m. for ages 8-17 (online sign up registration only at [youngeaglesday.org/?6163](http://youngeaglesday.org/?6163)). Drawing for free plane rides. Contact: Stuart Selchow, 320-583-8367; Max Anderson, 952-426-5067



**SEPTEMBER 9: "GRASS IS A GAS" POKER RUN.** Start and finish at KBRD. Fly to grass strips in Northern Minnesota and pickup a card at each stop. Play your hand when you return to Brainerd for some great prizes. Registration opens at 7:30 am with wheels up by 8:30 am. Return to Brainerd by 1:30 in the afternoon. Prizes will be awarded as close as possible to 1:30. Event is free, no cost to enter. One hand per person, maximum of two hands per aircraft. Sponsored by Brainerd Lakes Area EAA Chapter 1610. Come and enjoy Great Lake country flying. Contact: Mike Petersen. 612-750-2981, [eaachapter1610@gmail.com](mailto:eaachapter1610@gmail.com)



### **SEPTEMBER 15-17: MINNESOTA SEAPLANE PILOTS ASSOCIATION SAFETY SEMINAR.**

4 p.m.

Madden's on Gull Lake

Sept. 15-17 safety seminar. Wipaire sponsored poker run, multiple safety speakers Saturday. Contact: Steve Guetter, [steve@penguinflight.net](mailto:steve@penguinflight.net)

### **SEPTEMBER 17: HECTOR LIONS FLY in BREAKFAST.**

Sunday, Sept. 17th, 2023: 81ST Annual Lion's Fly-in Breakfast, Hector (1D6), 7:30 am - 12:30 pm. All you can eat Pancakes - French Toast - Sausage - Coffee - Juice and Milk. PICs free. Warbirds, Classics, Antiques, Homebuilt, Helicopters and Ultralights. Ping Pong Ball Drop with prizes for Kids at 11:15 am. CTAF 122.8, Contact Ed Newberg 320-979-1270.

**SEPTEMBER 30: KLXL FALL COLORS FLY-in.** Second annual fall colors fly-in hosted at KLXL! Brat feed beginning at 11 a.m., live music, classic car show, and static display aircraft. Underwing camping available on-site. Contact: [EAA1681@outlook.com](mailto:EAA1681@outlook.com).





#### DID YOU KNOW...?

An easy and convenient way to keep up-to-date on scheduled Chapter 1610 meetings, events, and other aviation-related programs is our Website.

First, open your web browser and type in **#eaa 1610**.

Once you open the website, select the tab **Event Calendar**.

The rest is easy.



I am always interested in hearing your suggestions for future topics in the Newsletter. I also encourage budding authors to submit content.

Please contact Mark Bearss

- ♦ email to [mgbearss@gmail.com](mailto:mgbearss@gmail.com)
- ♦ Text to 952-818-9986

And finally, the contact information for Chapter 1610 has changed.

## EDIT YOUR CALENDAR

Any highlights below in **RED** means something has been added or re-scheduled for Chapter 1610 meetings and events.

**September 9: ‘GRASS IS A GAS’ POKER RUN No regular meeting this Saturday.**

**September 16: YOUNG EAGLES FLIGHTS at Breezy Point.** We have 20 confirmed passengers.

**October 14: Regular Meeting and FAAS Team Presentation** from Trudi Amundson. “Ten Bad Habits that Other Pilots Have.”



## CLOSING REMARKS

Unfortunately, my attempt of imbedding a *workable* audio file into a PDF document was not successful for the August issue of **CAVU Chronicles**. But there is a work-around if you are interested in hearing the landing instructions given to pilots from the controllers at Oshkosh when planes were being lined up. Simply go on the Chapter 1610 web site (#eaa 1610), then select **Newsletters**. In that folder you will find a link that reads **AirVenture2023 ATC**. Left-click and enjoy listening.

We had fifteen chapter members at our August meeting who partook in a light breakfast prior to a tour of the new ARFF/SRE facility at the airport. I would like to thank James Norwood, who is an excellent resource, for conducting the tour. From what I heard, it was a very enjoyable and informative experience.

During the August meeting, an “informal motion” was presented to the group that we plan and schedule a Fly Out. I am all for it, so I guess that means “I am seconding the motion!” All in favor, say Aye... “**AYE!!!**” All opposed, say Nay... (Crickets). Motion (informally) passed. Now...If there is anyone who would like to volunteer to help organize our first one, please contact me or Mike, Trudi, or Mark Crist.

And finally...A VERY special thanks goes out to Joe Ratuski from Canoe Wild Rice for his generosity and kindness. Joe donated the boxes of wild rice at the Aitkin Flyers Pancake Breakfast that he sold for \$1 each. \$500 was collected which goes into the EAA Chapter 9656 Scholarship Fund. **THANK YOU, Joe!!!**

