

# THE PYLON



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF EAA CHAPTER 252 OSHKOSH WISCONSIN  
STEVE WITTMAN CHAPTER

## President's Report— Carrie Forster



Happy New Year! Here we are at the start of 2022. We saw a return to many of our chapter activities and events in 2021 and have a full slate of events planned for 2022.

As I write this column, we are in the midst of another wave of Covid-19, dominated by the extremely highly transmissible Omicron variant. At this point, we are planning to hold our in person chapter gathering on January 13 and our Winter Party on January 22. If those plans change, we will let everyone know. We will do our best to provide distancing at these events. You may also want to consider wearing a mask indoors.

You can still RSVP if you are coming to our Winter Party (RSVP if attending, you do not need to contact me if you are unable to attend). We will need to confirm our final count as soon as possible, so please let me know soon if you plan to attend. You can email me, or complete the Google form [HERE](#).

We will also resume our VMC/IMC club sessions. These will be held in the conference room at the Wittman Airport terminal building. The first will be on Wednesday, January 19 starting at 6:00 pm.

We've had some interest in our possible teen build project, but are definitely looking for more volunteers and chapter support. Come to our January gathering to learn more about what a teen build project looks like and how you might become involved.

If you have ideas for topics or presenters for chapter gatherings for 2022, or if you have a topic you'd love to have addressed, please reach out to me at [ea252@gmail.com](mailto:ea252@gmail.com). We have some things planned, but are looking for more.

Here's looking ahead to longer days and spring on the horizon.

Blue Skies,

Carrie

**January 13  
Chapter Gathering**

**Topic: Chapter 252 RV-12 Teen Build Project**

**Dinner: 6:30PM  
Meeting: 7:00 PM**

**Location: Chapter 252 Hangar (see back page for address)**

**PLEASE BRING A SIDE DISH OR DESSEERT**

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## January Chapter Gathering

Chapter 252 has a unique opportunity to host a teen airplane build program featuring an RV-12 kit. We will discuss opportunities and challenges for this project— including opportunities for chapter members to participate.

Dinner starts at 6:30 PM; program starts at 7:00 PM. The chapter will provide dinner; please bring a dessert or side dish.



## December Chapter Gathering Report

EAA Director of Communications Dick Knapinski gave an informative presentation to chapter members on Airventure 2021, what's coming for AirVenture 2022, and EAA's Project 21. AirVenture 2021 planning, which started months in advance, was done with great uncertainty as to how the pandemic would progress by summer. All of the planning and precautions paid off, as most of us know, and attendance was one of the best ever for convention. As always, some lessons were learned and will be incorporated into 2022. Some of the changes will be incorporated into the event permanently, such as the use of Jani King cleaning services, advance mailing of wristbands (this time wristbands without disappearing ink), and free admission for youth. Celebrations for 2022 include the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the USAF, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Van's Aircraft, and more. Dick also talked about the museum expansion, Project 21. This is more



than a museum project and will incorporate space for education programs of all kinds as well as event space (this will limit the amount of times museum airplanes will have to be

moved outdoors to make room). Dick also thanked all Chapter 252 members for what we do not just volunteering at convention, but year-round for EAA and aviation.

## Chapter 252 VMC Club

First meeting of 2022 to held in the conference room at the Wittman Airport terminal building. Please join us on Wednesday, January 19 starting at 6:00 pm.

The VMC Club offers monthly meetings in which pilots can network and share knowledge and experience. The meetings use real-world scenarios to engage members, and allow a free exchange of information that im-

proves awareness and skills. The intent is to create a community of pilots willing to share information, provide recognition, foster communications, promote safety, and build proficiency. All EAA members are automatically eligible to take part in VMC and IMC Club programs in their local chapters. VMC Club is supported by Jeppesen.



Supported by:

## Chapter 252 Winter Party

**Saturday, January 22, 2022**

Our chapter Winter Party is back! We hope you can join us on Saturday, January 22 for our annual Winter Party. We have booked a private dining room at the Oshkosh Elks Club. We are looking forward to once again enjoying this social event and we hope you can come. Guests are more than welcome.

Oshkosh Elks Club (map link [HERE](#))

175 W. Fernau Ave.

Oshkosh, WI 54901

Cost: \$25.00 per person (payable by cash or check to EAA Chapter 252)

Menu: buffet style meal with broasted chicken, ham, mashed potatoes

Cash Bar

Private Dining Room

Cocktails at 6:00

Dinner at 7:00

Awards at 8:00

Members and their guests welcome.

**RSVP [HERE](#)** or email [ea252@gmail.com](mailto:ea252@gmail.com).

## CHICKEN WINGS®

BY MICHAEL AND STEFAN STRASSER



Courtesy of Mike and Stephan at <https://www.chickenwingscomics.com/>



## Ray Scholars Update

### Forrest Draws EAA Chapter 252 Ray Scholar

Unfortunately, I haven't soloed yet. The week before I was supposed to solo, two of my lessons were cancelled due to high winds and snow. The following week was when I was supposed to solo right before Christmas vacation, I didn't feel prepared or comfortable enough at the time to do it. During this time, I was questioning myself and was having some feeling of doubt and hoping I could live up to the expectations of becoming a pilot. During the Christmas break I took some time to think things over and reevaluate. I also had the opportunity to meet with a professional pilot, Jeffrey Gents and a second year college student, Ryan, who is pursuing aviation at Mankato. I was able to spend the afternoon with both of them and was able to visit Jeffrey's hangar and see his 1971 BeechCraft B55 Baron.



During this time I was able to ask any questions and concerns that I had. I am finding a lot of value with networking with other pilots. In the upcoming weeks I have scheduled my-

self with a few morning options in hopes of completing my solo. Wish me the best of luck and thank you for your support.

### WOMEN IN AVIATION

## This Aviation Student Has Been Exploring All Her Life



Sonja Karner already has a diverse resume, and hopes to become one of a very rare breed.

By Ellen Voie

December 24, 2021



Sonja Karner after her first helicopter flight. [Courtesy: Sonja Karner]

Sonja Karner, Chapter 252's first Ray Scholar, was featured in *Flying Magazine's* online newsletter in their December 24, 2021 edition. As this edition of the *Pylon* newsletter went to press our request to reprint the article had not been answered (a link to it is provided below).

The article features several photos of Sonja and describes her aviation journey (so far) in detail, including her switch to rotary wing training at UND and her flying one of the university's helicopters to the institution's display at AirVenture last year.

The article states that she credits Chapter 252 for encouraging her to make her dreams of learning to fly a reality.

The article is available online at <https://www.flyingmag.com/this-aviation-student-has-been-exploring-all-her-life/>

## Member Profile: Dan De Decker

The key to becoming a pilot, as most of us know, is perseverance. Dan De Decker certainly has that, and it undoubtedly helped him earn his private pilot's license last December a few days before Christmas. Yes, there is a Santa Claus!

Dan started flight training in 1991 after returning from Desert Storm, but had to halt after about five hours of training at Maxair in Appleton. Dan went on to serve in the U.S. Army, active and reserve, for 23 years, including two tours in Iraq.

It wasn't until 2019 when Dan returned to the cockpit and restarted training. Issues arose with his obtaining his 3<sup>rd</sup> Class FAA medical, with requests for detailed information and tests, contemplation by the FAA, more requests for tests and information, and on and on. Progress was further delayed with the pandemic slowing down the FAA Office of Aerospace Medicine since their personnel could not perform many of their duties for a period of time.

Dan persevered and obtained his medical, continued training, and flies with the Winnebago Flying Club. He found landings challenging (Is there anyone who hasn't?) and overcame other obstacles as well. His last obstacle was winter weather, but he passed

his checkride on December 30. What a great way to wrap up the year.

Dan and his wife recently purchased a 1967 Cherokee 140, which they are keeping at Brennand Airport for now... they will move it to Oshkosh as soon as hangar space becomes available here. An avionics upgrade to replace some its more vintage hardware is in the near future.

Dan has also been bitten by the homebuilding bug and has begun work on an RV-9A empennage kit and plans on starting on his instrument rating once his Cherokee's avionics have been upgraded. We hope Dan leaves



enough time in his schedule to join us at chapter events in the coming year!



## Member Plane Profile : Fred Stadler's GlaStar

**Fred Stadler**  
**EAA Chapter 252 Treasurer**

A year of owning a (new to me) GlaStar has shown both the advantages and the challenges of buying a used, experimental aircraft. My experience isn't unique and hopefully could be useful if you're considering buying someone else's dream aircraft. One major lesson learned was that contacting the plane's former owners helped me better understand its history and systems. The prior owners were each interested to learn the current state of "their" airplane and what I intended to do with it.

Some background: I had owned a Cessna 310 for forty-nine years and it gave me great service, with many trips across the country carrying my family of five. We flew the length of the Grand Canyon below the rim, back when that was legal. And it made trips to Canada, both U.S. coasts, and the Virgin Islands. But as my interests (and capabilities) changed, the 310 no longer fit the kind of flying I wanted to do. It was a great "go places" plane, but needed extensive (and expensive!) upgrades to keep it current for instrument flying. And it couldn't go into small, turf airports for hamburger socials. So, reluctantly I started looking for a replacement airplane.

I'd flown quite a few Young Eagles in EAA's two GlaStars and came to like the design. The GlaStars aren't as fast as RV's, but have good visibility, docile handling, and more interior room. Their configuration was reminiscent of my first airplane, a Luscombe. I hadn't made much of a search when a likely candidate airplane flew into OSH. It wasn't configured as I would have preferred, but it was close enough.

I wanted a basic airplane, preferably a taildragger. This GlaStar had a nosewheel and quite a number of "upgrades" which I wouldn't have selected. It had an O-360 engine instead of the standard O-320. As so

often, one design change leads to several others and the larger engine had caused the plane's prior owners to install auxiliary fuel tanks, which, in turn, created the need for fuel transfer pumps and a complex series of warning lights.

The plane had a Dynon EFIS with an autopilot, but no navigation radio other than a portable GPS. The "upgrade" causing the most other changes was installation of dual Lightspeed electronic ignitions. I would have been happy with basic magnetos, but did see some benefits from the electronic units, such as easier starting and the use of less expensive automotive spark plugs. A compromise might have been a single electronic ignition combined with a magneto, but various sources suggested that the improvements from variable spark timing would be less with that combination. Unlike a magneto or some other electronic ignitions, the Lightspeed units relied on battery power and that had prompted other electrical system changes.

Prior owners had attempted to create redundancy by replacing the usual single battery with two, smaller, Odyssey batteries (one for each ignition unit). That involved a much more complex electrical system, with two master solenoids and a switch to select the battery in use for main power. The larger (and heavier) engine meant that the batteries needed to be in the back of the plane for weight and balance considerations. That required longer electrical connections and since the GlaStar has a fiberglass fuselage, separate ground return cables for each battery. To save weight, the original builder had decided to use larger #2 cables only on one battery. As a result, engine starts could only be done with one of the two batteries.

The original builders had seen the battery as a critical single-point-of-failure and addressed that problem by installing two batteries. But they had apparently not considered other

critical potential failure points. One was the split master switch, a part commonly used on Cessna single-engine aircraft. The switch uses push-on electrical terminals. As installed on a Cessna, the electrical system shuts off if a wire comes off the switch, but as installed in my plane, the engine would stop, too. The plane had flown that way for about 500 hours when I bought it, but I wasn't comfortable with the design.

This illustrates one of the major differences between buying a certificated aircraft and an amateur-built experimental. A buyer can be reasonably confident that a certificated aircraft has a design that is well thought out and proven over time. An experimental design can be great or be downright dangerous, based on decisions made by the builder. A strong advantage of the experimental, however, is that a qualified owner can make changes to the design without onerous reviews and approvals. And that is exactly what I intended to do.

On my first condition inspection of the plane, I made a list of intended changes and separated them by their priority. I considered a few absolutely mandatory before I would carry passengers. High on that list was to make the engine keep running even if the main battery died or if the master switch was turned off. Other changes were less critical, like installing thicker starter cables and relocating the master solenoid closer to the battery.

The least total work would have been to make all of the changes at once, but I also wanted to keep flying the plane. So I divided the projects into separate steps that would minimize the downtime during changes.

The first phase of the changes involved installing a dedicated backup battery for one of the ignition systems, rewiring the power supply wires to both systems, and installing a new master solenoid near the main battery. I decided to install the TCW





Part of the panel when I bought the plane. It had two electrical systems and some mysterious, unlabeled circuit breakers.



The first set of changes included removing the key start switch and adding a temporary panel with separate ignition system switches.

Integrated Battery Backup system, which is specified by Lycoming for their electronic ignitions. It includes circuitry to keep its own internal battery charged from the main battery, while remaining otherwise separate from it. I also replaced the installed ACS key start switch with separate toggle switches for each ignition system and a simple push button for the starter. These switches will eventually be moved to one of the main instrument panels, but I built a temporary panel to house them until the next phases of changes are done.

While I intend to eventually replace the two master solenoids with just one, I now have three (the new one, not fully connected yet, and both old ones). Getting down to a single solenoid will have to wait for warmer weather when working in my unheated hangar is more pleasant. The next planned changes will also include replacing the twin batteries with a single, larger one and removing the duplicate charging systems.

In net, I'm quite satisfied with this plane as a project that's right for me. Someone who just wants to fly a plane

would be well to stay with certificated designs. And building a plane from scratch or from a kit is best done by someone who enjoys being a builder as much or more than being a pilot. Buying a used, experimental plane was a great compromise for me. The purchase was less expensive than buying the parts for a new plane and it let me "tinker" with the design while still enjoying a flying airplane. My list of future projects for the plane suggests that it will likely never be completely done. But that's part of the fun, too.

**December 2021 Board Mtg Agenda**  
**Tuesday, December 21 at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Virtual - GoToMeeting**

**Attending:** Carrie Forster (President), David Leiting (Vice-President), Fred Stadler (Treasurer), Wayne Daniels (Board Member), Doug Milius (Membership Chair), John Forster (Young Eagles)

**Old Business:**

Ray Aviation Scholarship

Forrest Drews (Carrie)

Jarrett Schiedemeyer (David)

Application submitted for 2022 scholarship cycle

Monthly Gatherings and Upcoming Events

January - Carrie and John, Teen Build Proposal

February - Jim Cunningham and Eric Abraham: preparing for a flight review

Insurance requests submitted for all 2022 events that have been planned thus far

VMC/IMC meetings to begin Wednesday, January 19 at Wittman Terminal in the conference room

Third Thursday of the month

Holiday Party in January on Saturday, January 22

Elks Club

RSVPs

Awards

Spirit of ELO discussion

Hangar Updates (Doug)

none

Teen Build/RV-12 project proposal

Carrie and John will present what the teen build project would be like

David will bring over the EAA RV-12



Monthly Gatherings:

<b>2022 Chapter Gatherings</b>	<b>Topic/Presenter</b>
Thursday, January 13	Carrie and John Forster Teen Build Proposal
Saturday, January 22	Winter Party Elks Club, Oshkosh
Thursday, February 10	Preparing for Flight Review Jim Cunningham and Eric Abraham
Thursday, March 10	
Thursday, April 14	
<b>Saturday, April 23</b>	<b>Pancake Breakfast and YE Rally</b>
Thursday, May 12	
<b>Saturday, May 14</b>	<b>Flying Start (Chapter Hangar)</b>
Thursday, June 9	<u><b><i>Behind My Wings: Untold Stories of Vietnam Vets</i></b></u> Author/Presenter BJ Prior
<b>Saturday, June 11</b>	<b>International YE Day Rally (Wittman Terminal)</b>
Thursday, July 14	
Thursday, August 11	
<b>Tuesday, August 16</b>	<b>Flying Hamburger Social</b>
Thursday, September 8	Corn Roast (Chapter Hangar)
<b>Saturday, September 10</b>	<b>Pancake Breakfast and YE Rally (Wittman Terminal)</b>
Thursday, October 13	
Thursday, November 10	
Thursday, December 8	

**New Business:**

# THE PYLON

## **Chapter 252 Hangar**

**817 W 20th Ave**

**Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54902**

### **Find Us Online!**

**[www.eaa252.org](http://www.eaa252.org)**

**[www.facebook.com/EAA252](https://www.facebook.com/EAA252)**

## Join the 252 Family!

Annual Membership (Calendar Year) Dues are \$20(\$10 for partial year, July - December). Student Memberships are \$10. Dues in the amount of \$20 can be given to Doug Milius or mailed to him at:

Doug Milius  
1305 Maricopa Dr.  
Oshkosh, WI 54904

**Renew your membership online from home at: <https://chapters.eaa.org/ea252/join-renew>**

*The Pylon* is the monthly newsletter of EAA Chapter 252 and is published monthly. Digital copies are emailed to each chapter member. Hard copies are mailed upon request to those without email access. Current and past copies can be accessed from the chapter website at [www.252.eaachapter.org](http://www.252.eaachapter.org). If you have submissions for the newsletter, please send to editor Jim Cunningham no later than the 20th of each month preceding the issue month at [jlcunni6@yahoo.com](mailto:jlcunni6@yahoo.com). Submissions received after the 20th will be included at the editor's discretion in the next month or held for a future issue. Submissions in either Word or similar format, and photos in .jpg format are appreciated.

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Newsletter Editor:  
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### Chapter Technical Counselors and Flight Advisors

**Technical Counselor:** Lyle Forsgren, Englewood, FL, 920-589-2060

**Skills:** Firewall Forward: 2-Stroke, Firewall Forward: 4-Stroke, Firewall Forward: Auto Engine, Sheet Metal - Driven Rivets, Sheet Metal - Pulled Rivets

**Technical Counselor:** Joseph Norris, Oshkosh, 920-279-2855

**Skills:** A&P Mechanic, Fabric Covering, Firewall Forward: 4-Stroke, Firewall Forward: Auto Engine, Sheet Metal - Driven Rivets, Welding, Wood, Sheet Metal - Pulled Rivets

**Technical Counselor:** Timothy Hoversten, Oshkosh, WI, 920-426-6846

**Skills:** Composite, Electrical/Avionics, Fabric Covering, Firewall Forward: 4-Stroke, Firewall Forward: Auto Engine, Sheet Metal - Driven Rivets, Welding, Wood, Sheet Metal - Pulled Rivets

**Technical Counsellor:** George Donaldson, Fultonville, NY 12072 518-461-6636

**Skills:** Firewall Forward: 4-stroke, Firewall Forward: 2-Stroke, Fireward Forward: VW engine, Fabric Covering, Woodworking, Sheet Metal - Pulled Rivets, Sheet Metal - Driven Rivets, Welding