
EAA Chapter 32 News

The official publication of Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 32 - St. Louis, MO (Jim Bower, Editor)

June, 2024

Check out our fantastic Web Pages at
WWW.EAA32.ORG

Laura Million, Web Designer



**Restoration of Aeronca Chief NC-85862 is proceeding nicely.
See the article in this issue.**

Newsletter Contributions and Deadlines

Anyone wishing to submit articles, advertisements, rants, etc. to the newsletter should send them to your friendly editor on or before the Tuesday ahead of the scheduled meeting. Send contributions to newsletter@eaa32.org.

President's Corner

by Bill Doherty

Well, it's a couple days after the Spirit of St. Louis Airshow and STEM Expo and my ears have finally stopped hurting. As I warned our volunteers who staffed our table in the STEM tent, it was indeed LOUD. I have a sound meter app on my phone, and it was reading peaks of 111 Decibels with sustained levels of over 85 to 90. And that was from the hot ramp, east of the center of the airshow box.

For those of us working at Spirit, that was 4½ days of having afterburners pointed at us.

There were some aircraft I've never seen in person before. A Navy E-2 Hawkeye landed and was in the static display area. An Air Force E-3 Sentry AWACS flew over on Saturday.



The Blue Angels were the featured stars of the show but personally I think the F-22 Raptor and F-15 Advanced stole the show. I may be biased as I was invited to climb up and sit in one of the F-15 demo aircraft. Of course I wasted no time getting up that ladder! Lots of mind-blowing stuff about this new fighter! But understandably, no pictures allowed inside the cockpit. I'd tell you what's in there, but you all know what would have to happen next.

Sunday morning started with a beautiful sunrise and I couldn't resist getting a few pictures of planes on the hot ramp before the teams started showing up.

The peace and quiet would be shattered soon enough with the ear-splitting hiss of multiple APUs. Only the deepest tones of the Corsair's massive radial engine would be detectable among the jets.

The chaos of the hot ramp also would soon take over as requests for equipment and/or fuel would come simultaneously from multiple aircraft, some far away on the airport. All needing more than would be available and all needing it NOW! Feed the jets and go to the bulk plant to get more. The Blue Angels use a fuel additive during their performances. This was added to 2 of our 4 jet fuel trucks, thus limiting the supply of the regular Jet-A for the other aircraft.

Thankfully, most of our regular tenant customers relocated their aircraft to other airports or stood down for the weekend.

The airshow went pretty smoothly for those of us working on the ramp. It was a huge amount of work, mostly before and after the performances. Still, I





didn't get to stand and watch much of it as we were often fueling planes that had just landed, to get them ready for the next day or for departure following the show.

I'm sending a big thank you to everybody who volunteered at our STEM Expo table. I hope your voices have recovered as well as your hearing.

If you haven't seen my urgent email from Monday, we've canceled the Young Eagle event for Saturday and will just have our regular chapter gathering (meeting). Smartt Field is hosting a large bicycle charity ride event Saturday morning that will

involve hundreds of cyclists. The starting and finish line will be on the ramp in front of the ARC so we'd have to relocate our aircraft to the ASOS pad area. That's just too much shuttling back and forth and too many opportunities for something bad to occur.

We're also canceling this month's Aviation Merit Badge program as many of the flights are part of that. It's a public use airport and it's another opportunity to share what we do with many who don't know about the aviation opportunities EAA presents.

Heads up, though. Parking at the ARC on Saturday may be challenging but we can adapt. Remember, the Wright Brothers were cyclists before they built the first successful airplane. So, we have a common heritage of sorts, and their event is for a good cause, fundraising for the fight against cancer.

We missed out on International Young Eagles day due to the airshow, but we'll still fly plenty of kids this year as always. Hopefully, we made some new contacts for Young Eagles, Aviation Explorers, scholarship opportunities, and AeroEducate.

AirVenture is fast approaching next month. The June chapter video has information about volunteering if you're interested as well as some webinars for flying to AirVenture.

Early bird pricing ends June 15. Usually that gets extended, but who knows? Anyway, here's the link for this month's video magazine with Charlie Becker.

<https://www.eaa.org/videos/chapters?playlistVideoid=6353016102112>

After working extra days and 12 hour shifts in the sun, I'm ready for my weekend and a day long nap!

Well, that's about all I have this time around.

Until then, I'll see you at the ARC or maybe around the pattern. Stay vigilant and always fly safe.

Blue Skies!
Bill Doherty,
President
EAA Spirit of St. Louis Chapter 32

May Meeting Minutes

Dave Deweese

May's meeting began with the chapter video, then the Pledge, Bill Doherty presiding.

We had visitors in attendance for the Flying Start event.

Bob gave the Treasurer's report, including checking, savings, PayPal, and Ray Foundation (Anna's funds are on the way) balances. The new chapter roster was sent out, contact Bob if you have questions or issues. We made \$1,948.45 profit from the car show, including donations and around \$280 from breakfast sales.

Our recent Young Eagles event was safe and successful: 12 pilots flew 60 passengers.

June 8 is International Young Eagles Day, that's the same weekend as the Air Show/STEM event, meaning we'll have volunteer conflicts. Do we want to try and do both? There are 36 pre-registered for the Merit Badge and that will go on regardless. We're planning on having our table at the air show staffed with two or three people over the weekend. We'll need additional volunteers for that. Motion was made, seconded, and voted on to move the Young Eagles event to June 15.

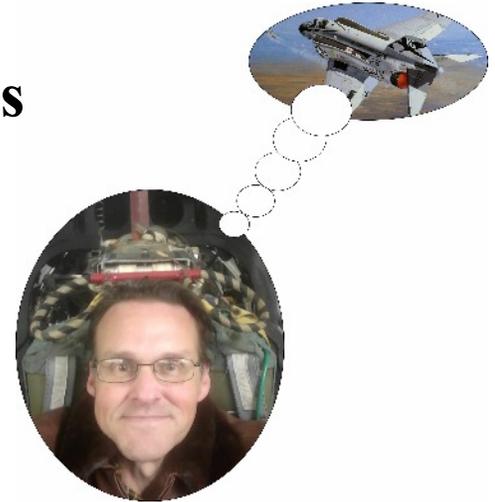
Ray Foundation: we have four in progress, Anna and Caleb are our new scholarships. Anna had her picture taken with the giant check, along with Ken, Jim, and Mom and Dad. Lauren's scheduled to fly Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays but thunderstorms complicate matters. She's scheduled to fly after our meeting and will need a DPE soon. Mr. Bill had Lauren wear "foggles" to demonstrate what they teach.

Art Graves just soloed. He reports that he may not have been the oldest student, but he's definitely not the youngest.

Explorer Scouts: Libby attended a prior rocket-building event, the scouts will launch their rockets in a few weeks at Buder Park. This is the last official event of the session; they'll restart in September.

Next week several members will be at DuBray Middle School for a careers event. Lauren, who attended that school, will be there to present.

Over Memorial Day weekend the CAF will have their planes at Wings Over St. Louis.



We'd like to restart Movie Nights. May 25 will be the first, we'll see "Wings", a silent movie about WWI. The event starts around 6pm with a potluck.

See Dave Doherty and pay up if you're participating in chapter camping at Oshkosh.

Ron Burnett has Dierbergs Cards in 100 and 25-dollar denominations.

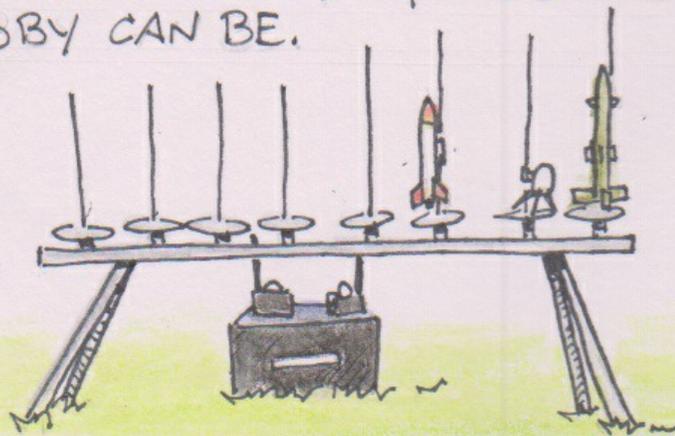
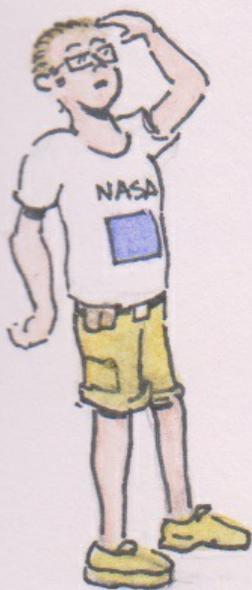
Motion made, seconded, and voted to adjourn. After the meeting our Flying Start event begins.

New taste sensation... primed ribs!



NOTES FROM DAVE'S JOURNAL

JIM HALL'S EMAILS ANNOUNCING AN EXPLORER SCOUT ROCKET EVENT LED ME TO VISIT THE SPOT WHERE THE ST. LOUIS ROCKETRY ASSOCIATION CONDUCTS LOW/MID-POWER LAUNCHES. A FEW YEARS BACK I BOUGHT AN ESTES KIT - IF YOU WERE EVER A KID YOU'VE BUILT AT LEAST ONE: BALSA, CARDBOARD, WHITE GLUE, RATTLE-CAN PAINT JOB. IT FINALLY FLEW, ALONG WITH THE SCOUTS' CREATIONS, FROM AN ELABORATE PORTABLE LAUNCH SETUP THE CLUB HAULS AROUND. THANKS TO JIM, 9032, AND THE ROCKETRY CLUB, FOR REMINDING ME HOW SATISFYING THIS HOBBY CAN BE.

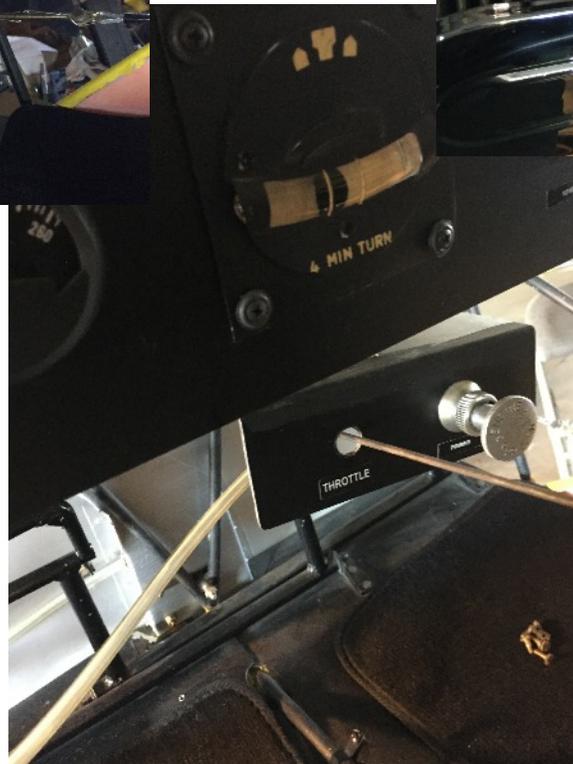


Dave McGougan's Kitfox Project

As you see the carb cables are now hooked up thanks to Bert Biermann, who walked in to visit and was pounced upon by myself and Kim. About 45 minutes later the pain was gone and both carbs were coupled to the throttle. A good thing! Then, I activated the throttle, but it was stiff...ok a little more umph was needed.....the bad! It bent, it was not an aircraft grade throttle, bought at OSH from one of the side vendors. The ugly part is I have yet another repair that must be made, slowing me down some more!

Also my plane got weighed. The RavenFox came in at 485 lb. Not bad considering the book says a model 2 Kitfox weighs in on average at 480. Hope to get the balance part done right after the throttle repair.

That's it for now. I would like to express thanks to Kim and Bert for their help and Herman for supplying me with a new throttle.



Learners as We Go

“Pictures from the Springtime Events And A Long Lost Love!”

mr. bill

Ahhh, Spring is in the air. And so are many other things. As I look back into the life history when I was in college (1976-1982) and seeing the Garcia's Flying Tomato Hot Air Balloon.



The Garcia Brothers

Which brings me to this month here in 2024, helping this young lady solo her balloon in the Saint Louis Area,

All this done by 0830 in the morning. YES, I am enjoying this thing called RETIREMENT! Chasing these balloons. Ahhh but soon, I will be in the basket.



A solo balloon launch on a beautiful morning

A picture from the EAA 32 FLIGHT START Program which had me and Lady G (a former TWA Reservation Agent) wanting to check out the front office of the Cessna C-172 with some professional pilot.



Followed by the perfect landing in an open field....



Lady G and Mr. Bill cruising the airways over O'Fallon, MO

SO HOW ARE YOU SPENDING YOUR PRE-SUMMER DAYS? SAFELY, I HOPE.

NC-85862 1946 Aeronca Chief 11AC-256

Rescue and Restoration

Mike Benne EAA 1371240

Jon Benne EAA

June 2024 Project Update

Status Update Part 5 - Fabric

If you follow our project on the restoration of our 1946 Aeronca 11AC Chief in the past four status updates, we completed the reassembly of each wing in October 2023 and now we are ready for covering the wing with fabric. Aeronautically, the Chief is described as a high-wing monoplane. The steel-tube framework is covered by a polyester fabric which will receive three coatings of a polyester fabric product, then a coating of a silver spray for UV protection, and the final color coat(s) which will make the plane attractive and weather resistant. The wings are also polyester fabric covered as well as the empennage. All of the control surfaces on the Chief are of metal frame and are fabric covered. The doors and engine cowling are sheet aluminum.

We had asked our favorite IA to inspect each wing and the fuselage prior to covering, and he approved moving to the next step of enclosing the wings and fuselage with fabric.

There were seven fabric systems to choose from¹ as choice number 8 was dropped immediately:

- 1) Air Tech (Ceconite fabric with Air Tech's polyurethane coatings)
- 2) Randolph (Ceconite with nitrate or butyrate dopes)
- 3) Star Gloss (Ceconite with vinyl and polyurethane coatings)
- 4) Oratex (Pre-coated fabric)
- 5) Poly Fiber or Stits (Poly Fiber fabric with Poly Fiber's vinyl-based coatings)
- 6) Stewart Systems (Ceconite or Superflite fabric with Stewart's water-based coatings)
- 7) Superflite (Superflite polyester with Superflite's polyurethane coatings)
- 8) Original aircraft fabric of Grade A cotton or linen with nitrate or butyrate dope

Each of these systems has individual benefits and disadvantages. Some systems are lighter than others. Some systems are more environmentally friendly and less toxic. Oratex has the fabric pre-coated and has the primer / UV protection and color impregnated in the fabric. When choosing a covering, we suggest reading each of the manufacturer's website's and selecting the covering system that best fits your application requirements and budget. Reading Chapter 2 "Fabric Covering" of AC43.13-1B is also highly recommended.

We focused on a system that did not use nitrate or butyrate dopes, nor natural fiber fabrics as cotton or linen, a system that was durable, one that had been a proven performer over a number of years, and was supported by a STC.

Ceconite, Superflite, and Poly-Fiber fabrics are all basically the same. These are polyester Dacron fabrics woven at the same mill on the same looms. They are all capable of being shrunk about 10% and the thread count is the same on the warp and fill.² With that in mind, it essentially narrows the choice down to using polyurethanes, vinyl, or water-based coatings systems.

The Stewart water-based system and the Air Tech polyurethane system were very persuasive. We settled on the Poly Fiber system which also happened to go on sale at Wick's aircraft supply in March of each year.

The Poly Fiber system (as well as many of the other systems) has support in the form of YouTube videos, a complete STC manual and hands-on seminars; one of which Jon attended at an EAA event to get acquainted with the system. In order to understand the costs involved for materials, the Poly Fiber manual includes "Covering Material Quantities Required" such as "number of Linear Yards of 70-inch fabric", "amount of Polyester Finishing Tape Rolls", "amount of Poly-Tak Fabric Cement", etc., for dozens of aircraft models and components. This can be used to estimate the cost of covering a project.³

POLY-FIBER COVERING MATERIAL ESTIMATES

These estimates are furnished as a service to assist in selecting quantities of basic materials. If your aircraft is not listed, use the numbers for the most similar aircraft and you'll get a close approximation of quantities. Final determination of quantities is the option of the customer.

Aircraft and Components	Linear yards of 70-inch wide fabric unless Light (66-inch) for plywood surfaces is listed.	POLY-TAK Fabric Cement	POLY-BRUSH Gallons (Reduce 3:1)	POLY-SPRAY Gallons (Reduce 4:1)	Poly-Fiber R 65-75 or RR 8500 Reducer Gallons	Polyester Finishing Tape Rolls ("B" = Bias)	Rib Lacing Cord (See Note 1)	Reinforcing Tape (Width same as cap strip)	POLY-TONE Pigmented Finish Gallons (See Note 2) (Reduce 4:1)	R 65-75 or RR 8500 Reducer Gallons for Poly-Tone	Optional AERO-THANE Polyurethane Finish Gal (vice POLY-TONE) (See Note 2) (Reduce 3:1 with UE-820)	Optional RANTHANE HS Polyurethane Finish Gal (vice POLY-TONE) (See Note 2) (Reduce 3:1 with G-4200)
NOTE 1: Delete rib lacing thread for those model aircraft that use wire clips or screws instead of rib lacing.												
NOTE 2: Quantity estimates of POLY-TONE, AERO-THANE, and RANTHANE finishes are based on fabric covered areas. Add appropriate additional amount for large metal portions of aircraft.												
NOTE 3: Add 1 spool polyester machine sewing thread if envelopes or a blanket are to be sewn.												
NOTE 4: "Wet goods" are sold in both gallons and quarts. A gallon equals 4 quarts. 1/4 = 1 quart, 1/2 = 2 quarts, 3/4 = 3 quarts.												
Light aircraft size & configuration of: AERONCA CHAMPION, AERONCA CHIEF, CALLAIR, CITABRIA, FUNK, INTERSTATE CADET, PIPER J-3, -4, -5, PA-11, -12, -14, -18, -25, PORTERFIELD, REARWIN, TAYLORCRAFT, etc.												
Complete Aircraft	45 yd	1 Gal	10	11	6	1(1"), 7(2"), 2(3"), 1(4"), 1(3"B), 1(4"B)	1	2(1/2")	10	2 1/2	6	4
2 Wings & Ailerons	25 yd	2 Qt	5 1/2	6	3 1/2	4(2"), 2(3"), 1(4"), 1(4"), 1(4"B)	1	2(1/2")	5 1/2	1 1/2	3 1/2	2 1/2
Fuselage	11 yd	1 Qt	2 1/2	2 3/4	1 1/2	1(1"), 2(2")			2 1/2	3 Qt	1 1/2	1
5 Tail Surfaces	9 yd	1 Qt	2	2 1/4	1 1/4	2(2"), 1(3"B)	50'	1(1/2")	2	2 Qt	1 1/4	1
Complete Less Fuselage	34 yd	3 Qt	7 1/2	8 1/2	5	5(2"), 2(3"), 1(4"), 1(3"B), 1(4"B)	1	2(1/2")	7 1/2	2	4 1/2	3
Complete Less 2 Wings	20 yd	2 Qt	4 1/2	5	3	1(1"), 3(2"), 1(3"B)	50'	1(1/2")	4 1/2	1 1/4	2 3/4	2
All Control Surfaces	11 yd	1 Qt	2 1/2	2 3/4	1 1/2	2(2"), 1(3"), 1(3"B)	50'	1(1/2")	2 1/2	3 Qt	1 1/2	1

Figure 1 Example of the amount Poly Fiber Supplies Required for Select Aircraft

Poly Fiber has the disadvantage of using MEK as a solvent and must be applied in a well ventilated and open area, so we waited until June to begin the covering of the wings and fuselage during reasonable weather. The ideal temperature for fabric work is 77 degrees F with the humidity between 0% and 70%. Everything moved to the garage.

We began with looking closely at other fabric covered aircraft around the various airfields in the area and took close up photographs when allowed. We found some very professional looking fabric covered aircraft! We read and re-read the Poly Fiber manual and watched numerous videos. We began with practice covering small items. The first item to cover was the right-hand oleo landing gear fairing and then we proceeded to the tailfeathers. We started the right-hand wing a couple of weeks ago and it took about 18 hours to cover and glue the fabric to the upper and lower surfaces of the wing. Since it is a high wing aircraft and seams would be more difficult to see on top of the wing, we covered the top of the wing first, then the bottom.

After gluing the fabric to the wing as specified in the manual, we then use a calibrated iron on the fabric shrinking it into place using the 250-degree F and then the 350-degree F settings. It was amazing to see wrinkles and other discontinuities disappear with the iron! Keep in mind that the fabric will shrink about 10% - so over a 200

inch wing span and a 60-inch chord, the fabric can shrink up to 20 inches longitudinally and 6 inches chordwise, which makes the fabric tight as a drum. A bold caution in the manual was: Using a heat gun or hair dryer on Poly Fiber will void the STC!³

We have since started on the left-hand wing. I believe it it a labor of love and requires the same amount of patience that I saw in my grandmother when she would sew and quilt in her living room. She made dozens – maybe hundreds – of quilts over her lifetime and perhaps we will find out if we inherited any talent working with fabric.

Over the summer we hope to complete the wings as well as cover the fuselage with the fabric. We will need to attach the fabric to the wings with PK screws (the Chief is not rib-laced, the fabric is held to the wing ribs with approximately 350 #4 screws and washers). After brushing on the first coat of Poly-Brush we then apply the finish tapes and gussets. There are lot of seemingly major steps to accomplish. We hope to complete spraying the parts and assemblies with two coats of Poly-Brush and the UV coat of Poly-Spray by this fall. Wish us luck!

CONTINUED

NC-85862 1946 Aeronca Chief 11AC-256

Rescue and Restoration

(Continued)



Figure 2 Complete RH Wing Ready for Covering



Figure 3 Covered RH Wing Ready for Poly-Brush

FOOTNOTES

1) Turner, L. (2023, July) All Covered Up, EAA Sport Aviation

<https://inspire.eaa.org/2023/08/22/all-covered-up/>

2) Alexander, R. (1998, October) Fabric Covering Problems, EAA Sport Aviation

<https://www.eaa.org/eaaircraft-building/builderresources/while-youre-building/building-articles/fabric-covering/fabric-covering-common-problems#:~:text=By%20the%20way%2C%20Ceconite%2C%20Superflite,on%20the%20warp%20and%20fill.>

Membership Opportunity

Spirits of Aviation Flying Club, LLC



This flying club is an economical way to own and fly a Vans Aircraft RV-12. Ownership shares are purchased to become a part of the “Club”. Costs are shared among its owner members. Fixed costs such as hangar rent and insurance are evenly divided between its members and paid on a quarterly basis. Flight hours are expensed on a per hour cost (currently set at \$15/hr.), which is used to purchase consumable items, such as tires, oil, incorporating any service requirements and an eventual engine rebuild or replacement when the time comes. An online calendar is used to reserve the plane with dates and times by members. With a limited number of owners, the plane is readily available most of the time.

As time goes by, a member wishes to sell their ownership in the club for various reasons. Over the six years the club has been in existence, members have bought shares, and members have sold their ownership shares.

The Spirits of Aviation Flying Club, LLC originally had six owner/members. It presently has five. One of them wishes to sell their share of the club. As a result, the Spirits of Aviation Flying club has an opening for one or two new members. We are looking for someone who has some flying experience, is willing to assist with maintenance when it is needed and has some applicable skills they can use to help with maintaining the plane, and/or is willing to learn skills as required to help keep the plane in good airworthy condition.

If interested in becoming an owner/member of the Spirits of Aviation Flying Club, please contact the club for further information.

Contact info:

Dave Doherty

dwdoherty@aol.com

Cell: (636) 240-5983

Aviation Explorer Post 9032 Activities Update for June, 2024

Jim Hall, AE Advisor

Three, two, one: LIFTOFF!!! Aviation Explorers & Advisors brought rockets they built to the St. Louis Rocketry Association launch event in Buder Park and shared in the excitement of testing their own builds and watching others attempt to reach high in the sky. They got to witness a “catastrophic failure” test event that brought lots of noise and smoke around the launch pad - lessons learned for next time.

One of our rockets became dubbed the ‘lawn dart’ after the fins fell off before launch, effectively grounding it because of safety concerns - another learning moment. New designs were also attempted, including a rocket egg with fins and engine that was placed on the launch pad. Nearby a couple of cicadas were attempting to reach for the stars by hitching themselves to a long rocket. They bailed just a millisecond before ignition. Many of the AE rocket launches were successful and repeated more than once after being safely parachuted back to earth. Overall, it was a great experience for everyone and one that will be held again in the future.

Upcoming Plans:

- Tuesday June 18th at 7:00pm, AirVenture logistics virtual meeting tentatively planned, you should receive a calendar invite with a google meeting link. Per Chrissy, AE Advisor’s, email message there is still needed information from everyone who is signed up to go in order to finish final arrangements.

If you are attending AirVenture you must attend this meeting, or make prior workaroud.

- July 22-28, the registered Aviation Explorers will attend the **Aviation Explorer Camp at EAA AirVenture 2024**
- August, AE summer break scheduling
- **September, Aviation Explorer Post 9032 Kick off and Open House – Date TBD**

Recently Completed Activities:

(Note: see previous EAA Chapter 32 archived monthly Newsletters for older information re: past AE activities)

- June 8 & 9, 2024 Spirit of St. Louis Air Show & STEM Expo; Even though it wasn’t scheduled as an AE activity, Explorers were encouraged to attend on their own.
 - Note: THANK YOU to the Aviation Explorers & Advisors who accepted an invitation from EAA Chapter 32 to help out at their table in the STEM tent during the airshow.
- May 25th, 8:00AM - 1:00PM – Aviation Explorers (& a couple of advisors) were shooting rockets coordinated with the St. Louis Rocketry Association at Buder Park.
- May 15, 6-7:30pm - We had a rocket building activity. AE Advisor Andrew Hedlund acquired the rocket building kits. Expenses for materials was covered by AE Advisors – THANKS TO ALL! We met at the Creve Coeur Airport Office meeting room and built the rockets outside on the tables. Rocket Building Location: 14301 Creve Coeur Airport Rd, St. Louis, MO 63146
- May 11th, EAA Young Eagles event held at the Chapter 32 (ARC) Aviation Resource Center which is located in St. Charles County Regional Airport. Aviation Explorers welcome!
- May 8, 6:30pm - Rescheduled as Virtual Meeting- AE Post Officer Elections. We elected a new President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer for the upcoming season! Officers will begin their duties in autumn, 2024. Afterwards discussed Aviation Explorer Camp at AirVenture

- May 4, on a Saturday; Proposed visit to Bonne Terre, MO Space Museum & Mine Tour - Note: N/A for spring AE schedule at this time
- May 1, 6pm - Astrophotography (Astronomy Photography) presentation by Peter Seddon at Boeing Prologue Auditorium and Mr. Jim Roe who's an accomplished astronomer.
- April 17, 7:00pm – 9:30pm Star party with St. Louis Astronomical Society. Location: Francis Park Outreach Site, 5121 Tamm Ave., St. Louis, MO 63109.
- April 13, EAA Young Eagles event held at the Chapter 32 (ARC) Aviation Resource Center located in St. Charles County Regional Airport.
- April 3, 5pm - Air Evac Helicopter Headquarters and Simulator Training Facility in O'Fallon, MO
- March 23, Saturday – Open Attendance at St. Louis Astronomical Society (SLAS) program on solar eclipse held at STL Gateway Arch
- March 20, 6pm - Navy Recruiter Speakers at Boeing Prologue Auditorium: a Boeing P8 Poseidon Anti-submarine Warfare Aircraft Pilot and a U.S. Navy Nuclear Machinist's Mate - SS (Submarines) shared their career paths and rewards for their career pursuits.
- March 6, 6pm Creve Coeur Airport; Historic Aircraft Restoration Museum tour
- February 24, on Saturday - Open Attendance at IUAC Ultralight/Light Sport Symposium held at SWIC; Granite City, IL
- February 21, 4:45pm - Boeing Polysonic Wind Tunnel Tour (limit of 15 participants) meet at Boeing Building 100
- February 7, 6pm – Panel discussion on flying by Pilots/Aircraft Owner/CFI/Airline Captain and Student Pilot speak on Flying held at Boeing Prologue Auditorium
- January 24, 6pm - Pete Seddon of STL “Gateway” TRACON (Terminal Radar Approach Control) speaks at Boeing Prologue Auditorium

- January 10, 6:30-8:00pm Aviation Explorer Post 9032 Officers & Advisors Virtual Meeting

ABOUT POST 9032

Aviation Explorer Post 9032 is an established career exploration program based in St. Louis, MO. Part of the Greater St. Louis Area Council, ‘Learning for Life’ program. AE Post 9032 is a chartered youth group with advisors and support from Boeing and Chapter 32 of the Experimental Aircraft Association. Meetings are held in the **Boeing Prologue Auditorium located in Building 100 @ 6300 James S. McDonnell Blvd, Berkeley, MO 63134, USA.**

Additional links to AE Post activities are listed below:

<https://www.facebook.com/aeopost9032/>

<https://www.instagram.com/aeopost9032/>

Tentative dates for Aviation Explorer Post 9032 meetings and activities are on the website calendar: <https://www.aepost9032.org/>

The AE post officers have a lot of great activities lined up for 2024.

Proposed Agenda: Each month the usual schedule (flexible around other activities with some events being held on a Saturday):

1st Wednesday; 6-7pm General Meeting in Boeing Bldg. 100 Auditorium

2nd Wednesday; 6:30 & 7pm Post Officers and Advisors Virtual Online Meetings

3rd Wednesday; 6-7pm Guest Speaker or offsite Activity (day/ date subject to changes)

Splash Splash I was taking a bath...(part 2)

Ron Burnett

Splash!

Every two years Naval Aviators don our flight gear, and train for ejection by riding the seat up a rail after pulling the face curtain, which fires the rocket, propelling you upward as the rail braking system stops you and then lowers you back down, simulating an actual ejection. So the whole squadron requalifies, since these facilities are only available at MCAS (*Marine Corps Air Station*) and NAS (*Naval Air Station*) Stations. Then we head to an Olympic size pool where you are attached to your parachute harness, standing backwards on the edge of the pool. Then a winch drags you on your back at a brisk pace across the pool, simulating parachuting into water with winds strong enough to drag you. So we all get a turn, and while being dragged you practice releasing both of your parachute quick releases using both hands, hopefully before you hit the other end. In an emergency, your training should take over and save your life. I was a few months short of my 2 years, and in the meantime our parachute attachment had been improved from squeezing both sides simultaneously with your pointing finger and thumb to the new design which only required wedging your thumb under a release lever and lifting up, much simpler and requiring less coordination. Now with doing the new procedure on a regular basis every time I strapped in and I strapped, wouldn't you think I would do it right, even in an emergency, but NOOO!, I reverted to my last of many pool dragging practices.



Another improvement was Nomex gloves which were not only fire proof and (unlike our original issue yellow leather gloves), Nomex is not slippery under water. Naval aviators also have a 4 to 20 minute supply of oxygen in our seat pack, and our masks had flanges on each side to prevent water entry into the mask which a smart pilot would still be wearing, hence breathing even under water. Easy to think about as an afterthought, but rare in actual practice as most pilots feel confined wearing the mask.

Back to the Sploosh and descent into dark water, not like the turquoise sea you long to snorkel in, around beautiful tropical islands, but a reality that would tax every bit of my survival instincts. However, it was a windy day and shortly I found myself on my back while my former lifesaving parachute was

now sporting with me, dragging me along on my back as it pleased. My previous training techniques sprang into action but no matter how hard I pinched my thumbs and fingers together on the harness release mechanisms, it just didn't just release the parachute, (Ron, you dummy). However, engineers, thankfully, were always improving our lives and had designed cups sewn around the outer edge of our parachute so that when enough water is captured within in them, the dragging chute would then collapse. However, Newton's law of physics is always in effect, so a body in motion (mine) tends to remain in motion, so I was greeted by the stopped sinking parachute and now was entombed by the 128 shroud lines and chute. I was now trying desperately to inflate my Mae West but with those old salt slippery type of gloves I so proudly wore, my hands seemed worthless now. I managed to kick to the surface twice getting a gasp of air along with a gulp of seawater almost retching me. As I was sinking into the darkness I managed to finally inflate one side of my life vest which buoyed me upward where I had forgotten the sun was shining, and guess what, there was my life raft



basking in the sun, within kicking and swimming range, some yards away. With my last bit of energy, I managed to kick and half swim to it and drag myself over the side and into the raft. My leader had been circling around and as I waved he headed to Rosey Roads wagging his wings, and no doubt a little schosch on fuel.

I began cutting some of the 128 shroud lines as I feared the sinking chute might drag me over the side and back under. Before too long I saw a fishing boat approaching. Some kind fisherman were coming out as they had witnessed the ejection and crash from shore at nearby Ponce. They hauled me, all my wet heavy gear, raft and sinking chute into the boat and took me ashore, to the local police station where an English speaking officer asked for my statement. In about an hour a Marine H-34 fetched me, and as he did an accelerated climb to a few hundred feet, we flew over the still protruding wounded tail of old number 11 whose bombsight never would be repaired! Soon I was back at Rosey where the base hospital examined me and grounded me for a couple of days. Explanations and accounts were shared with my squadron mates who were all glad to see me, as the last two A4 pilots had not survived their water ordeals. Info was shared with the squadron and my final comment was I think none of this would have happened if I had just had breakfast before I launched.

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