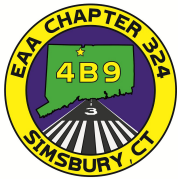


EAA 324 Simsbury, CT



August 2022



Aug 16	VMC Club Simsbury Airport Clubhouse 7 pm
Sep 7	EAA 324 Gathering 6 pm Flying, food, drink, project updates, topics of interest, videos and general storytelling
Sep 24-25	Simsbury Fly-In events

Chapter Happenings:

EAA 324 has been, and continues to be, a huge supporter of the annual Simsbury Fly-In, Classic Car Show and Food Truck Festival. This year, we have a food truck event on Saturday, the 24th, (maybe some fly-in visitors and demos?) and then the full-blown event on Sunday, September 25th. If you have hesitated to get involved in the past, now is the time to check it out. More info on this inside the newsletter.

I sat down with long-time member (over 30 years) Dan McKeeman and our conversation is featured in this newsletter in "Member Spotlight". If you're new and haven't met Dan, make sure to introduce yourself at our next gathering!

Several members and their families traveled to Oshkosh for AirVenture 2022 during the last week of July. You'll find photos from their adventure in this newsletter, including above, the finished EAA 324 signpost displayed at AirVenture!

Read more about this month's happenings on the following pages!

AirVenture 2022



First Night



Our cooks (Mark, Brad and Charlie)



Mark, Theresa, Vince, Charlie, Xhulia



Another Dinner



Xhulia at NASA



Good friends, good times



Final Night

Member Spotlight: Dan McKeeman

On a toasty summer morning, I sat down with Dan McKeeman to hear about his aviation story.

Where are you from and where do you live now?

Simsbury, in fact, on the same road that I grew up on!

Tell us something about your family

My wife is Beverly and I have three grown children: Rachel, John and Matt, all of whom live in Connecticut.

When and how did you get interested in aviation?

I was always interested in cars and then as a mid-year college grad with a teaching degree and working on my Masters degree, and with Viet Nam looming and my deferment expired, I was able to get a teaching job in Milford and stay out of the Viet Nam conflict. While teaching school, I saved a little extra money and started taking flying lessons. I actually rented a room in Milford during the week, then came home on the weekends, taking flying lessons at Johnnycake Airport in Harwinton. It was a busy time. I even took my students to the Sikorsky Memorial Airport and was able to get them free rides in an airplane, so I've been promoting aviation for a long time! I ended up getting a teaching job at the newly built Simsbury High School in 1969 and taught there for 4 years. Following that, I worked for HondaWest in Canton until the Arab oil embargo killed the bike imports, so I lost that job. Then I found my industrial sales job with Fasteners, Inc., where I retired.

When did you start flying and what ratings do you have?

I started at Johnnycake Airport and got my private pilot's license there in the late 1960's.

Have you owned aircraft before?

I've owned three aircraft, two of which were build projects.

The first aircraft was a Teman Monofly ultralight project with a Volkswagen engine, split in half, as it's power source. During the engine build and testing phase, the engine failed and the amount of work involved to rebuild it was not worth it, so I donated the project to Simsbury High School.

Friends who saw it for sale out on Cape Cod recommended the second aircraft I owned. It was a Cherokee C and I had many good years in that plane, flying it out of Johnnycake Airport and even taking it to Oshkosh with my son. I owned that plane for about 8-10 years.

My third aircraft was also a build project, a Zenith aircraft. I started the project at home in New Hartford in April of 2000 and finished it five years later. Johnnycake Airport closed, so when it came time to fly the Zenith, I had a flatbed truck deliver it to Simsbury Airport and I've been at Simsbury ever since. I had the Zenith for 6 or 7 years until a short field landing that went wrong. I had to veer from my planned grass landing to the runway and lost too much lift in doing that, and the resultant hard landing caused the landing gear to collapse. The insurance company totaled the plane, it was sold at auction, and I've stayed in touch with the buyer who plans to make its first flight this Fall!

I rented aircraft out of Simsbury for a while after that, but it wasn't the same, so I haven't flown for a few years now.

Any special trips in these aircraft?

Yes, I flew the Cherokee to Oshkosh and I also flew the Zenith to Oshkosh.

How did you connect with the Simsbury Airport?

When Johnnycake Airport closed, Simsbury Airport became my home airport for flying, particularly with my Zenith. I was already an EAA 324 member, so I was quite familiar with the airport.

What's the best thing about the Simsbury Airport?

It's a peaceful, quiet, country airport and a good place to learn. I have a lot of friends connected to the airport.

Since you haven't been flying, how do you get your aviation fix?

I've been an EAA 324 member for over 30 years and I'm at EAA gatherings and events.

I'm also involved in the Simsbury Fly-In as a volunteer and have been doing that for over 30 years also. (When I'm not at the airport, I attend a lot of car shows on the weekends with my Corvette!)

Photos, starting at top left: Dan's Cherokee C, a page from the Zenith builder's log, the EAA 324 inspection team and Dan (far left) inspecting the Zenith in his garage, the Zenith arrives at Simsbury without the wings attached and the finished Zenith aircraft.



Simsbury Fly-In, Car Show and Food Truck Festival –September 25th

If you haven't volunteered to help out before, our chapter urges you to sign up this year. There are volunteer spots for all interests, typically for either a morning or an afternoon, giving you the time to check out the rest of the event before or after you help out. Volunteers get a free t-shirt, snacks and lunch from Jersey Mike's all as part of their "volunteer gig", as well as great parking and free entry.

To sign up, go to www.simsburyflyin.com. If you're on our regular mailing list, you'll be getting plenty of reminders to sign up to volunteer as well. Thank you in advance!

Attendees this month:

Mark Ranstead, Charlie Luke, Vince Carucci, Laura Doherty, Jill Nulsen, Karl Boehm, Doug Melville, Brad Griswold, Rob Joyce, Phil Vonrichthofen, Walter Adams, Dan McKeeman, Luke Wismar, Bill Thomas, Dave Buyak, Jameson Pestana. (Please forgive my memory....I know I'm missing 2 people, husband and wife.

Please reach out to jilln658@ymail.com to update me. Thanks!)

Guest: Julia Staszak

Treasurer's Report:

Our Treasurer, Vince Carucci, has the most recent statement on file.

News from EAA:

There is no chapter video magazine for August.

