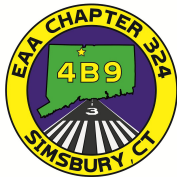


EAA 324 Simsbury, CT



December 2022

*Drone engineer builds RC Christmas tree and flies it over San Diego, CA.**



Jan 4	EAA 324 Gathering 7 pm Food, drink, project updates, topics of interest, videos and general storytelling
January	Winter Dinner
Spring	International Learn to Fly Day
May	Young Eagles Day
July 24-30	AirVenture, Oshkosh

Chapter Happenings:

The New England Air Museum graciously offered us their conference room for our December election gathering, as well as opening up the museum for us that evening. What a treat! If you haven't yet visited the museum, it's well worth your time.

As we normally do at our gatherings, everyone brought food to contribute, so we ate very well. Many thanks to our own Bob Upson who helps out in the museum restoration shop and facilitated the connection to get us in.

Mark distributed service pins for 2022:

Mark Ranstead (President), Charlie Luke (V.P, VMC coordinator and Eagle flights coordinator), Vince Carucci (Treasurer), Jill Nulsen (Secretary, newsletter editor and website editor), Laura Doherty (Ray Aviation Scholarships), Bob Upson (Technical Advisor) and Peter Dachnowicz (Flight Advisor). Thank you to all who have been integral to the functioning of our chapter this year.

We welcome Tom Bush back to our chapter after an absence of a few years. Tom has recently purchased a 1950 Piper Vagabond and will be bringing it to Simsbury soon. Welcome, Tom!

**Read more about this at: <https://www.catersnews.com/stories/video/man-builds-remote-controlled-christmas-tree-flys-it-over-town/> (There's also YouTube video!)*

Chapter Elections

The following slate of officers were elected on December 7th for a two-year term (2023-2024):

President: Vincent Carucci
Secretary: Jill Nulsen

Vice President: Jeff Neumann
Treasurer: Dave Buyak

Additional Board Members: Mark Ranstead (past president), Charlie Luke, Phil Vonrichthofen, Eric Nulsen and Dan McKeeman (all except past president are appointed by the president)

Additional Posts:

VMC: Laura Doherty and Bill Thomas

Scholarships: Laura Doherty

Flight Advisor: Peter Dachnowicz

Technical Advisor: Bob Upson

Eagle Flight Leader: Charlie Luke

Young Eagle Coordinator: Karl Boehm

Newsletter: Jill Nulsen

Web Page and Social Media: Thomas Russo, Xhulia Lumi and Luke Wismar

Mark, after 11 years of service as our President, we all thank you for leading us well and making it a fun and informative time. Now get that SuperCub flying again with all of your new "spare time"!!

An Interview with Mark and Vince

As an opportunity to get to know a little more about our president just finishing his term, Mark Ranstead, and our incoming new president, Vince Carruci, I forwarded a few interview questions for them to share a little more about themselves and EAA.

How did you first get involved with EAA and what attracted you to our chapter?

Mark: Mark Cigal invited me to a few EAA meetings in the early 2000s. I officially joined Chapter 324 in 2008. I had a very narrow view of airplanes. Real airplanes were normal category production models. I thought amateur built aircraft were dangerous, dreamed up designs of plywood, glue and VW engines. I joined the Chapter and learned you only needed HALF a VW engine.

Vince: Not quite 10 years ago I decided I wanted to build and fly an ultralight aircraft. One of the things I looked into was the location of an airport where I could fly it. Simsbury was the first place that said yes, so that's what brought me here. I don't remember whom I spoke with, but they told me about the EAA and the local Chapter 324 (I've been a member since about 2016). I've had a lifelong interest in aviation, decades of service in the USAF, and a new interest in ultralight flying, so joining the EAA seemed a smart and obvious choice.

Have you held other leadership positions with the chapter?

Mark: I held the position of secretary for several years before accepting the president position in 2011 after Mark Cigal stepped down.

Vince: I was elected chapter treasurer in 2019 and have served in that position until now.

How did EAA prepare you (either within our chapter or through national) to lead or to have a "baseline" of where to start from?

Mark: It was a bit of osmosis, the process of gradual assimilation of ideas, knowledge and the like from fellow Chapter members. I attended several EAA Chapter Leadership Boot Camp one-day courses.

Vince: I viewed a webinar from EAA on chapter leadership, but I haven't yet been to a leadership boot camp or equivalent. I was simply given some guidance from the previous treasurer. [Vince is making plans to go to Oshkosh for a leadership training this winter]

What are the activities you enjoy the most with regards to our chapter and national?

Mark: I like the show and tell segment of our gatherings. I'm simply impressed at the talent of our members. I listen in awe on the progress of their builds, how they overcome technical problems through reverse engineering and testing to solve a problem. I look forward to the Chapter Camping at AirVenture

every year. I can disconnect from everyday responsibilities for a few days and enjoys time with my son and fellow Chapter 324 members.

Vince: I always look forward to the monthly gatherings. They are aviation-centric and a great community of interest. I've really come to appreciate the quality of people that make up our chapter. Everyone brings unique experiences and participation. Additionally, visiting AirVenture is a great adventure. It's feels like an aviation version of Disney! You couldn't possibly see it all in one year.

Are there other activities that you think would be well accepted and beneficial that our chapter could promote, sponsor, initiate or get involved in some way?

Mark: I know our chapter membership would like to have more guest speakers and hands-on labs. Since COVID is behind us, we'll be starting Eagle Flights, Young Eagle Flights and Learn to fly events. We've discussed starting a build project but with 5 builds underway and another 4 aircraft under maintenance during the winter, there is little time remaining for a build project presently.

Vince: Our chapter dues has been enough to cover all our operating expenses so far while still allowing a slow increase in our account balance. This may not always be the case. I think we should look into some fund raising activities, at least to cover unplanned expenses that aren't covered in an annual budget. Someday I would like to start an Ultralight club in our chapter, similar to the VMC club. This could help increase our membership numbers and continue to bring together people with similar interests. There have been discussions about an aircraft renovation project. We should always be on the lookout should an opportunity present itself.

How long have you been involved in aviation and what keeps you interested and engaged in it? Are there aspects of it that you haven't tried and would like to?

Mark: 47 years. From my earliest memories, I have been mesmerized by airplanes. In elementary school my drawings were always jets with lots of orange and yellow flames coming out of the engines. I earned flying lesson money by delivering newspapers (a couple of 1000 a day). I soloed in 1975 at 16 and earned my PPL at 17. I earned an A&P license in 1980, the same year Susan and I married. I've worked in some facet of major airline aviation since 1979, ramp service, A&P and pilot. I have flown DHC-6 Twin Otters, Convair 580, Fokker 100, Boeing 727, 747, 757, 767, 777, DC-9-80, Airbus 319, 320, 321, 321neo. Presently I serve on the Board of the Simsbury Airport Association as the Treasurer. In the US there are 258.3 million adults of which 243.4 million or 94% are licensed drivers and 692,000 or 0.3% are licensed pilots. We are a rare breed that is blessed with the talent to slip the surly bonds of Earth. I would like to fly Powered Paragliding (PPG).

Vince: I've been interested in all things aviation since I was kid. If it was in the sky, I was fascinated. I joined the Air Force right after high school and except for a few interruptions; I've served ever since. I think the only thing left to do now is start flying. [Vince is working on his private pilot's license]

Very often, our membership comes from individuals or families who volunteered at the Fly-In and wanted to get more involved at the Simsbury Airport. In a few very brief sentences, what would be your "elevator speech" to them about checking out membership in our chapter?

Mark: Simsbury Airport is unique in that it is a privately owned, public use airport located in a countryside setting of three townships. The Chapter is a family oriented aviation club that is home to aviation enthusiasts, aircraft builders and restorers. Our member's interests range from photography to drones to skydivers to powered parachutes to gliders and airplanes. We gather monthly to socialize and get to know one another a little bit better.

Vince: For more than half a century, Chapter 324 has been a gathering point for builders, flyers, and aviation enthusiasts from the Southern New England area. Our members all contribute to a friendly and welcoming organization. Our monthly gatherings focus on the social aspect of the chapter, all while maintaining an aviation theme. Whether you are a seasoned pilot or a skyward dreamer, you are always welcome to visit us on the first Wednesday of each month and invited to become a member of our chapter.



Piper J-5



RV-10



Piper Vagabond



Zenith 750

Project Updates:

- Mark got the breather tube figured out for his SuperCub and got the ELT installed. Thanks for the explanation and show of the drawings for the powerplant for this aircraft.
- Doug got to meet up with a previous owner of his RV-6 (the 3rd owner) to pick up some original parts and discovered the Claremont, NH airport...another gem.
- Dave continues work at home on the wings for his J-5 restoration. He was able to find out the production date for the aircraft (June 6, 1941) and acquired the logbooks dating back to 1952.
- Charlie, who's had issues with the propeller hub seals and has been continuing to find a fix, having been assured it's not a safety issue, was able to send it out to Whirlwind for repair. This after a night flight back from Maine that yielded significant amount of fluid leaked onto his canopy enroute and discovered after landing. All is well and the propeller is re-installed after the repair.
- Karl was able to re-route the breather tube on his J-4 project and is working toward getting an approval on that change.
- Don is onto the painting stage of the empennage of his Pitts and will be doing fabric work over the winter.
- Jon finished the stabilizer of his Zenith 750 project and is starting on the elevator soon.
- Jeff's RV-10 empennage is in the barn, waiting on home projects to be done and the rest of the kit to arrive in the Spring.
- Vince is doing a design modification to the wing tips of his Legal Eagle project, hoping to reduce drag in flight. He shared an interesting account of testing wire strength at home....engineering proving!
- Eric's wing kit is done, ready to be wrapped up and stored, and his fuselage kit is ready to be started for his RV-7 project.
- Tom Bush has purchased a 1950 Piper Vagabond and is working on getting it moved from Syracuse.

Note: Aircraft depicted are representative, not the actual project that the member is working on.

More Chapter News:

- Charlie will have 2023 EAA calendars available for those who expressed interest at the meeting. If you weren't able to attend and would like a calendar, check with him to see if there are any extras.
- The annual national chapter survey was sent to all members following the meeting. This is a survey done at the end of each year to assess our own chapter and help us to improve.
- Laura had Luke Wismar, our Ray Aviation Scholarship recipient, give a report on his progress. He said the funds became available at the end of November and he is now hopping off the school bus at the airport for flying lessons on Tuesdays and Thursdays as well as coming out on Saturdays.
- Laura asked for a show of hands for a preferred night for VMC Club to meet since turn out has been low on Tuesdays. The consensus was that the 3rd Wednesday of each month would be best.



Pitts



Piper J-4

Attendees this month:

Mark Ranstead, Charlie Luke, Vince Carucci, Jill Nulsen, Laura Doherty, Phil Vonrichthofen, Karl Boehm, Jay Ely, Scott Selker, Chance Selker, Jeff Neumann, Bob Upson, Dan McKeeman, Dave Buyak, Peter Luke Wismar, Eric Wismar, Rob Joyce, Don Chamberlain, Doug Melville, Jon LaValley

Guests: Holly Ely, Ramona Upson, Maharu Wismar, Mia Wismar, Tom Bush (soon to be a member)

Treasurer's Report:

Our Treasurer, Dave Buyak taking over from Vince, will have the most recent statement on file.

News from EAA:

The December Chapter Video Magazine is available here: <https://www.eaa.org/videos/chapters>

