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RUNWAY 35

The Official Newsletter of EAA Chapter 35, San Antonio TX



December 2013

Volume 55 Issue 12

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Next Event

**EAA Annual Holiday Buffet
Luncheon**

14 December

1200 Noon

Reservations Required by

10 December

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The Christmas Ball

Chuck Fisher

Living in South Texas has lots of great advantages, like 300+ VFR flying days a year. However, the trade-off comes about this time of year when we try to hang Christmas lights while sweltering in shorts and T-shirts and lugging the plastic tree down from the 200 degree attic. Ah, for a traditional Christmas. You know, a Christmas with tall fir trees hanging heavy with snow, family gathered around a roaring fire, and happiness and peace all around; the kind on the AOPA Christmas cards (I checked—EAA doesn't sell Christmas cards).



Well that isn't going to happen in South Texas, and probably doesn't happen much anywhere any more, if it ever did. Yet, even without snow, without roaring fireplaces, sometimes without a tree, black Friday shopping, credit card-straining gifts, sleighs, skis, jingle bells, carolers, fancy church services or plum pudding Christmas still happens.

It happens all around the world in the remotest places and the darndest ways. Today we are experiencing a uniquely American pre-occupation with political correctness, yet in the rest of the world, Christmas still occurs despite religion or ethnicity, among those who are devout and those who are not. From the cold of Siberia to the depths of Africa, Christmas is a time to re-set, re-fresh and re-new our lives. And, despite what extremist politically correct politicians say; so it is here too. This is a story of one Christmas.

This week I was digging through boxes in my hangar to find an office item I needed. The boxes had been gathering dust since I left the military a few years ago. Most were marked with something akin to "office papers - need to sort". I suspect several of you have a similar collection gathering dust somewhere. One box, smaller than the others, was unmarked except for lots of tape and mailing labels. I had to move it to get to the box I

(Continued on page 5)

**Sign up now for the
EAA 35 Holiday Luncheon**

Dec 14th at Noon. \$12 a Person, Gift exchange rules on page 3

Reservations Required!

Contact Nelson Amen at nelson.p.amen@gmail.com or 210-340-0992 by

10 Dec 2013



PRESIDENTS COCKPIT



Nelson Amen
Chapter 35 President

CHRISTMAS TIME!!

Of course, I hope you are all planning to join us at our annual Christmas dinner and gift exchange. We will start the festivities at noon on

Saturday, December 14th at the Chapter 35 building. All will enjoy a BBQ buffet as well as many other goodies, so don't miss it! The annual gift exchange is always one of our most lively activities of the year. We each bring a wrapped item (typically in the \$10 to \$20 range) and the random unwrapping and "exchanging" (ok ... swapping!) begins. This year we will have an FAA Representative to manage the action (well ... not really), but you should expect a lot of "ooooohhs" and "aahhhs" and an occasional "HEY!" to be involved. So ... put this on your calendar as a "must" and we will see you there to enjoy Christmas cheer! Ho Ho Ho !

The meal charge is \$12 per person for reserving a spot at the table. **You will need to submit your name and number attending NO LATER THAN 8:00 pm on December 10th.** There are three ways to sign up and commit your \$12 for our wonderful time together:

- Sign up and pre-pay during our November meeting (already completed)
- **Email President Nelson Amen (nelson.p.amen@gmail.com) with the names of those attending. The subject line / title of the email must include "EAA CHRISTMAS" for it to be recognized and processed. I will respond to confirm.**
- **Call President Nelson Amen (210-340-0992) and leave a message (again – please say "EAA CHRISTMAS") with the names of those attending and total count.**

Easy peezy lemon squeeze. And just so you know, we need a good headcount for the meal. Those that have not pre-paid at November's meeting will just pay December 14th. We will have a "meet our new Chapter Officers" table set up in a corner where you may chat and pay. Ulf will have the official attendance list ... and checking it twice!! And yes, this is a family affair so feel free to bring the kids along. Participation in the gift exchange is not required. It is totally up to you.

THANKS FOR THE EXTRA EFFORT

I am writing this month's column on November 24th and I wish to make a specific mention/recognition of the community service several members performed yesterday morning as a Chapter. Despite having to meet on a (very) cold and rainy Saturday morning about 7:30 am, over a dozen of our members showed up to work as a crew through 2:00 pm on a Saturday. A special thanks goes to Dave Baker for his coordination efforts, hooking up the trailer, gathering tools and managing the multi-vehicle job. Upon arrival at our Chapter building, we found (sure enough!) that Gail

had already prepped the coffee makers and all we needed to do was throw the switch and enjoy the hot coffee. Sweet!

I realize the above was just one of our activities in November, but it exemplifies the commitment, fellowship and top-notch membership we have in our Chapter 35 family. One for all ... all for one.

GOING FROM EXPERIMENTAL TO CERTIFIED

Well ... the two first trips to Castroville to fill-up with 100LL were fun in my new-to-me Sundowner 180. While I now have room for four instead of just little ol' me, I have noticed just a few small changes from the operation of my Star-Lite to the new baby Beech:

For that all important gas:
Star-Lite – 2 gph of Valero Regular grade – about \$6/hr
Beech – 10 gph of 100 LL – about \$49/hr.

For a replacement 12v battery:
Star-Lite - \$14
Beech - \$280

For an oil change and filter:
Beech - \$74
Star-Lite – oil change?

True, this is just the start of a new (as in \$\$) journey for me, but also what I had planned. Of course I really like my new airplane (just ask!) and think about a new destination and another flight every day. Don't we all? So, the price of that hamburger just went up a tad. It will just taste that much better!! See you all on the runway.

NEW TITLE – "PAST PRESIDENT"

This column brings to an end (!) my 24 month term as President of our fantastic team. The support I have received from every one of our members, chairs, and officers has been exemplary and unparalleled. It is wonderful to have so many friends who share a passion for flight, and a determination to make our world a better place each and every day. Being raised in south Texas was a blessing, but knowing all of you is a privilege. Let's all commit to make 2014 and 2015 another fantastic twenty four months for our Chapter 35. Simply ... the best.

Be a safe Chapter 35 member and fly happy,

Nelson Amen

Annual Dues Time!

It is time to pay up for 2014. Member benefits include use of the EAA chapter hangar and tools, great camaraderie, a superb clubhouse and the opportunity to read and contribute to this newsletter!

Please see Ron O'Dea to renew and update your information for the member directory!

CHAPTER

BULLETIN BOARD

Chili Cook-Off Results:

WINNER: Roxanne Beavers
2nd Place John LaTour
3rd Place Tom Morgan
Door Prize Dennis Scheidt
Silent Auction John LaTour

Holiday Dinner Gift Exchange RULES

One of our Chapter 35 traditions is the gift exchange after our Holiday Dinner. Participation is optional of course but the more gifts, the more fun we have, so everyone is encouraged to bring something. The specific "Rules of Engagement" will be explained in detail prior to the start of the gift exchange but here are the things you need to know before you get to the Holiday Dinner.

You *must* bring a **wrapped gift** to participate. Gift value should be around **\$10** and be something *appropriate* to the occasion. Re-gifting of something from previous years is discouraged. Finally, don't get too attached to your gift because someone else may take it from you – that's part of the fun!

Hope to see all of you on the 14th.

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 October 11th, 2013



CONTACT: John Nohe
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Mooney Announces Its Comeback

With New Funding, Mooney Sets Itself to Re-enter the Single Engine Market

Kerrville, Texas – After a five-year hiatus from manufacturing single-engine airplanes, Mooney is pleased to announce that it will restart manufacturing at the beginning of January 2014 at its headquarters in Kerrville, TX. New funding from Soaring America Corporation, a California based Company will provide necessary capital to re-launch and sustain the legendary brand. Details of the financial arrangements will remain confidential. The company will continue to manufacture the Acclaim Type S, and the Ovation series.

"It's a new day for Mooney. And with a new investment group that is committed to the future, we're expecting to make a strong move in the industry," noted Barry Hodkin, Chief Financial Officer for the company. "It's been a long time coming and we couldn't be more excited about our return to manufacturing one of the finest and most trusted airplane fleets in the industry."

The first order of business will be to hire and train a new workforce and reestablish the supply chain. The company is projected to recruit up to 100 people within the first year of operation. The company has a large variety of personnel needs that includes technicians, engineers, line workers, accounting and sales people. Within two years, the company is anticipating employing significantly more people depending on the demand for its products.

"While we expect to be reunited with some of our previous employees, we are confident we'll attract new talent as we re-enter this aviation space. We're looking for the best and brightest people to help meet our vision for the future," said Hodkin.

(more)

The Acclaim Type S is recognized as the world's fastest single engine airplane. The turbo-normalized airplane is home to over 130 speed records with a normal cruise speed of 230 kts and a service ceiling of 25,000 feet. The Ovation series has cruising speeds up to 190 kts and a service ceiling of up to 20,000 feet.

"It's too early to provide the details, but we'll have some very exciting announcements in the near future about the technological advances that will accompany the Acclaim Type S and Ovation series," said Hodkin.

During the difficult economic times starting in 2008, when single engine sales dropped by over 30 percent compared to the year prior, Mooney ceased production. Over the last five years, the Company that was started by Al Mooney more than 80 years ago has remained in business, focusing on customer support for the Mooney planes still in service. Given more positive economic indicators and the unique market niche for Mooney airplanes, the company feels confident about a sustaining future in the industry.

About Mooney

Since its inception, the company has manufactured and delivered more than 11,000 aircraft worldwide. Today, more than 7,800 customers in the United States and 1,000 more overseas fly these proven, high-performance airplanes. For more information, visit www.mooney.com.

Mooney Owners Rejoice!

YOUR Articles Needed

This Newsletter is YOUR newsletter. I put the articles in it, but **you** have to write 'em! Your chapter needs YOUR contributions. Please share your experiences, skills and wisdom, photos, humor and announcements with our membership. What may be common knowledge to you, may be priceless for a new pilot or builder. Even if you are not a Pulitzer level author—send me your words, I'll buff up the grammar if needed. Send input to: ea35news@gmail.com

NOVEMBER EAA 35 GATHERING

Photos by Nelson Amen, Dave (the Artist) Baker and Peggy Fisher. Thanks!



NOVEMBER EAA 35 GATHERING

Photos by Nelson Amen, Dave (the Artist) Baker and Peggy Fisher. Thanks!



CHRISTMAS (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

needed. When I did so the lid came open, and there, on top of an odd assortment of trinkets, papers, a folded flag and even some very old candy was a little hand-made Christmas ornament.

It was Christmas in wartime. Americans had become accustomed to nearly a decade at war and I, like thousands of others, was a long way from home in an undisclosed location. We'd been getting a steady stream of cards and packages from the states, the BX tent had some festive snow scene Christmas cards and a promotion to get us to buy stuff we didn't need, and inside the compound some folks had strung up strings of Christmas lights along their work stations. But, there was no denying that we were still working 24/7 in a hot, dusty (or sometimes muddy) combat zone. I'd just returned from a sojourn to some other forward medical facilities and the story was repeated across Iraq and Afghanistan and Africa. It sure as heck didn't feel like Christmas. I think we all sort of felt we *needed* to do something because it *was* Christmas, but really, nothing seemed very festive and the mood at best was blue. They don't make postcards about this.

My workstation that Christmas was an Isoshelter – a steel shipping container with walls that pull outward like an RV. Six or eight of us surrounded by computers and comm-gear manned “the box” 24 hours a day. My wife, Peggy, had sent us a tiny plastic Christmas tree, so I obligingly set it up on a counter. It really looked out of place and the others, I think, were a little less enamored of it. Maybe they hadn't gotten a plastic Christmas tree from home. But, one day another ornament appeared, a plain ball painted with Sharpie lettering with our organization and year, and then some others from families and so forth. Someone scrounged up some lights, and soon we had a well-decorated “box”. The only aviator and the senior member of the team, I was the only one to travel a lot, so the rest of the staff were truly stuck in the compound. I was glad they were participating, but despite the surreal pseudo-Christmas look, it still did not “feel like Christmas”.

On Christmas Eve we were glued to our stations in the “box” like every other day and night waiting for dreaded calls.



There wasn't much official action, though, and we started talking about Christmas at home. At some point, thanks to the miracle of the internet, we printed off the words to some popular Christmas carols, and someone had the brilliant notion to go assail the other “boxes” and the rest of the compound with carols. And, so we did.

The same picture played out over and over again. We'd open the door to another steel box or tent and begin singing. Bored faces would look up at us with annoyance, fingers on keyboards would hesitate. Then one by one folks would stand up and gather at the door and they'd start to sing along with us for a few minutes. And when we'd leave no one jumped back on their computers. Most stayed in a sort of huddle, their team together, many breaking out a box of cookies and some soda, and started sort of a little party of their own.

The next morning, Christmas day, we were at our stations as always. But as the day progressed, folks from around the compound stopped in just to talk. And to say thanks. I saw, met and befriended folks that day that I had only seen at another table at the dining facility and some I'd never met, though they worked only yards away from me. Over the next several weeks we continued to make more friends and, although maybe it was just a figment of my imagination, the entire group seemed to become tighter knit. When once we'd send an e-mail to the team next door, now we'd stop in to share information, chat and deal with problems face to face with ease. We were fighting a war and seconds mattered. Knowing, seeing and understanding the guys we shared decision-making with became easier as those folks now shared the dinner table with us.

And it started with a Christmas carol.

You see, Christmas is not about snow-laden Fir trees, roaring fires or the perfect wrapped gift. Though Christmas formally celebrates the birth of our Savior, it is more than that even. Every major religion, and based on that religious heritage every society, has a time to pause, to put down what you are working on, and to commune. In wars throughout history adversaries have paused, sometimes crossing into no-man's land to shake hands, in POW camps guards and inmates have

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CHRISTMAS (CONTINUED)

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sung together, and none of this has been dictated or directed by church or religion. In the United States, Christmas is our societal time to do that. Christmas is about reaching across, letting down barriers, refreshing old friendships, making new ones, and setting aside old battles if even for a day. Christmas is for making that phone call you have been putting off or checking on someone who is alone.



Christmas is for singing a carol for someone you've never met.

As I put the lid back on the dusty little box, I was amazed how the memories flooded back just from this little Sharpie inscribed ornament. I urge you to take a second to open a dusty box, reflect a little on your Christmas past, and reach out to those who might need a Christmas carol or two.



Merry Christmas!

TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

*'Twas the night before Christmas, and out on the ramp,
Not an airplane was stirring, not even a Champ.
The aircraft were fastened to tie downs with care,
In hopes that -- come morning -- they all would be there.*

*The fuel trucks were nestled, all snug in their spots,
With gusts from two-forty at 39 knots.
I slumped at the fuel desk, now finally caught up,
And settled down comfortably, resting my butt.*

*When the radio lit up with noise and with chatter,
I turned up the scanner to see what was the matter.
A voice clearly heard over static and snow,
Called for clearance to land at the airport below.*

*He barked his transmission so lively and quick,
I'd have sworn that the call sign he used was "St. Nick."
I ran to the panel to turn up the lights,
The better to welcome this magical flight.*

*He called his position, no room for denial,
"St. Nicholas One, turnin' left onto final."
And what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a Rutan-built sleigh, with eight Rotax Reindeer!*

*With vectors to final, down the glideslope he came,
As he passed all fixes, he called them by name:
"Now Ringo! Now Tolga! Now Trini and Bacun!
On Comet! On Cupid!" What pills was he takin'?*

*While controllers were sittin', and scratchin' their heads,
They phoned to my office, and I heard it with dread,
The message they left was both urgent and dour:
"When Santa pulls in, have him please call the tower."*

*He landed like silk, with the sled runners sparking,
Then I heard, "Left at Charlie," and "Taxi to parking."*

*He slowed to a taxi, turned off of three-oh,
And stopped on the ramp with a "Ho, ho-ho-ho..."*

*He stepped out of the sleigh, but before he could talk,
I ran out to meet him with my best set of chocks.
His red helmet and goggles were covered with frost,
And his beard was all blackened from Reindeer exhaust.*

*His breath smelled like peppermint, gone slightly stale,
And he puffed on a pipe, but he didn't inhale.
His cheeks were all rosy and jiggled like jelly,
His boots were as black as a cropduster's belly.*

*He was chubby and plump, in his suit of bright red,
And he asked me to "fill it, with hundred low-lead."
He came dashing in from the snow-covered pump,
I knew he was anxious for drainin' the sump.*

*I spoke not a word, but went straight to my work,
And I filled up the sleigh, but I spilled like a jerk.
He came out of the restroom, and sighed in relief,
Then he picked up a phone for a Flight Service brief.*

*And I thought as he silently scribed in his log,
These reindeer could land in an eighth-mile fog.
He completed his pre-flight, from the front to the rear,
Then he put on his headset, and I heard him yell, "Clear!"*

*And laying a finger on his push-to-talk,
He called up the tower for clearance and squawk.
"Take taxiway Charlie, the southbound direction,
Turn right three-two-zero at pilot's discretion"*

*He sped down the runway, the best of the best,
"Your traffic's a Grumman, inbound from the west."
Then I heard him proclaim, as he climbed thru the night,
"Merry Christmas to all! I have traffic in sight."*



BACK IN THE SADDLE

Dennis Scheidt

Some years ago I had a Cessna 172 airplane and a Schleicher Ka-6 sailplane, both of which I flew as often as I could. Of course the Cessna was equipped with a glider tow hitch and a climb prop. I love climb props but that is a subject for a future article. It happened that I got rid of both aircraft about the same time but for different reasons. I started considering what kind of aircraft I would get next and then I remembered that motorcycle riding had been a lot of fun. At a young age, married, and with young kids, I felt that an accident on a motorcycle could be disastrous to the whole family and I chose not to get involved with motorcycles. At age 55 with the kids mostly grown and on their own and with a much better financial situation, I decided rather than another airplane, I would get a motorcycle.

I did some reading on motorcycle safety and determined that motorcycle riding was not necessarily a death sentence as some who learned that I was getting a motorcycle had told me. I took the Motorcycle Safety Foundation Beginners Riding Course which included both classroom and riding instruction. I also had motorcycle added to my drivers license which included both written and riding tests.

Although I had always wanted a BMW motorcycle, I found a new 250cc twin cylinder Honda Nighthawk that seemed ideal for a first bike. I bought a red one. I rode the Nighthawk 250 for several years and accumulated 25,000 miles on it before deciding to trade up. Then I bought a 750cc, four cylinder Kawasaki ZR-7S and rode it for 21,000 miles. The Kawasaki ZR-7S was also red. Both bikes had large fuel tanks for good range and had removable saddle bags. I guess all that says something about me. I sold the Kawasaki in 2012. I had thoroughly enjoyed motorcycle riding and had taken both motorcycles on multi day trips all over Texas.

During my motorcycle days I did occasionally fly with friends who often let me handle the controls, including a take off and landing at times. To these friends I am indebted.



Now I wanted to get back into flying but was not sure just how to do that. Buy, Rent, or What? And what kind of aircraft would be best for my kind of flying was also a consideration.

On February 24, 2013 I rejoined the Fault Line Flyers (FLF) glider club. I had been a member of the club years ago and had several friends that were still in the club. I needed a BFR, which I have heard is now simply called a Flight Review, before I could fly as Pilot in Command (PIC). The medical for glider flying is a relatively simple matter which I had previously taken care of. The FLF chief flight instructor was at the field and agreed to fly with me for the flight review in one of the club's Schweizer 2-33 two seat gliders. I had occasionally flown airplanes as mentioned

above but had not flown a glider in either free flight or on tow for too many years. Towing requires more skill but less critical decision making than free flight. All you really have to do when on tow is follow the tow plane, easier said than done.

I was concerned about my towing skills and it was time to be tested. I signaled for takeoff and the glider began to move forward. Takeoff was normal. The glider takes off first and is flown near the ground until the tow plane takes off. I was able to keep the tow plane in front of the glider and near the horizon. So far things were going well. After release I did the usual training maneuvers and area familiarization. The dirt strip is rather hard to find from several miles away as it blends in well with the surrounding ranch land. The instructor pointed out key features in the landscape to look for.

Now for the landing. I entered the pattern at the correct altitude and position and made a surprisingly good landing. It is actually easier to land a glider than to land an airplane. You just have to make sure that you do not come up short. Gliders approach the runway from higher than needed altitude and kill the extra altitude with the spoilers. Half spoilers work best. Use the spoilers like a throttle and it works fine. If high, pull back on the spoiler handle and if low, push forward on the spoiler handle just like you would do with the throttle in

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BACK IN THE SADDLE (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 8)

an airplane. The actual touchdown is similar to a wheel landing with a tail dragger but easier because the single wheel is very close to the CG of the glider.

Two additional pattern tows and landings completed the required flying for the Flight Review. For the Flight Review using a glider, you have the option of one hour of flight time or three flights of any duration. Then I had one hour of ground school, again with the club chief flight instructor. This brought me all up to date with requirements for the Flight Review. Of course this all must be satisfactory to the flight instructor.

After the Flight Review, I took the glider up solo for about a 30 minute flight that included a 600 foot climb. Now a 600 foot climb is certainly not a significant climb but after not flying gliders for many years and in the wintertime, it was good. Sitting there alone in the glider at 3000 feet after the climb, it felt great. I was home.

Since that day I have had many additional flights of longer duration and higher altitudes. I am working to regain the proficiency I had years ago. During the hot summer months the soaring was great. I have had several good flights in both the 2 seat trainer and the smaller Schweizer 1-26 single seat sailplane. Recently I flew for almost 4 hours and climbed to 9600 feet altitude. FYI, my release altitude was 2000 feet AGL or 3150 MSL. I am having a great time flying and am looking forward to many more good flights.

I'm back in the saddle again.

**NOVEMBER MYSTERY PLANE REVEALED**

Doug Apsey

No one guessed our November mystery plane, but it was a tough one since it is so rare. It's the Alexander Bullet built in the 1920's by the Alexander Aircraft Company. Located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, the Alexander Aircraft Company was only in business from about 1925 to 1932 but for a brief time was considered one of the largest aircraft manufacturers in the world. The company was best known for the



Alexander Eaglerock biplane, building 893 of them between 1926 and 1932.

Born in an era of open cockpit biplanes,

the low-wing monoplane Bullet was ahead of its time with its enclosed four passenger cabin and retractable landing gear. It first flew in February of 1929 and was a popular transcontinental racer in its day. Unfortunately, or fortunately depending on how you look at it, only 11 Bullets were built before the company went bankrupt in the early 1930's. The Bullet was prone to flat spins with four of the eleven crashing due to this trait. Two of these occurred during spin testing by the factory with test pilots at the controls.

Various models of the Bullet were powered by either the Wright J-6 Whirlwind engine or the Kinner K-5 engines. Construction was typical of that era with steel tube fuselage and wood wing both covered in fabric. Wingspan was 38 ½ feet and it had a maximum speed of around 130 mph. The gear folded back into the wing which may have contributed to its poor spin characteristics since the center of gravity was shifted back when the gear was retracted.

The Bullet was designed by none other than Al Mooney who went to work for Alexander Aircraft Company at the age of 19 and became their chief engineer in 1928. Mr. Mooney was also responsible for some of the design upgrades to the company's most successful aircraft, the Eaglerock biplane. Some of the features such as the hand operated retractable gear that Mooney designed for the Bullet were carried over to many of Mooney's later designs such as the Culver Cadet, the Mooney Mite and the M20 series of Mooneys.



HONDO VETERANS DAY ACTIVITIES

Steve Jones

November 10th, Hondo, Texas

Last mission of the year – an important milestone. This represents the culmination of a year's worth of preparation and hard work to keep Texas Raiders in the air and on the circuit. But it's just a milestone – a marker to note in passing. After the crew has celebrated this achievement with song and high-fives, dinner and drink, the mission continues. The away crew notes the new squawks and adds them to the 'bitch board' so the maintenance crew can look into them over winter maintenance:

Squawk: Number 3 engine missing

Resolution: After short search, number 3 engine found inside number 3 nacelle

What keeps Texas Raiders in the air? Love. Well, time. Money, too. We exchange our productive time amongst ourselves using money. When you think of it, it takes a lot of time, offered up by a lot of like-minded people, to keep TR flying. From the maintenance crew, to the flight crew, the PX, ride coordinators, wing staff, right on down the line to every passenger who puts down their hard-earned money to join us on a Living Heritage flight, we're all giving our time to make this happen. It's awe-inspiring and something to reflect upon as we pass this milestone. For all the unsung heroes in this endeavor, none get less billing than our passengers. Something to consider, the next time we're herding cats, and trying to get TR off the ground on schedule:

<http://vimeo.com/26828021>

It's an honor to be numbered among the crew who tend to TR and make this all happen. To see TR thunder into view, or rumble off into the fading twilight is reward enough, but there's so much more. The hair stands up in the back of your neck as the landing gear winds up into the nacelles, at the thought of the grim determination of so many young men taking the fight to the enemy, in what could easily be their last flight. It stands again, when a veteran stops for a moment during a ground tour and relates his own experience in this, or that campaign. Add to that, the smiles on our passenger's faces as they move about, exploring this airborne fortress and taking in the experience; the dance of the floor beneath their feet as four Wright 1820-97 engines pull them with authority through the air; and the smell of power as those engines sling fuel, oil, fire and propellers to make it happen. Wow. Reward enough.

Then there's the camaraderie. Like our armed forces today, this unit is an all-volunteer force of citizen professionals. Each crew forms like Minutemen to take a mission, and they perform it with pride. And so we come to the Hondo mission. Freda and I were blessed to be selected to crew on this, the last mission of the year, and her first as a CAF Colonel.

Arrival: We timed our departure from San Antonio to coincide with the arrival of Texas Raiders, and couldn't have worked the math more perfectly. At about 2 miles from Hondo Airport, Freda exclaimed "There she is!" as TR passed overhead just to the south of our position. We pulled up to the terminal, dismantled our fantastic plastic Saturn and were on the ramp in time to see it taxi into view.

EVERYONE in the terminal building stopped what they were doing, and filed out to watch it taxi past. TR has that effect, wherever it goes.

Something spontaneous happened while offloading the luggage – everyone formed a bucket brigade between the plane and the van. The luggage went hand-to-hand, person-to-person and it went very smoothly. That might be worth doing again.

TR wasn't on the ground ten minutes before Mike Bell, his staff, and anyone with a spare hand turned to setting up the PX. Sales were brisk, with toys and .50 calibre bullets flying off the table. And, with gross receipts of \$1,514, you can see how this positively impacts TR operations. Freda likes to meet and greet everyone, which makes her quite an asset for the PX. As seen in Nancy Smith's photo, even parrots aren't immune to her charm.

Media flight: Grey. Low overcast. Mist and rain. It looked like the Media Flight would be poorly attended. The passenger manifest was not filling very quickly as departure time approached. We took this opportunity to join a veteran and survivor of the Pearl Harbor attack on the ramp as he related stories and impressions from his time on the island. So enrapt were we by his experiences, we scarcely noticed more cameras and portable audio recorders showing up around him. The media had arrived. This gentleman, whose name escapes me, apologized for his condition – bound to his wheelchair, and struggling to

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HONDO CONTINUED

(Continued from page 10)

control his Parkinson's disease -- and went on. What courage, and dignity, to face down his ultimate challenge, and dismiss it with a joke! There's history here on a personal level and a lesson in character that you seldom get from books or movies. Three veterans joined us for the media flight, and the rest of the plane was filled to capacity with appreciative reporters, including an active duty Air Force Airman from the 3rd Combat Camera Squadron. On his return, he related "I'm at a loss for words, how do you describe an experience like that?"

Event Overflight: Jane Copeland had a surprise in store for Freda. As the passenger manifest came together, Freda found herself listed for her first ride aboard TR, and what a ride it would be! Freda joined Haeke (pronounced "Hike'-ah") in the nose. Heake is a Texan now, and was a child in Berlin during the Airlift. She was asked how she got to Texas. "I married a Texan!" she said. She related her experiences as a youngster during the war, and remembered retiring to bomb shelters day after day, as B-17s delivered their ultimatum from above. Even then, she noted, most Germans bore no ill will toward the Americans. They understood the evil that resided among them, and knew it had to be eradicated. She personally remembered the Candy Bomber, dropping goodies by parachute during the Airlift. At such a tender age, she knew the planes of the Airlift were their only hope. She was honored to be here to witness the candy drop. It was hard to keep a dry eye, watching this unfold before her.

Flight Impressions. From her vantage in the navigator's position, Freda noted what so many have said before, "it really drove home the remarkable courage those men displayed, climbing into this bomber and flying straight into the face of death." Freda made another observation as she looked out the port and starboard sides. She looked at those Wright engines and the propellers in flight, and said, "Oh, this is cool!"

Support: Don Woodham, John and Kay Gibeau, Paul and Wendy Bigelow and the rest of the Tex Hill Wing went the extra mile on this visit. Wherever, and whenever they could be of service, they were there with information, transportation, and even lunch. Those local to the Hondo area remember Evelyn's Flight Line Café. As TR was preparing for the Heritage Flight, Evelyn rolled up with the Airport Manager to take in Engine Start. Evelyn's frail body betrays her age, but she doesn't let that stop her. She's young at heart, and a staunch supporter of the flying community. She thinks the world of us; it's easy to think the world of her.

Heritage Flight: The Nancinator did what she does. Against all odds, at a sparsely attended event, she filled the 3:00 flight. I watched her in action, and was just awestruck by her tenacity, energy, and charm. My wallet has a visceral fear of her. I notice from the passengers disembarking from other Heritage Flights, that none of them feels shortchanged on their return to the ground. Nancy never oversells the experience. I can't relate impressions from this particular flight though because just as



TR was taxiing off for the 3:00 flight, I was...

Kidnapped! Jake White is the chief mechanic for the C-47 'Spirit of Hondo' and friend of 'Bluebonnet Belle'. As TR was taxiing off, Jake found me and implored that I follow him. Little did I know what was transpiring. I was be-

ing kidnapped! Just backing candy Spirit of to be yet.

from four outstanding passes, dropping over the airport, Hondo wasn't ready put in the barn, just



Jake grabbed Gulf Coast Wing members, Tex Hill Wing members, EAA Chapter 35 members, and parents and singers from the Children's choir, and filled the C-47 for another aerial tour of Hondo. On our return to Hondo Airport we saw a delightful scene - TR was just taxiing into parking position on the ramp. She's a majestic airplane, from any vantage point.

The view of the interior of the C-47 cannot compare to the B-17. This wonderfully historic aircraft was built to move passengers and cargo. It excels at this mission, but to do so, it has to be an unremarkable metal tube on the inside. So let's look outside: Two Wright R-1830 Twin Wasp radial engines under those beautifully sculpted nacelles, sleek polished aluminum, swept leading edge, and the Medina County countryside sliding by beneath us, as we explore the upper bounds of this misty ceiling. I imagined what this ride must have been like as our American



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HONDO VETERANS DAY ACTIVITIES

(Continued from page 11)

paratroopers prepared to jump on D-Day. I asked, and Jake pointed to the static line at the top of the cabin. "We're ready," he noted.

Preload: The tarmac cleared quickly as dusk approached. Soon, there were just a couple of C-47s, TR, and Chuck Fisher's Navion active on the ramp. Chuck excused himself and taxied over to the fuel pumps to gas up for the flight home. As he fueled, a large, ominous overwhelming force of power and fear bore down upon him. TR was next in line for fuel. No pressure.

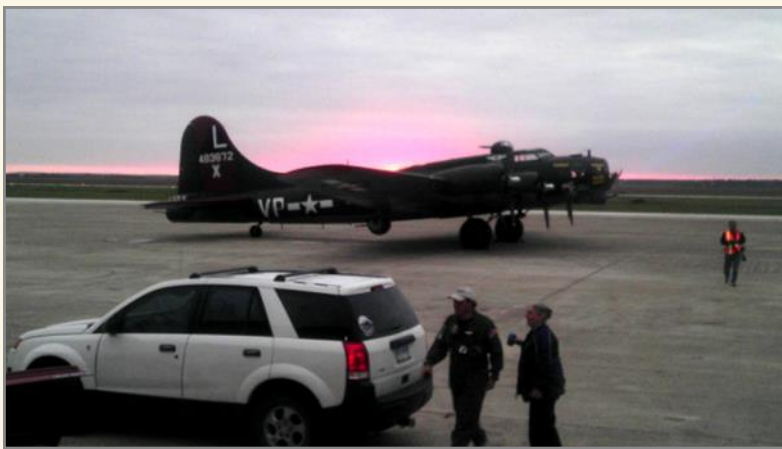
Once fueled, TR returned to the parking position on the ramp, and the crew began uploading PX items, signs and cones. This goes on almost autonomously, and anyone without an upload task tends to the next important duty: debrief. Evidently, this can't occur without the presence of 'debrief fluid'. Several folks dispatched to points north and east to bring this about. It was about here, that Ole remarked, "I've lost control, haven't I?" In a sense, I'd say he didn't. Just refer to that 'herding cats' video. From our vantage, the sun was just breaking through the low ceiling, on the way to a pretty sunset. I wish I could do justice to the scene. You'll have to imagine how it looked from this cellphone snapshot.

Folks, I'd like to take a moment here to honor some incredible veterans. While we were fueling Texas Raiders here in Hondo, a very special group was meeting to honor their own mission and their fallen. The last four of the Tokyo Raiders determined it was time to open General Jimmy Doolittle's bottle of 1896 Hennessy Cognac and toast their final toast. Three heroes were well enough to make the journey to the USAF Air Power museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, and raise their goblets in honor of their comrades. They honor us.

Dinner: The staff of the Buckhorn Saloon Steakhouse and Mexican Restaurant put on a brave face as three CAF units descended upon it. Tex Hill Wing, Gulf Coast Wing, and Highland Lakes Squadron all but took over the place, squeezing patrons and regulars to the four corners. I have to say staff and patrons alike demonstrated outstanding grace under fire, as folks like

Rick Baker, Laser McKonkey, John Gibeau and Len Root claimed this corner of D'Hanis in the name of the Commemorative Air Force.

Entertainment was provided by Mike Carr, morning DJ for KCWM AM 1460, and David Halverson, of the Lonestar Statesmen. From the first song of the evening, to the last set, it was clear these gentlemen musicians knew how to party, and really appreciated the CAF. They did a rendition of Asleep at the



Wheels' 'Miles and Miles of Texas' that just about swooned Freda off her feet.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NguGPTabB4>

Survivor Party: No mission is complete until the crew retires to a safe place to honor the recently fallen. And after enough debrief fluid, there's plenty of falling to be had. So, the crew gathered around the

hotel pool, because, well, they're danger junkies. No pictures. What goes in Hondo, stays in Hondo. No, really. I mean that. Honestly, though, there was plenty of history to be learned and laughs to be had as folks recounted their experiences on past missions. From beginning to end, the camaraderie and esprit de corps equaled anything I've encountered in military operations. This is a special group.

Why do we do what we do? I have an idea, but I could bend your ear for the next hour and never get the point across. Sometimes a picture does a better job. Let's see if Sleeping Dog Productions captured it:

<http://www.sleepingdogtv.com/reel/Aviation-Demo-Reel.aspx>

<http://www.sleepingdogtv.com/reel/Uncle-Jack.aspx>

Thanks, everyone for an outstanding season. I'm looking forward to next year.

Steve Jones - Loadmaster

Steve Jones is EAA Chapter 35 Vice President-elect. Members who would like to participate in the preservation of historic aircraft through the Commemorative Air Force have several options in the South Texas area. See <http://commemorativeairforce.org> for details

HOW AN AIRPLANE WILL FIND YOU WHEN YOU REALLY NEED ONE

A STORY OF LOVE AND FATE

Doug Jenkins

I thought long and hard before I decided to write this article. You see, I have a longstanding aversion to seeing my name in print, tooting my own horn, etc. It just seems a tad egotistical to assume that someone would want to read anything I have to say. However, since I do enjoy reading magazines and gaining insight and information from them I was faced with a logical disconnect...if everybody felt the same way and nobody wrote articles, how would there be magazines to enjoy and learn from? Given this conundrum, I decided that I would, indeed, write a short piece...on two conditions. First it was not going to be about me; it was going to be about an airplane, an idea, and an awesome wife and family. Second, if, after I finished it, I decided it was no good, I would just delete it. Well, here it is...

I need to get some stuff about me out of the way up-front so that the rest of this story will make sense. Sorry. I am a recently retired Air Force pilot. During my career I flew (this is not bragging, just scene-setting) the C-21A (a Lear 35), the T-38 Talon, the T-6A Texan II, the MC-12W (a King Air 350 ER) and the F-15C Eagle. Even before I joined the USAF I paid my way through college teaching aerobatics in a Bellanca Decathlon. The common theme here is that I like pulling Gs and flying upside down. Way back in 1984, I bought a 1946 Taylorcraft BC-12D, which I still own and love. Unfortunately, she does not enjoy pulling Gs and flying upside down. As retirement from the USAF inched closer this difference between myself and my Taylorcraft, needless to say, presented a problem (but I just said it...oh well...this is why I don't write for a living).

To summarize, the problem was this:

- When I left the Air Force I would no longer have the very generous American tax payers financing my flying (thank you!).

- My one and only airplane, which is great for the sheer fun of being off the ground, was incapable of scratching a very serious aerobatic itch that the Air Force had scratched for years.



- If I stayed in the Air Force they were likely going to send me somewhere I didn't want to go...like back to Afghanistan; which finally brings us to the start of our story.

Does that make everything up to this point a prologue? Can a magazine article have a prologue?

How does every great flying story start? So, there I was (wait, this wasn't going to be about me!) on a dark and stormy night in Afghanistan. Here's where it gets different: I wasn't flying; I was sitting Ops Sup. "Ops Sup" is the term for the poor soul who sits at a desk for three days and watches everyone else go fly until it's finally someone else's turn to be the Ops Sup. Theoretically, the Ops Sup fills a very important, even indispensable, role. In reality, I was just answering phones and making sure all the missions were moving on track. Twelve hours of sheer boredom, noon to midnight, for three days.

If any Air Force Communications people are reading the rest of this article, please avert your eyes and plug your ears at this point. Not that plugging your ears would do any good, I guess, so just go ahead and avert your eyes. As we have already established (I think), I was bored. In my boredom, I visited a website, whose name might rhyme with barnstormers.com. You see, I had always planned on buying an aerobatic mount when I had enough money and retirement was imminent... so it seemed like a prudent use of my time to see what the market was charging for a decent airplane. I had mentally budgeted around \$50-\$75K for a capable steed. Those figures were well outside the realm of my current means, so I considered this an idle research project to pass the time. (Let me stress this point...I had NO intention of buying another airplane any time soon. I intended to finish my time in Afghanistan and go back to flying as an instructor in the T-6 at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio for as long as I could.) Sure enough I scrolled through Decathlons for \$50K, Pitts S2s for more than that, and some truly exotic airplanes I'd never even heard of that cost way more than any house I'd ever owned. It was shaping up to be a long and boring night. That's when, like a bolt from the blue, I saw her...

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LOVE AND FATE

(Continued from page 13)

Fate Point # 1. It was love at first sight. She spoke to me across the miles and through the ether. She said quite clearly (and I quote)...“You need me. I need you. I have much to teach you, and we will have many, many unbelievably fun experiences growing and learning together.” I almost fell out of my chair. I had never felt this way about an airplane (or any “thing” for that matter) before. When I first found the Taylorcraft in 1984 it was similar, but the black and white picture in Aero Trader (a picture I still have) lacked the impact that this airplane had on me. I had never seen so wonderful a collection of parts assembled into sheer perfection. This machine was quite possibly the most beautiful airplane I had ever gazed upon. I needed this airplane...and she needed me! I was terrified to keep scrolling down to the price. I just knew that there was no way that the perfect airplane for me was going to be within my reach. HOLY COW!!! ONLY \$27,000!! I CAN DO THAT! I think...maybe...possibly... I hope.

Much to my surprise there were several single-seat Pitts available under \$30K. I “watch listed” all of them, but none had the same impact, and I kept going back to her picture...not sure how, but knowing that I needed to have her.

Fate Point #2. Before going to Day 2 of Ops Sup I was Skyping (is that a word?) with my wife (is that a phrase I can use in a family magazine?). I casually mentioned that I had been looking at airplanes the night before and that I had found a few that were interesting. She seemed intrigued and asked about them. I said, “Let me show you some pictures,” and commenced to scroll through the “watch listed” airplanes. When I got to “her” picture, my wife...had exactly the same reaction I did! She immediately said, “That’s Daisy!” and just like that, the airplane had a name. Her first question, logically, was, “How much does she cost?” I replied, “He’s asking \$27,000, so maybe around \$25,000.” These were her next words, and they are burned into my brain forever: “That’s not so much. We should adopt her.” Yes, I realize that I am the luckiest man alive. And, yes, my wife is very much off the market. She is, however, available for airplane purchase consultations with other spouses.

Just like that I became a man on a mission! My job was to make Daisy ours.

Fate Point #3. Now I needed to find out if Daisy was even still available. She was! The two co-owners were exceedingly nice and more than willing to work with a potential buyer 7000

miles away. But there was the real problem... I was 7000 miles away with no way to look at the airplane. She was in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex area, and I was in Afghanistan. So my next e-mail was to a trusted IA back home in San Antonio to ask if he knew anyone in North Texas who could look at a Pitts for me. His answer: “No, but I’m going to be up there in two days anyway-- do you want me to look at the airplane?” You could have knocked me over with a feather. Here is the airplane of my dreams, my wife wants me to buy it, and a mechanic I trust “just happens” to be able to look her over. It was starting to look good for the home team! A flurry of e-mails ensued, and the owners and my mechanic were scheduled to meet ...two nerve-wracking days of hoping no one else wanted Daisy as badly as I did. As you can likely deduce by now, the pre-buy went fine with my IA telling me that I had found a strong, straight and well-built airplane and that I should go ahead with the purchase. A quick conversation with the owner (a small miracle of modern technology) and Daisy had new parents...or did she?

Fate Point #4. Into every fairy tale there enters a villain, an evil doer, a dragon, a malevolent presence. In this story that role will be played by a number of lending institutions who did all they could to spoil the happy ending. Bank #1’s tactic: we don’t loan on experimental aircraft. Bank #2’s excuse: we don’t loan on aircraft under \$30K. Bank #3’s gambit: we don’t loan on aerobatic aircraft. Finally, Bank #4 took my application and told me all was well; right up until, after four days of processing time...“we don’t loan on aerobatic or experimental aircraft.” What part of Pitts SiE was unclear to you four days ago? AARRGGGGHHH!!!

I sent an anguished e-mail to the seller letting him know that he should probably put Daisy back on the market, as I had exhausted every financing avenue I could possibly explore from 7000 miles away. I then sent an even more anguished e-mail to my wife telling her that, despite my best efforts, I had been unable to make Daisy ours. She was as disappointed as I was, maybe even more so. She did however insist that I not give up and she offered one more road to run down before throwing in the towel. In fact, she was quite insistent that the towel would never make an appearance in the ring because, well, she just knows things.

She knew, as I am sure you know that every fairy tale villain ends up being slain by a hero. In this story the role of the hero will be played by my parents. That’s right, my parents. My dad was aware of what was going on and had shared my hap-

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LOVE AND FATE

(Continued from page 14)

piness at the pending adoption of the new plane. As I reached the end of my rope he tied a new one and offered to lend me the money. After wrestling with my pride for about .69 seconds, I gratefully accepted and frantically e-mailed the seller with the news that \$ was on the way and PLEASE don't sell Daisy to anyone else. He assured me that the airplane would be mine and would be waiting for me when I got back to the States... in four months.

Fate Point #5. Now that I had found an airplane my wife and I loved, determined that she was in good condition and lined up financing from the other side of the world one final challenge remained...finding a home for our new child. My Taylorcraft lives in a hangar that could accommodate the Pitts as well, but just before I left the States the door developed issues that made regular use a bad idea and repairs were going to take time after I got back to the good old USA. It was time to turn to a brand new circle of friends to help me find Daisy a home. During the purchase process I had joined and subsequently found a lot of useful information on another website, whose name might be something like biplaneforum.com. Several members were from the San Antonio area and all were enthusiastic in the congratulations and quite welcoming to the group. At my request they quickly provided contact information for several local airports and individuals with hangars for rent. It soon became clear that finding Daisy a home was going to be an issue. Airport #1: year-long wait list. Airport #2: you must sign a 12-month lease up front. Airport #3: nothing available for rent...ever. Finally a new friend from biplane forum put me in touch with a guy at the airport that just happened to be nearest to my house anyway who just happened to have the only available hangar in San Antonio and who just happened to be happy with no long term commitment. OK then, sign me up! Now that Daisy had a home waiting for her, I just needed to get home myself!

There were some days over those last months in Afghanistan when I would get this silly grin on my face and think to myself "I own a Pitts...no really... I own a Pitts" I'm pretty sure the people around me wondered what was going on since not many folks in Afghanistan have silly grins on their faces. I spent most of those months reading, cover to cover, the IAC Tech Tips volumes and the Pitts Flight and Service Manuals, as well as any other information source I could round up. I am a big believer in being prepared.

Fate Point #6. Finally, we get to the first date. I likened the situation to a "Mail-Order Bride." Sure, she looked great in the pictures, but what would you find when you actually met for the first time? I'm getting ahead of myself, though, because before I could meet Daisy in person, I needed to make sure I could get a Pitts off of and back on to the ground in one piece. The nice people at the insurance agency were rather insistent on this point. So I found a Pitts S2B and a super qualified instructor in the San Antonio area and set up an appointment just two days after getting home. I was curious to see if all the "horror" stories were true. As any Pitts pilot can tell you...they're not. I found the S2B to be well mannered and honest...and a real blast. But, I wondered, what about Daisy? Would she be OK too?

My wife and I drove north up I-35 from San Antonio to Midlothian, just south of Dallas three days after I got home from Afghanistan to collect our new family member. I was giddy as a school-girl the whole trip up, and my wife was happy, too. She knew that Daisy was the key to my happiness and sanity (and, therefore, her happiness and sanity) once I left the Air Force. She is quick to tell people that she can always tell when I haven't been off of the ground in awhile. Apparently, and this is according to her, so consider the source...I get a little grumpy!

When the hangar doors opened and we finally met Daisy face-to-face, we both knew instantly that we had done the right thing! Daisy looked every bit as good as her pictures. After a thorough briefing from the soon to be former owner, it was time to fly her back south to San Antonio while my faithful and indulgent spouse drove home solo.

The very first time I settled into Daisy's cockpit, I felt comfortable and "home." The first takeoff was a rush, and the awesome climb left me exhilarated. Flying an open-cockpit biplane agreed with me from the word go. We enjoyed a wonderful trip home and an uneventful landing back at the new home 'drome.

Just as when I first met my wife, it was as if Daisy and I had always known each other. I have yet to feel uncomfortable in Daisy's one and only seat. She does exactly what I ask and expect her to do. In return, I do not ask her to do anything we are not capable of doing.

She does have much to teach me, and I am just beginning to learn, but owning an airplane that flies exactly like I always wanted an airplane to fly is an unbelievable experience. When

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LOVE AND FATE

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I was a kid, dreaming of being a pilot, I knew what I expected flying to be like. Over the thirty-plus years I have actually been a pilot I have been searching for that dream experience. Well, now I have it! No machine I have ever flown before is as responsive, powerful, graceful, and as beautiful as this one.

Having this wonderful creature available made the decision to retire from the Air Force, after 22 awesome years, a lot easier and I was able to find an Air Force Simulator Instructor job in San Antonio, get hired and retire before the USAF could do their worst to me (again).

One idle night sitting Ops Sup in Afghanistan changed the course of my life. I heard Daisy call, I answered her call, I shared my dream with my wife, she fell in love too, the stars aligned to assure me that buying a new airplane was the right thing to do, my courageous wife convinced me to persevere when money seemed impossible to find, my parents threw me a lifeline, we found a home for Daisy and when we finally met it was as we had known each other forever.

This brings us to the end of THIS story, but not THE story. If there is a moral or a point to these ramblings it is this...listen to your inner voice and allow yourself to feel when fate is steering you in a particular direction. So many of us are so



lost in the noise of day-to-day life that we no longer hear that inner voice of delight and wonder, and we miss fate shouting at us "here, right here, is what you need right now!" It would have been easy for me to miss that voice altogether or to use any number of excuses; "I can't really afford this," or "Maybe later," or "Maybe when I have more money," or "No one wants to lend me the money I need, so I should just give up." Truth be told, I can't afford this, I should have waited, later never gets here, and I almost did give up...only a brave and deter-

mined wife and a generous set of parents kept me going.

But I am unbelievably happy, at this very moment, just knowing that Daisy is out at the hangar patiently awaiting our next adventure, our next practice of the Sportsman sequence.

That happiness pales in comparison to the sheer joy that erupts when my

left hand moves forward, and we charge down the runway and claw our way skyward, together, learning, growing, doing.

If you haven't already...find your Daisy...or let her find you.

Doug Jenkins is the president of the San Antonio area chapter of the International Aerobatics Club. This article, he tells me, will be published in Sport Aerobatics. It is reprinted here with his permission. If you are looking for a "Daisy" or would like to learn aerobatics, please contact Doug at

bagsf15@yahoo.com



CONGRATULATIONS MAARTEN VERSTEEG



Congratulations to Maarten Versteeg!

After 7 years of construction, Maarten flew his Zenith CH-601, featured in the September 2013 issue of *Runway 35*, on its maiden flight just prior to the November meeting. Maarten transitioned quickly from his left yoke/right throttle ways to his new stick and throttle arrangement and has been a regular fixture in the pattern most evenings since. He has a very thorough test program laid out, but near as we can tell the plane and pilot are getting along just fine!



THE BUILDER'S CORNER

REVERTED RUBBER AND SOFT AIRFIELD OPERATIONS

Mark Julicher

I'll indulge myself a little bit this month as I write about operations instead of maintenance. Once in a while my CFI side just can't help waxing pedantic, so just cut me some slack and read on.

Reverted Rubber

The exact processes for making rubber are closely guarded secrets akin to alchemy and magic. It is highly unlikely the Goodyear, Firestone, Michelin or Lord chemists will tell you how they do what they do. However, the gist of the procedure is to mix synthetic rubber, sulfur, and carbon black into a homogeneous mixture, extrude it into a desired shape, and then vulcanize it. If you heat a tire under the right circumstances, the rubber compound reverts to its component parts.

In the case of aviation tires, the right circumstances are to land on a wet runway and brake heavily. Heat from tire friction with the runway generates steam and the steam attacks the rubber. If this situation is allowed to persist, (we are talking only a few seconds here), you find yourself travelling down the runway on "eraser crumbs" with a coefficient of friction of about zero. This is known as reverted rubber hydroplaning.

The bad news is that reverted rubber hydroplaning causes nil braking action. Good news is that the tire will burn through and blow out very quickly and the airplane stops rather quickly on blown tires flapping about on the wheel rims. At that time, if the plane is still on the runway it will require high power to taxi.

The following photo shows a rather rare event where rubber tire just started to revert when the pilot relaxed brake pressure. Close call!

To avoid reverted rubber hydroplaning the pilot should touch down on speed, allow the aircraft to touch down firmly so the tire will spin up and not hydroplane. Go lightly on the brakes and use the full length of the runway. Note that if the runway has significant standing water or puddles, a tire may fully hydroplane losing all tire contact with the pavement. In this case there will not be any steam generated and no rubber reversion. Unfortunately, the tire also brakes to a complete stop whilst hydroplaning in this manner and when the air-

craft exits the deep water the fully braked tire will blow very quickly. So, take your feet off of the brakes when you encounter a puddle!

There is a lot of literature about hydroplaning so don't take my words here to be the full story – just a starting point to get educated. And remember the old adage; don't fly anywhere that your brain has not been ten minutes earlier.

Soft Field Operations

Now that we have warmed up with a bit about hydroplaning, lets move on to another slippery subject: soft field takeoff and landing.

There are various types of soft field, but during flight training they all get lumped into one category. Unfortunately, most neophyte aviators never actually experience a soft field before they earn their certificate.

Soft fields include mud, snow, sand, unprepared fields, and sometimes grass. As a rule of thumb, if you leave ruts while taxiing, the field is soft. Grass fields are not necessarily soft fields. In fact, a grass field in South Texas in August is likely to be as hard as concrete. Occasionally you encounter a grass field that has been leveled and manicured like a putting green. It might be soft or it might not, but more

often in these parts we encounter sod landing fields that are very rough. [Rule of Thumb: If you could not ride a bicycle across the field without bouncing your posterior black and blue, it is a rough field and should be treated like a soft field.]

Snow is a whole 'nother animal. Even if underlying surface is pavement or frozen ground, snow can cause appreciable drag on the landing gear and therefore soft field techniques are required. A Piper Tomahawk or a Cessna 150 will not depart from a runway covered with 4 to 5 inches of snow unless soft field techniques are used to raise the nose gear and reduce drag.

Mud is treacherous in its own way. Mud may support the weight of a rolling aircraft and then let it sink up to the axles as it stops. The center of a crowned runway might be perfectly fine to land on while the runway edges are bogs. Be wary.

Here is something to think about... when you operate on mud, slush, snow, grass; how much of it is thrown up onto your wings, fuselage, etc. Did your brakes just freeze solid

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Reverted Rubber Due to Hard Braking on a Wet Runway

BUILDERS CORNER (CONTINUED)

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from compacted mud or slush? Did ice just freeze your retractable gear in the up position? Hmmm. Maybe a few cycles on the landing gear and a few actuations of the brake pedals would be prudent during climb out.

What exactly is the game plan for operating on soft surfaces? Easy! Get the airplane up and down safely – and don't break it. That's all ya gotta do. The primary consideration is to make the wing lift the plane as early as possible on take off and lower the plane as light as a feather on landing. For a nose wheel airplane, put the elevator full up as you apply take-off power. Force the nose wheel to rise off the ground - but - keep the nose tire one inch off the surface until the plane becomes airborne. Naturally this takes finesse and means that you are continuously relaxing back pressure as the plane gains speed. Don't bang the tail on the ground and don't allow the nose wheel to plow. Plowing will delay the takeoff and possibly break the nose gear. Once airborne, stay in ground effect until safe climb speed is attained. The proficient pilot should easily be able to hold eighteen inches of altitude while accelerating. I always wanted to put the curb feelers from a '54 Studebaker onto my plane to help with holding this altitude, but I could never get a field approval.

Landing with a nose wheel is logically the opposite. Touchdown lightly. For some airplanes this may mean carrying a touch of power all the way to touchdown. No problem! This is a soft field not a short field. (If it is a soft AND short field what are you doing there?) Hold the nose wheel off as long as possible. Don't touch the brakes! On a genuine loblolly mud hole airport, you may have to carry power and sort of skitter the nose wheel all the way back to parking. Perhaps we can coin the term mudroplaning? The game is to use wing lift as much as practicable and keep the relatively delicate nose gear from absorbing serious punishment.

Soft field takeoff with a conventional gear is a bit different. Here the game plan is still to transfer lift to the wings as early as possible, but hauling back on the controls will force the tail wheel into the ooze and slow you down. Instead, begin with close to neutral elevator and let the tail wheel lift just a bit. Don't allow the tail to rise much or the plane could nose over! Just allow the tail up out of the sticky goop. Hold tail low and lift off as early as possible – again using ground effect while accelerating.

Landing the tail dragger requires a light touch down. Some pi-

lots use a power-on wheel landing and perhaps even an intentional skip to test the surface before they commit to landing.



<http://www.aerolaskaoutfitters.com/IMGPoog4.JPG>

Really soft surfaces will grab your wheels and grab your attention at the same time. A finessed tail-low wheel landing carrying a touch of power is a good technique if you can do it without crow hopping. Otherwise, make a light, three-point touchdown and expect to need full up elevator early in the roll out.

Some airplanes were never intended to use soft fields. A five-inch main gear tire is going to be trouble on a rough surface and terrible on mud. Wheel pants are a liability because mud and snow can pack up inside them and seize the tire. Airplanes with spindly landing gear should

stay away from soft or rough surfaces. Finally, if you operate on soft and rough fields routinely you should keep an eye out for cracks in sheet metal, foreign objects lodged in brake discs, and holes poked in fabric.

Mark Julicher is an EAA technical advisor and frequent contributor to this newsletter for which the editor is immensely grateful. He can usually be found at Bulverde Airpark and would love to help you with your technical issues. His contact information is in the back of this Newsletter



OOF! From Chuck Cluck

A mother and her young son were flying Southwest Airlines from Kansas City to Chicago.

The little boy had been looking out of the window. He turned to his mother and asked, "If big dogs have baby dogs, and big cats have baby cats, why don't big planes have baby planes?"

The stunned mother couldn't think of an answer. So, she told her son to ask the flight attendant.

The boy went down the aisle and asked the flight attendant, "If big dogs have baby dogs, and big cats have baby cats, why don't big planes have baby planes?"

The busy flight attendant smiled and asked the boy, "Did your mother tell you to ask me?"

The boy replied, "Yes, she did."

"Well", said the flight attendant, "you go and tell your mother that there are no baby planes, because Southwest always pulls out on time. Have your mother explain that to you."



Country Store

Brian Goode

The Fishing Shirt program is doing great. We will be inventorying some shirts for those desiring to purchase later and they will be on display at future meetings and events.

These shirts are a cotton/poly blend with lots of pockets in which to keep your phone, pens, pencils and glasses handy during your flying experiences. They are available in many colors and all of the standard men's and ladies' sizes, both short and long sleeves. The prices are \$39.00 for the short sleeved ones and \$43.00 for long sleeves. If you would like to order shirts outside of the regular meetings, please contact June or Brian Goode at 210-688-0420 or stop by our hangar, #53 on 8T8.

We have come up with yet another small program that will ben-

efit members as well as Chapter 35. We are now able to provide you with some of the WASH WAX ALL aircraft care products. The benefit to the members is that the product will help keep your aircraft, boat or motorhome clean and shiny. The benefit to the Chapter is a little commission on each sale, while holding the price to the same level as all of the other outlets who sell the products. In addition, you don't have to drive to town to shop. We will have a supply of the cleaner and the degreaser on hand at all times. See the Catalogue for details.

In addition, we have an opportunity to offer "Airplane Aprons" which are made by a little old gal on her little old sewing machine one apron at a time, for \$19.95 each. If there is enough interest, we will order some for the store.

EAA CHAPTER 35 CATALOGUE

Fishing Shirts with Chapter 35 logo	Short Sleeve	\$39.00
	Long Sleeve	43.00
Chapter 35 Baseball caps		10.00
Mesh Chapter 35 Caps		5.00
Chapter 35 sew on patches		3.00
Bumper Stickers		2.00
Aluminum Wheel Chocks – Set of four		42.00
Wash Wax All cleaner/wax:	16 oz.	9.95
	Gal.	27.95
Wash Wax All Degreaser:	16 oz.	9.95
	Gal.	27.95
Wash Wax MOP: Includes pole and pad		99.95
Extra pads (four)		29.95
Aero Scrubbers (5 pads)		28.95
Airplane Apron		19.95



2012 EAA Chapter 35 Contacts List



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Board Advisor 210-889-0664	John Killian jmkillian@gmail.com		

The FINE PRINT: Please note that, as always, in the past, present, or future, any communication issued by the Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 35, regardless of form, format, and/or media used, which includes, but is not limited to this newsletter and audio/video recordings, any digital formats including any EAA Chapter 35 website, is presented solely for the purpose of providing a clearinghouse of ideas, opinions, and personal accounts. Anyone using the aforementioned does so at their own risk. Therefore, no responsibility or liability is expressed or implied and you are without recourse to anyone. Any event announced and/or listed herein is done as a matter of information only and does not constitute approval, control, involvement, sponsorship or direction or any event local or otherwise.

CHAPTER CALENDAR

DECEMBER	14	 <p style="font-size: 2em; color: red; font-weight: bold;">EAA 35 Holiday Luncheon</p>	<p>EAA Chapter 35 Clubhouse Social Hour 12:00 pm Lunch 12:30 pm Gift Exchange 1:30 to 3:00 pm</p>
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Upcoming Events (200 mi of 8T8)

Aviation Calendar of Events websites

- Aero Vents <http://AeroVents.com>
- EAA <http://www.eaa.org/calendar>
- Fly-ins <http://www.flyins.com>
- Fun Places <http://funplacestofly.com>

14 Dec 1200
Bulverde Airpark
Thompson Aviation Fly-in BBQ.

EAA 35 Members at REKLAW (courtesy Nelson Amen)



AIR ACADEMY NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

For 2014 the Chapter has again decided to sponsor a candidate to the EAA Air Academy in Oshkosh. The candidate we are looking for should be between 16 and 18 years old and will be visiting the Air Academy from July 22 to 30 2014.

The Chapter will pay the travel and camp fees (including room and board), and give one selected candidate the opportunity to learn more about aviation and airplane construction and as a bonus visit the Air Venture in Oshkosh. In a group of about 50 campers the candidate will learn about Airplanes, Navigation, Weather and Practical airplane construction techniques in wood, composite and aluminum. And as said the last two days of the Air Academy coincide with the EAA AirVenture where he or she has the opportunity see the thousands of visiting airplanes there.

An interested candidate will need to provide a letter describing him or herself and why he or she should be next years candidate. He will also have to present a recommendation letter from an EAA Chapter 35 member. Possibly the Chapter 35 board may want to talk to the candidate before it makes its decision.

If you know a high school student that matches the above criteria and is interested in aviation ask him or her to apply. Applications should be received by the chapter before the February meeting (second Saturday in February).

For more information look online at: <http://www.youngeagles.org/programs/airacademy/> or contact the Chapter 35 Air Academy point of contact at: (210)-256-8972 or maarten.versteeg@sbcglobal.net



WANTED AND FOR SALE

NEW HANGARS FOR RENT @SAN GERONIMO AIRPARK

Available soon - construction is almost complete. 40 FT. Wide x 32 FT. Deep Reserve one now by contacting either: Brian



Goode (210)-688-0420 (727)-709-1159 n9785b@gmail.com or Ron O'Dea (210)-488-5088 r2av8r@gmail.com (expires Mar 2014)

HANGAR SPACE FOR RENT (8T8): T-hangar (30A) available for rent. Contact. Doc Hecker. 210-391-1072. (expires Mar 2014)

FOR SALE: Hangar at Boerne Stage Airfield, 5C1. 30' x 40', elevated office and storage, shop, storeroom, and, toilet. Airport fee \$540 per year, includes water, trash disposal and runway access. See at HangarHunter.com



Contact Bill Bartlett 210-865-4591 Email: bartlettsat@gmail.com (expires Mar 2014)

Airpark Property For Sale: One acre lot at San Geronimo Airpark. Water and electricity, buyer installs septic. Plenty of shade on this treed lot with large open area for hangar. Asking \$109K, contact Gary at (210) 722-2977 or gary@zwheelz.com (expires Mar 2014)

For Sale small aircraft / LSA trailer. Constructed for my Star-Lite, has a cradle for the mains, ramps, and a box for the wings. Used many times from garage to airport, and also for the 4600 mile trip to Texas. About \$450 in materials. Yours for \$150. 1 7/8 inch ball. In my hangar at 8T8. (expires Mar 2014)



To post an ad—contact the editor at eea35news@gmail.com.

- You must be an EAA 35 member.
- Ads will run for 3 Months from the last date you re-verify that the item is still for sale. If I do not hear from you the ad will be deleted
- PLEASE Notify me when your item sells!!
- You must contact the editor by e-mail or phone to extend your ad beyond the expiration date

NAME THE PLANE

Doug Apsey

This month's mystery plane is brought to you by Chapter 35 member Brian Goode. Brian and June came across this bird at Wm. J. Fox Airfield in Lancaster, CA on their recent trip around North America.

Who will be the first to tell me:



What company built it?

What country does it come from?

What is its designation? i.e. C-172, PA-24, etc.

Within 5 years, what year did it first fly?

NEW MEMBERS

Chapter 35 Continues to grow! Please welcome:

Stanley and Gayle Timmerman

Stanley and Gayle traveled from Austin, TX! to join us. Stan is a retired Engineer who is interested in computers, electronics, beekeeping and AIRPLANES!

Contact Stan: stimmerman@austin.rr.com

Nick Leonard

Nick who lives in Pipe Creek, is a past member of Chapter 35 and serious airplane builder. Welcome back Stan. He is currently building a Corby Starlet, about 80% complete. He is currently restoring a minicab GY-20. Just got the AW Certificate. Nick has also restored SHK-1, Dormoy Bathtub (??), Isaacs Fury, Marske Monarch and others. Nick is a Private Pilot as well as an A&P



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The Official Newsletter of EAA
Chapter 35, San Antonio, TX

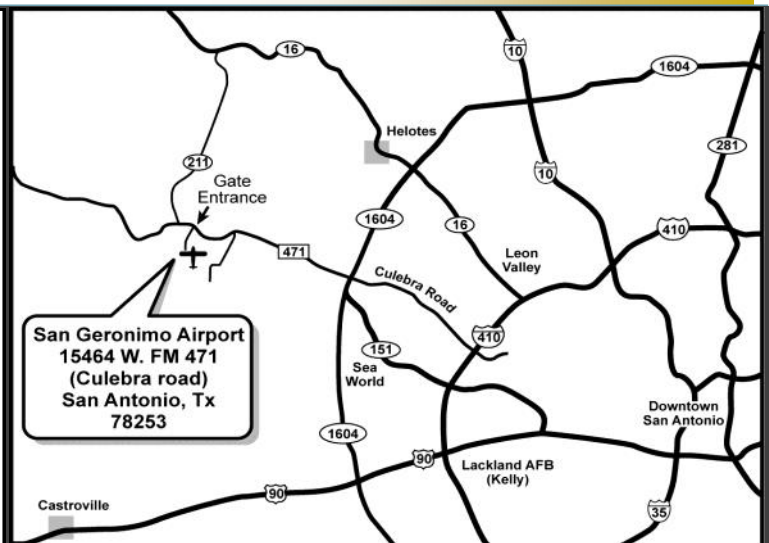
*Chapter 35 meets
Each Second Saturday of the Month*

EAA Annual Holiday Luncheon

**14 December
1200 Noon**

Reservations Required NLT 10 December

EAA Chapter 35 Clubhouse



EAA Chapter 35 is part of the worldwide network of EAA chapters. EAA embodies the spirit of aviation through the world's most engaged community of aviation enthusiasts. EAA's 170,000 plus members enjoy the fun and camaraderie of sharing their passion for flying, building and restoring recreational aircraft. Our clubhouse and building facilities are located at San Geronimo Airpark (8T8) located off FM 471 (Culebra Rd) West of San Antonio.

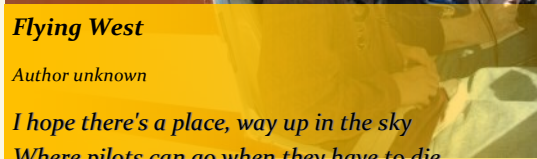
For over 50 years Chapter 35 has represented aviators of creativity who share a passion for flying. Come join us!

Runway 35 OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF EAA CHAPTER 35 – SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

www.35.eaachapter.org

Farewell Brad Doppelt

In November we bade farewell to our friend Brad Doppelt. Brad was humble, and not much for mugging for photos. But he was always there to help or lead when needed. Below are a few photos we dredged out of the archives that captured him in action.



Flying West

Author unknown

*I hope there's a place, way up in the sky
Where pilots can go when they have to die.
A place where a guy could buy a cold beer
For a friend and a comrade whose memory is dear.
A place where no doctor or lawyer could tread,
Nor a management-type would e'ler be caught dead!
Just a quaint little place, kind of dark, full of smoke,
Where they like to sing loud, and love a good joke.
The kind of a place that a lady could go
And feel safe and secure by the men she would know.*



*There must be a place where old pilots go,
When their wings become heavy, when their airspeed gets low,
Where the whiskey is old, and the women are young,
And songs about flying and dying are sung.
Where you'd see all the fellows who'd 'flown west' before,
And they'd call out your name, as you came through the door,
Who would buy you a drink, if your thirst should be bad,
And relate to the others, "He was quite a good lad!"*



*And there, through the mist, you'd spot an old guy
You had not seen in years, though he'd taught you to fly.
He'd nod his old head, and grin ear to ear
And say, "Welcome, my Son, I'm proud that you're here!
For this is the place where true flyers come
When the battles are over, and the wars have been won.
They've come here at last, to be safe and alone,
From the government clerk, and the management clone;
Politicians and lawyers, the Feds, and the noise,
Where all hours are happy, and these good ol' boys
Can relax with a cool one, and a well deserved rest!
This is Heaven, my Son. You've passed your last test!"*

