



The Hagerstown Homebuilder

chapters.eaa.org/EAA36 Hagerstown, MD

Vol. 32 No. 2

February

2023



EAA CHAPTER 36

February 2023

CONTENTS

Cover Page
Chapter Officers
President's Corner
Chapter News
Chapter Dues
Scholarships
Aviation News
Upcoming EAA Webinars
Scholarship Update
25 Years Ago Today
Members' Pages

Published by
EAA Chapter 36
Hagerstown, MD
chapters.eaa.org/EAA36

The contents of The Hagerstown Homebuilder are solely the viewpoints of the authors. No claim is made and no liability is assumed, expressed or implied as to the technical accuracy or safety of the material, opinions and/or views presented. The viewpoints expressed are not necessarily those of EAA Chapter 36 or the Experimental Aircraft Association.

2023-24 OFFICERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

2023-24 OFFICERS AND SUPPORT STAFF	
President: Ray Franze raymond.franze@gmail.com	Vice-President: Gary Keller garylkeller261@gmail.com
Secretary: Dean Popio dmpopio@gmail.com	Treasurer: Dean Popio dmpopio@gmail.com
Young Eagles Coordinator: Curtis Berry cberry@myactv.net	Tech Counselor - Flight Advisor: Gary Hartle g.hartle@comcast.net
Webmaster: Carl Thornwall thorn@myactv.net	Newsletter Editors: The Thornwall Family thorn@myactv.net
Board of Directors:	
Jim Marsden jim.mindy@myactv.net	Joe Boyle joeboyle1@myactv.net
Elizabeth Thornwall	Austin Colby austin@colbytech.com
	Dave Anderson

→→→ **Our next general membership meeting will be held February 7th** →→→

The President's Corner



Thanks again to PIA for hosting our January chapter gathering where we had three scholarships to present. Madison Richardson, our Ray Aviation Scholarship recipient, received \$10,000 for flight training. Rebecca Waring and Savannah Gibson, both students at PIA here in Hagerstown, received \$3,500 each—with funds derived from the Walter Green Memorial Scholarship for local PIA students, and the Richard Shoup Memorial Scholarships for aviation education. Congratulations to our recent winners! We look forward to following their successes as they embark on their journeys. If my math is correct, EAA Chapter 36 has awarded \$47,500 in scholarship funds since May 2019.

Don't forget to pay your 2023 local chapter dues. Our local dues structure remains unchanged. One-year, three-year and lifetime membership options are available. See further below in the newsletter for additional information. And before you ask—yes—we require U.S., non-crypto, currency. 😊

We have several active surveys available for members to complete. You can find the links further down in the newsletter as well as your email account's Inbox.

The first is a general chapter survey that encompasses many things but primarily focuses on the direction of the chapter. Your feedback is important to help us take stock of where we are as a chapter, where we want to go, and how we're going to get there together. Help me focus our resources on activities that we feel are important to us and want to make

available to our membership and the community. A sincere "Thank You!" to the 12 members who have completed the survey at this point. With a membership base surpassing 60 members, I hope we will see at least 30 survey responses prior to the end of March.

Another survey we have is centered around organized chapter flyouts. The survey is open to anyone interested in taking part in flyouts—from pilots who plan to fly to non-pilots who would like to tag along as passengers. Tell us where you might like to go. I realize many members may not be interested in the flyouts, so it's understandable the responses for this survey will be lower. And sure, we can plan a flyout schedule without input from anyone else, but I would prefer to see the interested stakeholders help shape the planned destinations.

Lastly, we have a survey open to solicit votes for our upcoming awards banquet. This survey is important and deserves your attention. This survey isn't my doing—it predates my time with the chapter. I just made it available as a Google Doc. The Hale Andrews Award goes to the Chapter MVP, and the Chapter 36 Award is saved for the second-place finisher. Other awards include the Blue Max Award for someone who completed an aircraft build and flown the requisite hours, and Phoenix Award for someone who restored an aircraft—brought it back to life. I'm open to ideas for other awards—but hurry up with those ideas as time isn't on our side. As for the location, date and time of our awards banquet—I hope to have more information for you in the near future.

I am interested to hear if anyone attended the Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association's annual banquet. The invitation was very thoughtful. And a guest speaker to speak about the James Webb Space Telescope sounds like a very exciting evening.

In summation, pay your dues, take the surveys, and until next time

Safe skies!

Chapter 36

News and Events

Take the EAA Chapter 36 surveys at the links below:

EAA Chapter 36 General Survey

[EAA Chapter 36 General Survey](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1c43xfHfVWyGJfvpFOWHXi1sT6bv-SGjE9oHviZRa2jA)

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1c43xfHfVWyGJfvpFOWHXi1sT6bv-SGjE9oHviZRa2jA>

2022 Awards (for banquet presentations)

[2022 Chapter Awards](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1joGhLgg6RdVET98np9R-xSnj4YRjrI57f9ay8ZXJ720)

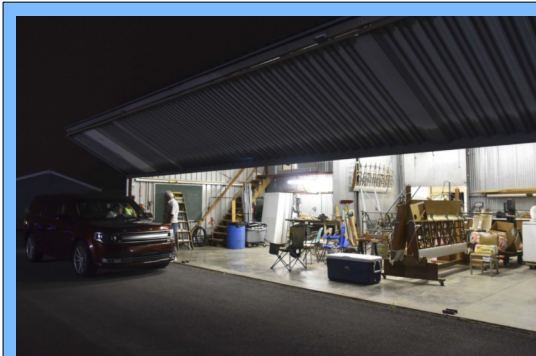
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1joGhLgg6RdVET98np9R-xSnj4YRjrI57f9ay8ZXJ720>

Flyout Interest/Destinations

[Chapter Flyouts survey](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1xCjh3Y6zrek7VbVsXYinCb-G8zfnyJSrL9gNcF6aONE)

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1xCjh3Y6zrek7VbVsXYinCb-G8zfnyJSrL9gNcF6aONE>

Current Fuel Prices		
as of January 26, 2022		
Airport	SS	FS
Hagerstown	\$6.75	\$7.50
Frederick		\$7.50
Martinsburg	\$6.39	\$6.79
Winchester	\$5.89	\$6.29
Cumberland		\$6.55
Carroll County	\$6.65	\$7.45
www.airnav.com		



Weekly Build Nights at the Chapter 36 Hangar,
Monday nights at 7 p.m.

February



Chapter Meeting

Monthly chapter meeting on Tuesday, February 7th, 7:00 p.m. at the Hagerstown Aviation Museum hangar.

\$ Chapter Membership Dues \$

Current:

Individual - \$30
Individual (3) - \$75*

Family - \$40
Family (3) - \$105*

Lifetime (I) - \$350
Lifetime (F) - \$500

Honorary – Free

**(3) = three-year membership*

What does local chapter membership support?

- PIA scholarship fund
- Youth flight training scholarship
- Youth RC project
- Young Eagles events
- Pancake breakfasts
- EAA national chapter dues & insurance
- Young Eagles Workshops
- Movie Nights
- Technical Counselor access for member build projects
- Flight Advisor access for member build projects
- Flyouts and other social events
- Member accomplishment celebrations
- Pedal Plane projects
- EAA youth camp sponsorships
- Banquet Awards
- VMC/IMC Club events
- Build project aircraft and supplies
- Hangar rent and utilities to support activities
- Tools and Accessories
- Machinery
- Online seminars
- Speaker presentations
- Volunteer opportunities
- Host annual Poker Run
- Marketing / Promotional activities

List may include activities that are proposed but not presently active

Dues are payable:

By cash, check or credit card at any of our events

By mail – send cash, check or money order to:

EAA CHAPTER 36
18515 Henson Blvd Hangar 6A
Hagerstown Regional Airport
Hagerstown, MD 21742

Scholarship Presentation

2023 Ray Aviation Scholar:
Madison Richardson.



PIA Scholarship Recipient:
Savannah Gibson.



PIA Scholarship Recipient:
Rebecca Waring



Aviation News:

EAA Celebrates 70 Years of Sharing The Spirit of Aviation

<https://www.eaa.org/ea/news-and-publications/ea-news-and-aviation-news/news/ea-celebrates-70-years>

Accidental File Deletion Led to NOTAM Crash, FAA Says

<https://www.flyingmag.com/accidental-file-deletion-led-to-notam-crash-faa-says/>

An Airplane That No Longer Wanted to Fly
<https://airfactsjournal.com/2023/01/an-airplane-that-no-longer-wanted-to-fly/>

Opinion: System Awareness

Be aware of your aircraft's systems, too

<https://www.aopa.org/news-and-media/all-news/2022/december/pilot/savvy-maintenance-system-awareness>

Top Air Show Performers Commit to EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2023

<https://www.eaa.org/airventure/ea-airventure-news-and-multimedia/ea-airventure-news/ea-airventure-oshkosh/airventure-2023-air-show-performers-confirmed>

Alton Bay Ice Runway Operations Canceled for 2023

<https://www.aopa.org/news-and-media/all-news/2023/january/24/alton-bay-ice-runway-operations-canceled-for-2023>

Air Force Museum: 100 Years and Counting

<https://generalaviationnews.com/2023/01/12/air-force-museum-100-years-and-counting/>

Seeing Possibility in the Impossible

<https://www.flyingmag.com/seeing-possibility-in-the-impossible/>

Training and Safety Tip: Startled Response

<https://www.aopa.org/news-and-media/all-news/2023/january/03/training-and-safety-tip-startled-response>

Behind the Scenes of an Airline Meltdown

<https://airfactsjournal.com/2023/01/behind-the-scenes-of-an-airline-meltdown/>

EWVRAA Looking Forward to New Year

https://www.journal-news.net/journal-news/ewvraa-looking-forward-to-new-year/article_32088a55-f681-54b3-abf3-4b2c8c62f11a.html

Pilot Career Earnings Top \$13M, According to Flight School

<https://www.flyingmag.com/pilot-career-earnings-top-13m-according-to-flight-school/>

We're Getting the Lead Out, Aviation Groups Say
<https://www.flyingmag.com/get-the-lead-out-aviation-groups-say/>

The Four Steps Of Spin Recovery, Explained

<https://www.boldmethod.com/learn-to-fly/maneuvers/the-four-steps-of-spin-recovery-explained-pare-recovery/>

Announcing the 2023 Richard Collins Writing Prize for Young Pilots

<https://airfactsjournal.com/2023/01/announcing-the-2023-richard-collins-writing-prize-for-young-pilots/>

Cold Temperature Engine Starts

Do's and don'ts

<https://www.aopa.org/news-and-media/all-news/2023/january/24/training-and-safety-tip-cold-temperature-engine-starts>

The Hardest IFR Quiz You'll Take This Week

<https://www.boldmethod.com/blog/quizzes/2022/01/the-hardest-ifr-quiz-you-will-take-this-week-six-questions/>

FedEx Retires Heavy Hauler with History

Last of the MD-10 fleet, including N306FE

<https://www.aopa.org/news-and-media/all-news/2023/january/24/fedex-retires-heavy-hauler-with-history>

FAA Extending Aircraft Registration to 7 Years

<https://www.flyingmag.com/faa-extending-aircraft-registration-to-7-years/>

X-Plane 12.0 Turns IFR Practice Into Homework

<https://www.flyingmag.com/x-plane-12-0-turns-ifr-practice-into-homework/>

Upcoming EAA Webinars

Full list: <https://www.eaa.org/ea/news-and-publications/ea-webinars>

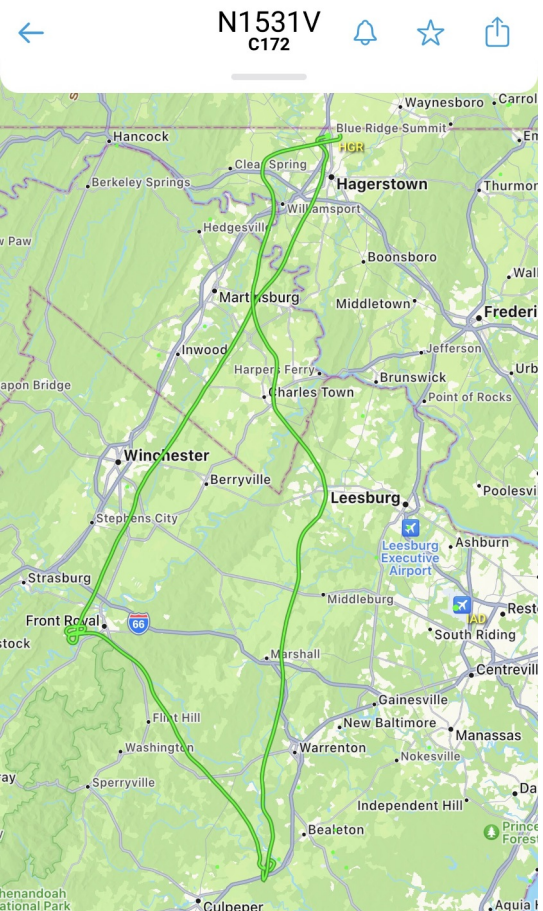
Date	Time	Title	Presenter(s)
2/1/23	7 p.m. CST	<u>Obsessed With EGT</u> Qualifies for FAA WINGS and AMT credit.	Mike Busch <i>Many pilots have been taught -- and many POHs recommend -- leaning by reference to EGT, e.g. 50 degrees F rich of peak (ROP) or 25 degrees F lean of peak (LOP). Most digital engine monitors have a fancy "lean-find mode" designed to assist pilots in doing so. In this webinar, engine expert Mike Busch explains why this is a bad practice that can adversely affect your engine's longevity. He explains why it's better for your engine's health to lean by reference to CHT and fuel flow (FF). Mike believes that EGT is great for troubleshooting but not for leaning, and he explains why.</i>
2/2/23	7 p.m. CST	<u>Become a Better Chapter Leader – Secretary - Treasurer 2023</u> Chapters Training Series	John Egan and Charlie Becker <i>hapters staff John Egan and Charlie Becker provide insights on the necessary tasks associated with the secretary and treasurer positions within EAA chapters, as well as tips on chapter management and critical due dates for chapter-related events.</i>
2/7/23	7 p.m. CST	<u>Sonex High Wing Aircraft Update</u> Homebuilders Webinar Series.	Mark Schaible <i>Mark Schaible of Sonex Aircraft will give a progress update of the new Sonex High Wing aircraft model. See the latest regarding the High Wing's design and prototyping progress in anticipation of the aircraft's debut at AirVenture 2023 and learn more about the new aircraft's planned design features!</i>
2/8/23	7 p.m. CST	<u>Is Your Airplane Airworthy?</u> Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.	Larry Bothe <i>Learn how to quickly determine if any light airplane is legally airworthy, and what to do if it isn't. Larry Bothe will cover certificates and documents, required inspections, airworthiness directives, and have a look at some logbook entries. Ferry permits and placarding inoperative items will be discussed. Finally, the four most likely un-airworthy conditions will be presented.</i>
2/9/23	7 p.m. CST	<u>Donations and Contributions to Chapters</u>	Patti Arthur <i>Tax attorney Patti Arthur discusses the legalities, tax benefits, and the potential pitfalls when accepting donations of cash or property. She will discuss donations of completed aircraft, as well as partially built or unbuilt kit aircraft.</i>
2/14/23	7 p.m. CST	<u>Neil Loving and his WR-1 "Loving's Love"</u> Museum Webinar Series	Chris Henry & Ben Page <i>Neil Loving worked hard to overcome obstacles in life. Join Chris Henry and Ben Page for an evening dedicated to the life of this great homebuilder and man, who made a name for himself as an aeronautical engineer and air racer.</i>

Ray Aviation Scholarship Update: Madison Richardson

Throughout the month of January I wasn't able to fly much as weather and schedules weren't lining up. However, we did do one flight on a day it was particularly windy to KMRB where we tackled landings and pattern work in 20 knot crosswinds. That opened my eyes on how much you truly have to play with the rudders and yoke when landing and keep control of the aircraft no matter what.




Madison also logged her 1st 154 NM dual Cross Country on 12/29 (KGHR-KFRR-KCJR-KHGR) and was also cleared through the Bravo all the while logging some foggie time.



KMRB TAF 2h 51m ago
22 nm SW of KHGR

141235Z 1413/1512 33014G19KT P6SM -SHSN OVC026
 FM141400 33017G25KT P6SM OVC028
 FM141700 33018G27KT P6SM OVC035
 FM150000 32016G23KT P6SM SCT035
 FM150700 32012G19KT P6SM FEW040



[Forecast Discussion](#)



Marginal VFR 31m ago

METAR KHGR 141453Z 33012KT 10SM OVC024 M01/M06 A298
 RMK AQ2 SLP161 T10061061 53021

Time	9:53 AM EST
Wind	330° at 12 kts
Visibility	10 sm
Clouds (AGL)	Overcast 2,400'
Temperature	-1°C (30°F)
Dewpoint	-6°C (21°F)
Altimeter	29.96 inHg
Humidity	69%

25 Years Ago Today – February 3, 1998

Thanks to Jay Kanagy

The regular monthly meeting of the Hagerstown Chapter 36, EAA, Inc. was held in the meeting room at Hagerstown Aircraft Services (formally Alphin's) located at the Washington County Regional Airport on Tuesday, February 3, 1998. The meeting was called to order by Dean Truax pinch hitting for the absent acting President, Ken Bercaw, and Robert Scott, Vice-President, at 7:30 P.M. with twenty members and guests present. Dean welcomed everybody and said he would do the best he could.

The Operating Committee and Board of Directors will meet in the EAA Hangar Lounge, February 24, at 7:30 P.M.

Tonight's program is on riveting.

BUSINESS MEETING:

The Newsletter policy will remain the same for members – dues not paid by March, no more Newsletters. There being no questions, corrections or additions, the January Minutes were accepted as recorded.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PROJECTS:

It was announced that there was an insert on Young Eagles in 'Sport Aviation'. Robert Enterline, Ken Bercaw, and Jack Raun were listed for flying ten young Eagles in '97.

Min-Max – Don Wilson reported it is coming along rapidly. May be completely built in the next six months. A Fly-In Meeting was held recently at Dean's.

Dates: September 19, 20 – Potomac Fly-In and Young Eagles;

Chamberfest – July 18-19. And Hagerstown Fly-in and Young Eagles in June.

The member's brainstormed an hour to make these events better and more appealing. More suggestions were: displays, antique cars and engines. One suggestion is to put out flyers earlier and listing all three events- Dean Truax will again be the Chairman for Potomac '98. Need a Chairman for the June event in Hagerstown.

It was proposed to hold a family fly-in picnic and fun event at Green's Landing this year.

Kent Mitchell asked Bill Wright to be the liaison between the EAA and the Fairchild Museum and if they could move the "Goose" over to the future Museum site. Don Wilson moved to accept Bill Wright as our liaison and loan the 'Goose' for display at the site, seconded by Dick Carbaugh and the motion carried. Walter reminded the members that if they have borrowed anything from the tool crib, please return when finished using them. He can't find any c-clamps and wrenches. Need them for the Chapter project. Please lock the tool crib when leaving. Walter also asked if anyone has seen his prop balancer – it is still missing.

PROGRAM:

Jack Raun presented an excellent program on rivets uses. Paper is included in this issue about the rivets. Dean thanked Jack for his presentation..

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Submitted by June Green

A note from Jay Kanagy:

All monthly minutes and/or chapter information from 1997 until early 2020 has be archived, along with all newsletters from August 2006 up to the present. Any member wishing to view any past history item can contact Greg, our newsletter editor, or myself, and we would be happy to oblige. Hard copy newsletters, and minutes are being stored in the file cabinet at our hangar. Special recognition must go to Sandy and Mark Hissey for past minutes and information, also to Betty Wright for minutes, and Jack Raun for past newsletters. All members cooperation in this matter, has been, and is greatly appreciated. Thank You!

Members' Pages

Andrew Russell

Back To College!

My first semester at The University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, ND, did not go well. My roommate and I did not get along, he enjoyed staying up all night playing video games. I tried sticking it out for the full semester but found a roommate that suits me better and moved in with him. We are still roommates this semester too.

Healthwise I ended up with a virus that left me having problems breathing, a friend (who is a first year nursing student) insisted on driving me to the hospital emergency room. There I spent two nights in the ER before they released me back to the dorm. A month later I went back to the ER but was released that night. When I got home for Christmas break my mom took me to a specialist and he ran me through four tests over three weeks and gave me a good bill of health.

Now for some good news. I have made some great friends here and was invited to one's house for Thanksgiving. There we went skating on the lake and Greek life is big here and most have nice big homes near the campus. I have joined Phi Delta Theta and my "big Brother" is a junior in the aviation program. He is helping to guide me on what classes to take and in what sequence to take them. Another "Brother" talked to my Mom to tell her what winter clothing I needed so she could get my Christmas shopping done! My plan this year is to live in the fraternity house this summer and get a few classes and flight hours in.



Tony Vallillo – Part 2, Section 1

Silver Argosy

Low and Slow across America!

By the time that all was in place to make the purchase of N112T possible, it was well into October of 1996. Summer was over, and so was the summer weather across a direct route from Independence Oregon to Connecticut. As I began the process of flight planning for the Silver Argosy, my first decision revolved around whether to fly at all!

Weather conditions across the northern tier of the USA can be quite harsh even in late October. This year we have seen that illustrated rather starkly; indeed, the flight would not have been possible at all during parts of October and November of 2014! 1996, while perhaps a bit less chilly in October than 2014 has been, was by no means a benign year up north. As I contemplated crossing the Cascades and the Rockies in a two place single engine very light airplane with no heater (that's right – neither Dave's Skooter nor mine has a heater; Thorp lived in southern California, and heaters are apparently less of a necessity out there!), I was also face to face with the fact that the "baggage" area of the T-211, which is a small shelf like area behind the seat backs, could accommodate little in the way of emergency equipment beyond a whistle and a signal mirror. The prospect of crossing a thousand miles of snow covered semi-wilderness without much more than a book of matches was not enticing. Neither were the altitudes that I would have to maintain in order to avoid the terrain, nor the temperatures I might encounter at those altitudes.

A considerable amount of snow had already fallen by late October all along the western reaches of the most direct great circle route, which would have involved a whole day of flying over areas with as much as 5 feet of snow on the ground, particularly in the mountains. This was long before I had joined CAP, but although I did not know then how difficult it is to spot a small airplane down in snow I had enough sense to realize that for reasons of safety, to say nothing of comfort, the northern route would be a risk, even following the Interstate highway. In addition to crossing two mountain ranges, the northern great circle route would involve crossing Lake Michigan in much colder weather than had existed when I did it in the summer, and a portion of the route actually lay in Canada. Cutting the corner into the territory of our neighbor to the north is a routine event in jet flying, but in a small airplane it would probably involve landing somewhere in Canada, if for no other reason than to accommodate the fact that a heater is not all the SkySkooter lacks – it also has no lav!

A slight modification to the northern route would avoid the lake crossing and keep the flight entirely within the good 'ol US of A, but it would still mean days of flying in weather colder than I was willing to accept. I therefore began to cast about for an alternative.

One possible alternative would have been to ship the airplane by surface transportation rather than to fly it. I actually entertained this notion, at least to the point of inquiring of the owner how difficult it would be to have 112T shorn of her wings, the better to fit onto or into some sort of truck or other conveyance. It was not until I was assured that this would be difficult and costly in the extreme that I put the notion aside.

Another notion that I briefly entertained was to buy the airplane right away but leave it out in Oregon until late spring, when the climate along the direct route would be more manageable. This might have been possible,

since the owner had nothing else going into his attached hangar (he had the sort of living arrangement that every pilot would kill for – a house with an attached hangar on an airport!). But he indicated that he would have to charge me rent for the hangar, a reasonable proposition under the circumstances. Careful analysis of the cost led me to cast this alternative aside as well – there is no justification (then or now) for inflating the cost of airplane ownership one iota.

So I would fly, and I would fly soon. Now it would come down to just where would I fly? Of course I already knew where I wanted the airplane to end up. I had been warned by the owner that this polished-aluminum airplane absolutely needed a hangar. If it were to be left outside for even a week, it would look like an old lawn chair. So I investigated the local Connecticut airports to see if, by chance, there was any hangar space available.



Hangar space availability is the second dirty secret of general aviation (the first, you may recall, is how ridiculously expensive it is!). Most airports that even *have* hangars for small planes (not all do) have waiting lists that are decades long to actually obtain a rental on one. In this sort of lottery, it matters not whether you can afford it; and so, in perhaps the only such instance in aviation, the rich and the not-so-rich are on equal footing – first come first served. In no other field of human endeavor would such costly assets be housed outside, at the full mercy of the elements. We're talking about airplanes costing over half a million dollars sitting tied down outside in the rain and snow! I

certainly don't recall the last time I saw a Lamborghini parked outside for months at a time, but that's how things are in aviation, at least in many places.

Fortunately for me the farther you go from a major metropolitan area, the greater the chance you will find hangar space available. And so it was that I stumbled upon a hangar that was available at the airport at Meriden Connecticut, around 45 minutes from our house. In aviation terms, this is close by. I immediately secured a lease and the Skooter had a dry place to roost when the time came. Thus the ultimate terminus of my Silver Argosy would be KMMK.

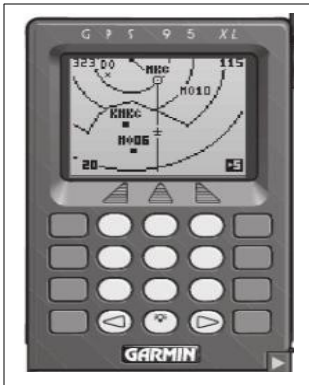
Planning a flight as long as this could take quite a while back in the day. Of course things are much easier now, with all of the many and varied apps for tablets that can do everything in a matter of seconds, even picking the cheapest fuel along the way and routing you to take best advantage of the low prices. But in late 1996 none of that existed. In fact, the concept of computer flight planning at any level below airline or corporate just did not exist. Or if it did, I was not privy to it! So I set about acquiring a bunch of paper charts, the better to peruse the choices of routing that might be available.

The climate pretty much dictated the overall plan of attack – the southern route, which would involve getting from Oregon down to the latitudes of Southern California, and crossing the continent in those balmy climes. I was already a devotee of the other meaning of IFR – I Follow Roads, so my first cut at looking things over was to examine a Rand McNally road atlas of the USA. Following the Interstate highway system makes a lot of sense, especially when you are transiting sparsely populated areas, and/or areas where opportunities for a successful forced landing are minimal. The Interstates are little ribbons of civilization across the wastelands, to say nothing of handy runways in the event of trouble. Looking at the atlas, it was obvious that Interstate 5 would provide a dandy thoroughfare for much of the first portion of the trip - the flight south that would precede the turn east.

Interstate 5, in that neck of the woods, runs south through Salem Oregon, just northeast of Independence, through the mountains that separate Oregon and northern California, and into the great Central Valley. It winds through a pass in the mountains and pretty much defines the best route. Once through the mountains and into

the Valley itself, other factors would come into play, and for that I turned to the aeronautical charts. I had initially bought three World Aeronautical Charts (WAC's) which, at 1 to 1,000,000 scale, cover twice as much ground as sectionals do. They are ideal for planning, and you can also actually use them for enroute navigation, provided the landmarks you will be looking for are really prominent – things like Interstate highways, or cities, or good sized lakes and the like. There was also the little matter of cost – three WAC's are cheaper than 7 or 8 sectionals.

Having chosen a general line of attack using the Rand McNally, I honed the route on the WAC's. Once south of the area of Mount Shasta there are many airspace issues, ranging from Class B's to Restricted Areas full of military pilots going Mach One plus with their hair on fire! Certainly I had no wish to mix it up with such as those, so lining up the actual route to be flown became much like planning to traverse a minefield of your own making. This aeronautical threading of needles was made more difficult by the fact that 112T did not have a transponder, nor would there be time (or money) to install one for the trip. Therefore, in addition to all of the military areas, I had to avoid Class B and Class C airspace as well.



Fortunately, in addition to my eyeballs on the charts I would have a portable GPS aboard, an early model called the Garmin 95. This was one of the first units with a moving map; and although crude in the extreme by today's standards, it did show the airspaces as well as the airports and the course line. So the needle threading work would be done using the Garmin, leaving the charts to be used as general orientation and backup to the magic.

I planned to turn the corner at the Tehachapi Pass, at the southern end of the Central Valley. I had no desire to mix it up with the air traffic in the LA area, nor could I have legally done so without the transponder, so instead of crossing the mountains into the LA basin I would turn left and traverse the Tehachapi. There would be some needle threading after that to avoid the restricted areas at Edwards AFB, which would have to be done with the Garmin since there were no conveniently aligned Interstates, but past that area things would get a bit simpler. I could pick up the Interstates again east of Palm Springs and pretty much follow the concrete compass.

Once established in the more hospitable southern latitudes, the trip eastward would weave its way south of Phoenix, so as to avoid the class Bravo there, and head toward Tucson, where the class Charlie would be easier to dodge. From there it would be a matter of keeping Interstate 10 in sight all the way to El Paso. Further east, once I reached the vicinity of Midland Texas, I could dispense with keeping to the Interstates, since the level of civilization below would increase to the point that a possible forced landing would not be a survival situation! Thus, from that point eastward, pretty much all the way to Connecticut, I could utilize the GPS and fly direct,



deviating only to avoid weather and airspace issues. There would still be DFW and Atlanta class B's to avoid, but that would be a simple matter of staying just south of DFW and north of Atlanta. Two additional fixed factors also dictated the route – I would plan to make overnight stops in Shreveport Louisiana and Winchester Virginia, where I had relatives. These stops would be in addition to others which were planned every 500 or so miles. I figured that 5 hours a day spent in the tiny confines of the T-211 cockpit would be enough (I was used to the more spacious Airbus A-300 at this point!).

An airplane that cruises at 100 knots makes for fairly simple flight planning. In the roughly two and one half hours that my physiological system can endure, I would travel 250nm in no wind conditions. Since a great deal of the flight would be flown with the letter "E" under the lubber line, I could anticipate tailwinds much of the time. However because this flight was being planned

several weeks ahead, it would be impossible to determine just how much tailwind would exist. Therefore, I decided to construct a very loose plan, one that would make for a good approximation but that would dispense with the fine details of what wind corrected course for what leg, and how much time and how much fuel exactly. The Skooter had a fuel gauge that was reported to be reasonably accurate, and I had no intention of going farther than 2.5 hours on any given leg, which was only a shade over half of the airplane's full fuel endurance, so there seemed to be little advantage in calculating everything down to the proverbial gnat's behind.

So it was that I prepared my charts in a manner that was of my own invention (although others, including Lindbergh, had developed similar methods over the years). Starting at Independence, I made marks on the chart perpendicular to my intended route of flight each 50nm. These marks I made long enough to accommodate a considerable left or right deviation from whatever the course line might be at the moment – Interstate 5 for the first portion of the flight. Thus I could keep a good track of my progress while being freed from a slavish captivity to a particular path across the ground. I had never tried this method before, but it worked very well on this flight.



Of course I had planned this argosy to be a solo endeavor, since there was at best but a single seat available for a “passenger”. This was actually the one part of the upcoming flight that I was not eagerly anticipating – the overwhelming majority of my flying over the years has been done with other people in the cockpit, and I anticipated that the many hours (it was looking like it would be around 40 hours, give or take) of solo time might well be both boring and lonely. Just at this point, however, an opportunity arose to have a copilot for the trip! The daughter of one of our best friends had just finished college and acquired a private pilot license. When she heard about my planned argosy she offered to join me at her own expense, the better to acquire some extra cross country flight time. After first consulting with She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed as to Her attitude toward having an attractive young woman accompany me most of the way across the country (Melanie would disembark at Chapel Hill North Carolina, about three quarters of the way to Connecticut and, fortuitously, right on the planned route) and receiving her enthusiastic approval (so confident was She in the fidelity of her spouse!!) I gave my assent, and could now look forward to having a real crew for this epic flight.



Melanie and I made our separate ways to Oregon on 30 October 1996, and met up at the Portland airport for the drive down to Independence. The following day, Halloween appropriately enough, I got my final checkout in the Skooter from the owner – takeoffs and landings, stalls and slow flight, and a full briefing on the workings of the simple machine, which included a late model LORAN (with which I was completely unfamiliar, but which I intended to use as a backup to the

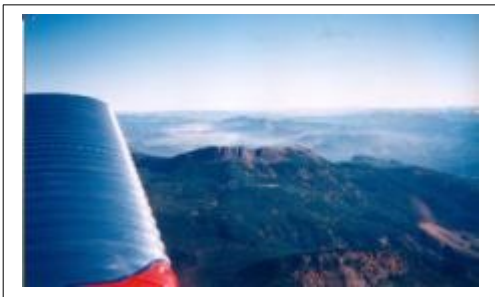
GPS). That having been done, I handed over a certified check for the amount we had agreed upon, arranged for insurance coverage, and mailed the bill of sale and change of registration form to the FAA. The airplane was now mine.

Bright and early the following day, 1 November, Melanie and I prepared to depart. A thorough weather briefing disclosed that the overall weather was superb all along the route, with the single exception of the valley that Independence sits in, which was afflicted with fog. This, however, would soon burn off and so we loaded up and gassed up, the better to be prepared to launch the moment that things improved. It was around noon when the weather cleared up, and after saying goodbye to the now-previous owner and running the simple checklists we launched off into the blue. We made one pass over the airport in salute and took up our southerly course to intercept Interstate 5.

The Skooter is a delight to fly, with excellent control response and reasonably light control forces. It is certainly no Pitts, but it is also certainly not a Cherokee regardless of its parentage of that line – the control forces in Cherokees are much heavier and the response less lively than the little Thorp. The controls are all operated by push rods instead of cables, resulting in a more precise and crisp feel than the typically loose and somewhat sloppy feel of the small Pipers and Cessna's. The bubble canopy gives the bird a jet fighter-like ambience, and the visibility is outstanding, just the thing for a long trek across America down low.



We took in the marvelous scenery of Oregon's central valley, with the small coast range on our right and the marine layer of fog still lingering along the coast. I once had a layover in Eugene Oregon, and rented a car on a bright sunny day to visit the beach, but an hour's drive away. Lo and behold, when I got past the coast range, the visibility dropped to zero as I encountered that marine layer, and the beach was a dreary place indeed; cool, clammy and uninviting.



Soon we approached the Eugene area. I had decided to cruise at 6500 feet, so we were well above the Class D airspace at the airport. But as we headed south toward the city we noticed a sudden shadow overtake us – an aluminum overcast above, composed of a United Boeing 737 also headed toward Eugene. I was thus reminded of the importance of watching for traffic in all quadrants, not just ahead; the more so since without a transponder we were essentially invisible to ATC.

South of Eugene the valley peters out into foothills and then real mountains. We followed Interstate 5 through the mountains, past Cottage Grove, Sutnerlin, Roseburg and Canyonville, Grant's Pass, Gold Hill and Medford. About every 30 miles or so there was a decent airport along the Interstate, and had we flown somewhat higher, perhaps around 10,000 feet we would rarely have been beyond reach of one or another of them, with or without the services of the little Continental O-200A chugging along up front! The scenery was spectacular. I had seen all of this from much higher aloft, of course, but the vistas we took in were everything I had imagined they would be in the days when I had gazed down from on high and dreamed of making the trip down low.



The surviving markings on the chart I used back then appear to indicate that we had planned to make our first stop at Rogue Valley Airport in Medford. I don't recall today why we overflew it, but I imagine that we had picked up a bit of a tailwind and were thus in no immediate need of either fuel or a pit stop. In any event, my logbook shows that we pressed on another 50 miles or so to the Montague Yreka airport, just south of the California border. Once south of Medford, the view was dominated by the incredible massif of Mount Shasta, and it was in the shadow of this great volcano that we made our first stop. Such was our satisfaction at having completed the first and most mountainous stretch of the route that we posed for a self congratulatory picture after the airplane had been topped off.

