



# The Hagerstown Homebuilder

[chapters.eaa.org/EAA36](http://chapters.eaa.org/EAA36) Hagerstown, MD

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# EAA CHAPTER 36

**March 2023**

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## 2023-24 OFFICERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

<b>2023-24 OFFICERS AND SUPPORT STAFF</b>	
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<b>Elizabeth Thornwall</b>	<b>Dave Anderson</b>

→→→ **Our Annual Chapter Awards Banquet will be held March 11th** →→→



## The President's Corner



Daylight is lingering a little bit longer these days, and it's about to get a welcomed adjustment soon. Daylight Savings Time occurs on Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>—when sunset changes from 6:13 pm the previous day to 7:14 pm in the evening. For the aviators in the chapter, don't forget to adjust your calculations as we will be four hours behind UTC opposed to five. I will try to remind everyone the evening of our banquet.

Speaking of the banquet, our chapter's annual awards banquet will be Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at the Parlor House in Waynesboro, Pa. We will gather at 5:00 pm, begin eating sometime around 5:30 pm and move onto the awards portion of the event. At the very least, we need those planning to attend to send your RSVPs to Gary Keller and Dean Popio so we have an accurate headcount to provide the restaurant by March 6<sup>th</sup>. An even better effort would be to also remit payment for the banquet in advance--\$25/individual or \$45/couple—to help Dean enjoy the evening opposed to playing banker at the event. Awards are being ordered, and we have some fun ones this year!

I want to thank Gary Keller, Dean Popio, Ken Jones, Sandy Hissey, and Jim Hauber for sacrificing a Saturday morning to perform an audit the Chapter's finances and ensure we're in good standing with the IRS and State of Maryland. While important work, I can think of many more enjoyable ways to spend a Saturday morning than auditing finances.

Additionally, I must thank Curtis Berry. We were approved for, and recently received, a \$6,500 Community Recovery Grant from Washington County. Curtis alerted me to the grant opportunity by

forwarding an email from the county. The grant is a helpful shot in the financial arm that mitigates our organization's inability to fundraise in 2020 and 2021; and a special thanks to Curtis for bringing it to my attention.

Recently, I requested training records from our current Ray Aviation Scholar, Madison Richardson to reconcile the invoice for her flight training. At the same time, I asked how the studying was coming along for the FAA Knowledge Test—a question I'm sure our scholars get tired of hearing as it's the least exciting aspect of flight training. What I didn't realize what Madison was flying under the radar—having already scheduled the FAA Knowledge Test, but keeping it a secret until after the fact. I am pleased to announce that Madison passed the exam. She has now completed two of the three required milestones. The last milestone is completion of the checkride which must wait until her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday in October. Her instructor assured me that if we didn't have to wait because of her age, she would be ready to pass the checkride within the coming weeks.

We received word from EAA that we were approved, once again, for another Ray Aviation Scholarship for flight training. Due to average costs to complete flight training, the scholarship award is increased up to \$11,000. The scholarship committee will discuss any refinements to the application process and we will establish a deadline for prospective scholars to submit their applications. Prospective scholars, their families, or members on their behalf, should contact me for the application packets. I was more optimistic this year that EAA would, once again, bless us with another flight training scholarship due to our continued success with the program.

The wheels are in motion to put together this year's guest speakers/feature presentations for our monthly chapter gatherings. Soon we will publish a Chapter Flyout schedule. I'm hoping to have a full schedule, finalized and ready to publish in the coming weeks. 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-SGjE9oHviZR2jA)

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1c43xfHfVWyGJfvpFOWHXi1sT6bv-SGjE9oHviZR2jA>

### 2022 Awards (for banquet presentations)

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

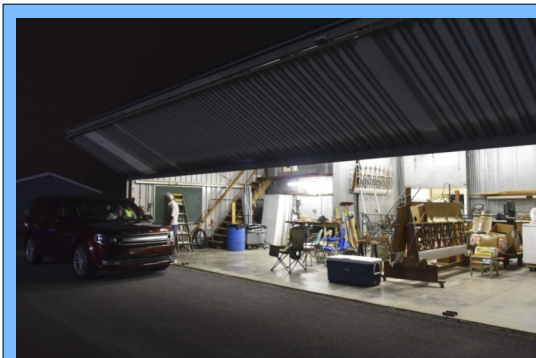
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1joGhLgg6RdVET98np9R-xSnj4YRjrI57f9ay8ZXJ720>

### Flyout Interest/Destinations

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

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

<b>Current Fuel Prices</b>		
as of February 23, 2022		
<b>Airport</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>FS</b>
Hagerstown	\$6.75	\$7.50
Frederick		\$7.50
Martinsburg	\$6.29	\$6.69
Winchester	<b>\$5.89</b>	<b>\$6.29</b>
Cumberland		\$6.55
Carroll County	\$6.90	\$7.45
<a href="http://www.airnav.com">www.airnav.com</a>		



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

## March



**Awards Banquet**

Annual Chapter Awards Banquet at the Parlor House in Waynesboro,  
PA on Saturday, March 11th at 5 p.m.

## \$ Chapter Membership Dues \$

### Current:

Individual - \$30	Family - \$40
Individual (3) - \$75*	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

Or online through PayPal at our website:

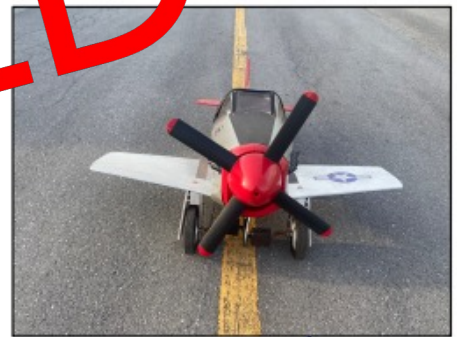
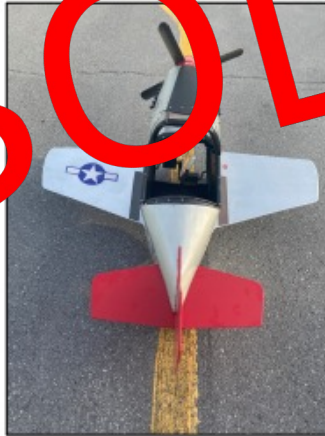
<https://chapters.eaa.org/ea36/membership>



# Pedal Planes for Sale

## North American P-51 Mustang

- ✓ Fresh Paint
- ✓ New Upholstery
- ✓ New Exhaust Stacks
- ✓ Always Hangared



~~\$750.~~

**SOLD**

## Bücker Bü Jungmeister

- ❖ German designed, American made
- ❖ Fresh from factory (EAA Chapter 36 Hangar)
- ❖ Zero-Time Airframe
- ❖ Zero-Time Engine



\$750.

Contact EAA Chapter 36 via FB Messenger or Email: [eea36khgr@gmail.com](mailto:eea36khgr@gmail.com)

*EAA Chapter 36 is a 501(c)(3) organization, proceeds benefit community programs*

## Aviation News:

### EAA Ray Aviation Scholarship Program Reaches 300 Pilots

<https://www.eaa.org/ea/news-and-publications/ea-news-and-aviation-news/news/ray-aviation-scholarship-program-reaches-300-pilots>

### FAA Rescinds LODA Requirement for Noncommercial Flight Training in Experimental Aircraft

<https://www.eaa.org/ea/news-and-publications/ea-news-and-aviation-news/news/faa-rescinds-loda-requirement-for-non-commercial-flight-training-in-experimental-aircraft>

### EAA Hosts Inaugural Learn to Fly Week in May

<https://generalaviationnews.com/2023/02/23/ea-hosts-inaugural-learn-to-fly-week-in-may/>

### Did USAF Shoot Down a Hobbyist Club Balloon?

<https://www.flyingmag.com/did-usaf-shoot-down-a-hobbyist-club-balloon/>

### Corsair Reunion Among the Warbirds Highlights at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2023

<https://www.eaa.org/airventure/ea-airventure-news-and-multimedia/ea-airventure-news/ea-airventure-oshkosh/corsair-reunion-at-airventure>

### Van's RV-15 Prototype Progressing Through Development

<https://www.flyingmag.com/vans-rv-15-prototype-progressing-through-development/>

### B-17 Begins Truck Trip Northward

<https://www.eaa.org/ea/news-and-publications/ea-news-and-aviation-news/news/b17-aluminum-overcast-heading-back-to-oshkosh>

### 10 Skills VFR Pilots Can Learn From IFR Pilots

<https://www.boldmethod.com/blog/lists/2023/02/10-skills-vfr-pilots-can-learn-from-ifr-pilots/>

### The Mooney 'Anomaly'

Owner orders paint in the blind

<https://www.aopa.org/news-and-media/all-news/2023/february/22/the-mooney-anomaly>

### FAA's New Rule Will Create mLSA

<https://generalaviationnews.com/2023/02/26/faas-new-rule-will-create-mlsa/>

### This Selfie above China's Balloon Was Taken over Missouri. Here's How We Know That

<https://www.npr.org/2023/02/23/1159007203/selfie-china-balloon-photo>

### Will This Perfect Day for Flying Go Unpunished?

<https://www.flyingmag.com/will-this-perfect-day-for-flying-go-unpunished/>

### "I'm Going to Crash!"

Helping a Pilot in Distress

<https://airfactsjournal.com/2023/02/im-going-to-crash-helping-a-pilot-in-distress/>

### As Fighter Jets Closed in on Chinese Balloon, Hobbyists Were Listening

<https://www.airforcetimes.com/news/your-air-force/2023/02/08/as-fighter-jets-closed-in-on-chinese-balloon-hobbyists-were-listening/>

### Flight Instructor Dies Mid Lap in Pattern at UK Airport

<https://www.flyingmag.com/flight-instructor-dies-mid-lap-in-pattern-at-uk-airport/>

### Continental Engine Issue Prompts Immediate AD

<https://www.aopa.org/news-and-media/all-news/2023/february/22/continental-engine-issue-prompts-immediate-ad>

### Restored Douglas A-26B Intruder Returns to the Sky

<https://www.flyingmag.com/restored-douglas-a-26b-intruder-returns-to-the-sky/>

### Mismanaging Hands Can Lead To Disaster

<https://airfactsjournal.com/2023/02/mismanaging-hands/>

### Mind Your Manners

<https://generalaviationnews.com/2023/02/15/mind-your-manners-2/>

## Upcoming EAA Webinars

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

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Presenter(s)</b>
3/1/23	7 p.m. CST	<a href="#"><u>A Matter of Trust</u></a> <b>Qualifies for FAA WINGS and AMT credit.</b>	Mike Busch <i>How far does your IA have to go to verify that your aircraft is airworthy? Can he or she rely on logbook entries made by other mechanics, or do they have to verify that all applicable ADs and other airworthiness requirements have been complied with by direct observation? In this webinar, maintenance expert Mike Busch relates the story of a diligent and well-intentioned IA who told a Citabria owner that his engine would need to be torn down to verify AD compliance, and how he worked with the owner and the IA to avert this terrible fate. Owners need to understand what maintenance records they are required by regulation to keep, and why it's so important for them to ensure that their mechanics provide them with fully compliant logbook entries.</i>
3/8/23	7 p.m. CST	<a href="#"><u>Airframe Parachutes and Canopy Concerns</u></a> <b>Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.</b>	Prof. H Paul Shuch <i>First introduced in 1982, the whole airframe parachute has offered us a new safety option for surviving catastrophic aircraft accidents. But, despite hundreds of successful deployments, inclusion of a chute is still controversial among some pilots. In this FAASTeam WINGS and AMT award webinar, Prof. Shuch explores the pros of parachutes, as well as the cons of canopies.</i>
3/14/23	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#"><u>The Curtiss Jenny</u></a> <b>Museum Webinar Series</b>	Chris Henry <i>The Curtiss Jenny is arguably one of the most recognizable aircraft from its era. This is one of the airplanes that taught America to fly, and broke barriers.</i>
3/15/23	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#"><u>Advanced Skew-T Concepts</u></a> <b>Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.</b>	Dr. Scott Dennstaedt <i>There are very few weather tools that provide so many important details as does the Skew-T log (p) diagram. Using the tool to drill down is a great way to augment your understanding of the big weather picture. Combined with surface analysis and prog charts, constant pressure charts, and a multitude of other analyses and forecasts, the Skew-T will add confidence that you are making the right decision to depart or perhaps stay on the ground. In this webinar, Dr. Scott Dennstaedt will do a quick overview of the base diagram and review lapse rates before we explore some advanced topics on how to use the diagram to determine the potential for convective processes including deep, moist convection and cumuliform cloud tops.</i>
3/16/23	7 p.m. CDT	<a href="#"><u>EAA Learn to Fly Week – Hosting a Chapter Flying Start Event</u></a> <b>Chapters Webinar Series</b>	David Leiting <i>May 15 - 20, 2023, is the inaugural EAA Learn to Fly week, and your chapter is invited to participate by hosting a Flying Start event on Saturday, May 20! Join David Leiting from EAA headquarters, as he provides an overview of how your chapter can participate in this special event, and how EAA can support your chapter's efforts.</i>



## **Ray Aviation Scholarship Update: Madison Richardson**

This month has been another month of only 1 flight day. However, on the one flight day we traveled from Hagerstown to Front Royal to Culpepper, and then back to Hagerstown. Winds were a little sporty but nothing we couldn't handle. It gave me a lot of experience with calling to get flight following, dealing with traffic, and landings. However, that is not all! Due to the decrease in hours I've been flying lately, I decided to dedicate my time to getting my written knocked out of the way, and that's exactly what I did. Towards the end of January my mom sat me down and we picked a date. No if, ands, or buts. Come February 20th, and many many hours of studying and practice tests later, I went and took my written. I passed with an 87% and I have never been more happy to get something out of the way than that test! To more flying in March!!



## **25 Years Ago Today – March 14, 1998**

### **Thanks to Jay Kanagy**

The annual Chapter 36 Awards Banquet was held on Saturday, March 14, 1998, in the Antrim House Restaurant, Greencastle, PA. Acting President, Ken Bercaw welcomed the group and led the members and guests in the Pledge to the Flag. Pastor Nancy Green gave the invocation. Everyone enjoyed the buffet dinner, after which guests Gene Kneeler, Control Tower Manager, and Matt Steele, of Radio Station KMAZ, were introduced. They appreciated being invited, wonderful aviation community and good airport.

A letter from National EAA was read thanking us for reaching our goal in flying 300 Young Eagles in 1997, and Don Myers presented a clock from EAA to our Chapter. Ken Bercaw accepted the clock in behalf of the Chapter. Don remarked he has good help when flying the Young Eagles: pilots, and ground people. It is fun flying with good safety people. The Young Eagles Organization presented certificates of appreciation to Walter and June Green, Bob Scott, and Bobbie McBee.

Service awards were presented to Gary Hartle - Technical Counselor and First Flight; Walter Green - Technical Advisor and Treasurer; June Green, Newsletter Editor and Secretary; Dean Truax - Technical Counselor; Bob Enterline - Vice President and Don Myers - Young Eagles Coordinator. A hand carved wings plaque made by Lew Ferguson was presented to Jack Raun by June Green on behalf of the Chapter for his ten years of service.

Robert Scott, Vice President, presented the Chapter 36 Award to Bobbie McBee and the Hale Andrews Award to Robert Enterline. The Scarf and Goggles awarded to Matt Steele - it was an absolute pleasure to help the Chapter and Gene Kretzer. the members go above and beyond their duty to help young people, with members such as June and Walter Green, and Keith Ford and Gregory Shantz.

Drawings for aviation postcards, and wooden airplanes was then held and several members and guests won them.

Don Myers presented the Door prize, to Bobbie McBee.

A gift of a crystal beer stein was presented to Jack Raun from the chapter for his services as president. The program consisted of tapes with excerpts of EAA Activities as caught by members.

Ken thanked everyone for coming and reminded them of the executive meeting the last Tuesday in Month.

Gene told the members that the DME is in status only for now and will be on the chart in April.

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

### Pete Walters

There's more than one nut in this picture. Can you spot them all?



Saw this homebuilt P-40 (??) in the commissary at West Point. Fabricated from soda cartons. It didn't appear to be airworthy.

Mad scientist? No, just Joe Boyle working his magic in the Chapter 36 hangar.



Serious photo. The rudder is on. I now have a sense of direction.



## Tony Vallillo – Part 2, Section 2

# Silver Argosy

### Low and Slow across America!

We launched again into the clear mountain air, and within minutes were passing abeam of the enormous cone of Mount Shasta. These Pacific Rim volcanoes are beautiful to admire, at least until one of them corks off! Fortunately, Shasta refrained from any untoward exhibitions as we passed abeam. Shortly thereafter we ambled down from the heights as the mountains tapered off into foothills and then the northern reaches of the great Central Valley. This valley runs from Red Bluff all the way to Bakersfield, and is one of the most fertile places on earth. A staggering amount of fruit and vegetables pours forth from this place every day, filling trucks and trains, and probably more than a few cargo jumbo jets



as well! It is also said to be one of the flattest places on earth, and it certainly looks the part as we descent to lower altitudes, the better to keep the landmarks in sight in the slight haze that exists in the now mid-afternoon.



We continued to follow Interstate 5, at least roughly. It keeps us clear of various airspaces over father east that we would rather avoid, among which is Beale AFB, the home of the U-2 and, earlier, the SR-71.

Approximately abeam of Beale, just east of Colusa, sits the highest point in the valley – Sutter’s Butte, which is a long extinct volcanic cone eroded

to a mere 2300 or so feet elevation. I was able to snap a quick picture as we flew by.



After Colusa, Interstate 5 bends southeastward toward Sacramento. It is here that we had to thread our first needle, navigation-wise. The Sacramento Class B rubs up close to an imposing looking area surrounding Travis AFB. On today’s charts this area is merely an alert area, but on the charts of 1996 it looked more like a restricted area. There is a gap of a few miles between the two, and the town of Davis lies squarely in the gap. We used the GPS to thread the needle between the two, and it worked like a charm. Of course the town provided a good landmark as well. Once through the needle’s eye, we set course directly

to our first planned overnight stop – Stockton California.

It was nearly dark by the time we landed at KSCK, and completely so by the time we clambered stiffly into a taxi at the FBO, bound for the Holiday Inn. The Skooter’s somewhat cramped confines had confirmed the wisdom of my decision to keep the flying down to around 500 miles per day. But the first day’s flying was done, and the arguably most challenging legs were now in the logbook. My copilot and I enjoyed a great meal in one of Stockton’s better eateries and we called an early halt to the night’s activities, the better to prepare for

tomorrow's journey. Just before heading off to the land of Nod I called Flight Service for an outlook briefing. The reports and forecasts were good – in fact, it looked like we would be able to make the entire trip home without any real opposition from the weather.

The next morning, a glance outside the motel window caused me to doubt the ability of the western weather gurus. Fog, luminous but opaque, had crept in on its little cat feet overnight and squatted lethargically over what appeared to be the entire Central Valley. A quick call to Flight Service confirmed what I saw, but also offered some comfort – the fog was typical in the early morning there, and would likely burn off completely by mid-morning.



We arrived at the airport around 9 and got the preflight completed shortly thereafter. That's the nice thing about a simple airplane like the Sky Scooter – the preflight is not the lengthy affair that it is on a Boeing! Once that was done we returned to the lounge to await the return of VFR conditions. All we needed was three miles visibility, since the fog layer was scarcely more than a few hundred feet thick and once above it we would be in clear skies. Around 10 the rotating beacon on the tower stopped spinning, the sure signal that visual conditions prevailed. And off we went, rapidly climbing above the residual layer of

now diaphanous mist into the clear-and-a-million skies above. Navigation now was the province of the Garmin 95, which had so far worked to perfection and continued to do so. We set a direct course for Bakersfield, at the southern end of the valley, close to the Tehachapi pass. This would be our next refueling point. As we droned southward, the Sierra Nevada Mountains provided a visual spectacle off to our left. This front row seat to the grandeurs of nature continued for nearly two hours, until KBFL hove into view ahead, and we contacted the tower for landing clearance.

After a refueling and a quick lunch, we were off once again, now bound for a little airport in the desert northeast of the LA basin called, curiously enough, Apple Valley. It may well be that I decided to make APV our next refueling stop just to see how it got that name, sited as it is in the desert and probably not at all conducive to



apple growing! The route to APV lay across the southernmost ramparts of what is left of the Sierra Nevada, and it was initially my intention to traverse this area by following the iron compass through Tehachapi Pass, one of railroading's most famous grades. As we climbed out of Bakersfield I could see that it would take some time to achieve the 9500 feet that I had planned to safely surmount the pass, and, from an aerial vantage point, it seemed that there was another low area in the range a bit farther south. So we continued our climb and headed for the southern end of the Central Valley. As we did so, we could see the entry into Tehachapi off to our left, and I took note of the windmill

farms that even back then dotted the terrain through the pass. If there was enough wind going through there to make it attractive for wind farms, there might just be a good bit of turbulence as well, so I became convinced that the more southerly crossing might be the best. Another attraction of bypassing Tehachapi was that the route through the pass would take us quite close to Edwards AFB, and I had no desire to mix it up with whatever they were testing over there!





Around twenty minutes after takeoff we leveled off at 9500 feet and turned left over what appeared to be the lowest part of the mountains at this point. We could not yet set our GPS to direct to APV, though, since there is a considerable array of restricted airspace surrounding Edwards, so we used the Garmin to steer a course just to the south of the forbidden areas. Once across the mountains, we were flying over the southern reaches of the Mohave Desert, with the San Gabriel Mountains off to our right and beyond those the LA basin. We were not high enough to observe the smog beyond the mountains, as I would

be nearly a decade later when I passed this way at 35000 feet on the way from ORD to HNL. And of course we were going one heck of a lot slower! But with this kind of scenery around, the old saw about “if flying is so much fun then why are we in such a hurry to get it over with..” takes on real meaning!

Just as soon as we cut the corner on the Edwards airspaces I set the Garmin for direct to APV. There are no conveniently aligned major highways to follow, so we used the GPS for all actual navigation, while keeping track of our position on the sectional chart that I bought at Bakersfield for just that purpose. It had already been clear on the way down that although the WAC charts were great for planning, and for following Interstate highways, Sectionals are better for keeping track of position, especially in areas like this that are complex and intensive. In other circumstances I would call ATC and get flight following, just to have someone to talk to, if for no other reason. But without a transponder that would be pretty much impossible in this area. So Melanie and I had to be content with each other’s company.



Palmdale passed off to the right, and I wondered about the subtitle in its name: Air Force Plant number 42. Just for starters, where are the other 41 plants; for in all of my travels I have never encountered another airport with an Air Force Plant number appended to its name. Nowadays, we can just whip out the iPhone and Google it,

but back then all of that magic was still but a gleam in Steve Jobs’ eye, and the questions went unanswered!



Off in the distance to the left, we could see the Mother Lode of the Right Stuff, Edwards AFB, and the large dry lakes that surround it and form a part of the landing area for, among other things, the Space Shuttle when it was first being tested. I once, on a layover, went to Mohave airport, which is fairly close to Edwards, and happened



to meet Burt Rutan there, along with an old acquaintance from my original Air Force days who was building a Long EZ. It was fascinating to talk to Rutan in those days before he really got into the aviation spotlight. Big ideas were his forte, even then, and the future was already in his head, taking shape; as we could tell from the conversational gems he dropped here and there. Mohave, then as now, was also a graveyard for old jet transports, including the entire fleet of TWA Convair 880’s. Today it is probably sinking under the weight of all of the 747’s, DC-10’s and other retired flagships of the airline fleets, including an ex-AA DC-10 and 767-200.



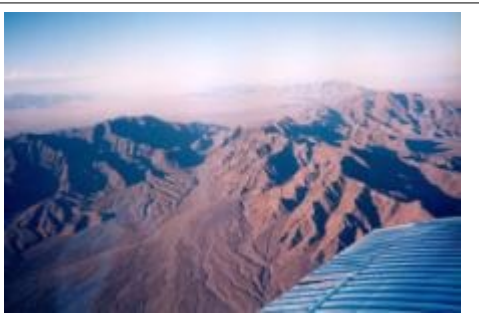


Approaching APV, we descended just to the south of what was once George AFB, now called the Southern California Logistics Center. George AFB was the F-4 Phantom training unit during the Vietnam era, transitioning all of the pilots and navigators into what was, at that time, the latest and greatest fighter in the inventory. Today it is a cargo port and, more recently, another boneyard for surplus airliners. We gave a quick shout-out to the tower as we passed by, for clearance into the class D from above.

A few miles east of VCV we spotted Apple Valley. And no, it certainly didn't look like anyone was growing apples out there. But apparently at one time apples were a big crop, and thus the name. Since the next leg, to Blythe California, wasn't too long we contented ourselves with a few vending machine snacks and a fuel top-off, and were back in the sky with minimal delay.

The flight to BLH called for a dogleg to avoid Restricted Area R-2501, which sits astride the direct route. This airspace runs from the surface to unlimited, so there is no getting over or under it. Staying to the south of it had us hugging the foothills of the San Bernardino

Mountains, just to the north of Big Bear Lake; which, I noted with amusement, was higher than we were. We turned the corner on the restricted area at Joshua Tree, and took up a southeasterly course direct to Blythe. Now we were flying over some true desert, and I was glad that we checked the batteries on the ELT as part of the pre-buy inspection. There were plenty of places to put it down, perhaps in one piece perhaps not, but the walk to the nearest phone might have been a long one indeed. The Skooter, fortunately, was purring like the kitten it could barely outrun, and any pessimistic speculation was lost in the incredible beauty of the place.



As the sun began to sink toward the Pacific, now many miles behind us, we picked up Interstate 10 for the last few miles into BLH. I let Melanie have a try at landing the Skooter, and she nailed it perfectly. We tied 112T down as the sun set, and headed into town for another great Mexican dinner and a good night's sleep. Two days journey in the logbook, with six days more to go. Tomorrow we

would have a good bit of distance to cover, for I intended to make it to the vicinity of El Paso before we bedded down again.

Up again at the crack of dawn, we checked the weather with FSS, to find that things were going to be perfect yet again, and looked to remain so for much of the remainder of the journey. We ate a quick breakfast and got a taxi out to the airport again for our third day of the journey. Fuel topped off, and the preflight inspection

completed, we were off into the sun and the Arizona desert. We had the navigational certainty of Interstate 10 again as we headed east, but before too long we were forced to part company with the concrete



compass and head out into the true wilderness. The Phoenix class B, and in particular the 30nm mode C veil, precluded us from following I-10 all the way into town, where it turns south and heads for Tucson. To avoid the Mode C area we had to cut the corner and start heading southeast across the desert nearly 90nm from PHX, roughly paralleling V-94 to Gila Bend. There were (and still are) restricted areas galore off to the south and west, and we had to clear R-2308 before we could make our turn toward TUS. At Gila Bend, there was R-2304 on the right side and the PHX Mode C veil on the left. The restricted areas showed up on the Garmin 95, as did the Class B, but not the Mode C veil; so I set the GPS to take us directly to the GBN VOR, and then direct to our first destination, Ryan Airport just west of the Tucson class C.



This was the first time in the trip that we were flying on a leg with just about zero civilization below. There were no towns, no settlements of any kind on the chart, and only a single rail line that we would cross on the way to Gila Bend. But the Continental engine was still running perfectly, so the pucker factor was comfortably low. In fact, so absorbed were we in the harsh beauty of the desert scenery that we didn't give a single thought to the potential usefulness of our survival mirror and whistle!

I was not completely unfamiliar with the Tucson area, having had many a layover there nearly 20 years previously in my Boeing 707 engineer days. In addition to the various aircraft graveyards, civilian and military, the area is pitted with great mines – huge holes that resemble man made versions of the famous Meteor Crater.



Most of these are copper mines, and indeed Arizona is known as the Copper State. Tucson is also well known for its outstanding Mexican cuisine, although we did not tarry to sample it, for this was but a fuel stop for us.



I had chosen Ryan field for a specific reason, aside from its being just outside of the Class C. RYN was the home of Venture Light Aircraft Resources, which happened to

be the current holder of the type certificate and tooling for the Sky Skooter. Larry Rebling, the owner of Venture, was just getting started selling T-211 kits made up from some of the 100 ship-sets of parts built in 1966 when 112T was built. I was hoping to meet and talk to him during our stop, since it would be a good idea to get acquainted with a potential supplier of parts. I actually entertained the notion of buying one of the kits - not to build it, but to have a permanent supply of spare parts; and in fact Dave's widow did just that some years later after he went west. But as it turned out, Larry was out to lunch when we passed through Ryan, and we weren't able to wait around for him to return. Back over our shoulder, you see, a weather system was moving onshore from the Pacific, and this had the potential of catching up to us if we dallied an extra day this far west. So after another fuel top off and a quick snack, we launched yet again into the wild blue.



From Ryan, we had to skirt the TUS Class C, and that took us to a convenient landmark, the giant open pit of the ASARCO Mission Mine, just north of Green Valley. Apparently a goodly bit of the copper



that plays such an important role in all things electrical originates in this hole. We turned the corner at the mine and joined I-10 again east of Tucson at Benson. The terrain was just as stark over here as it had been northwest of Gila Bend, but the Interstate linked a number of small towns every 10 or 20 miles, so civilization was close at hand. We didn't follow every turn and bend in the highway, but rather set a straight course toward Deming and just kept the road in sight.

Ever since we turned the corner at Tehachapi we had been the beneficiaries of tailwinds. These are always welcome, and they got stronger as we went further east. By the time we were east of Tucson, we had a boost of roughly 20 knots working for us, with groundspeeds in the giddy range of 130 knots or so. This may not sound like much, but in an airplane that usually true's out around 100 knots this is a significant boost indeed, and we welcomed it with open arms. It looked like we might be able to make it beyond the area of El Paso today.



Originally it looked like Deming NM would be a good place to set down, but those tailwinds gave us just enough push that we were able to press on farther. Our second stop, for fuel and lunch, turned out to be Las Cruces New Mexico, just up the road from El Paso. Beyond that point, we had to turn south, because there was both high terrain and restricted airspace on a direct course eastward. So after takeoff we followed Interstate 10 south toward the West Texas town of El Paso, as Marty Robbins described it. Much as I would have wanted to stop there and pay a visit to Rosa's Cantina, there was still plenty of daylight and our eastward course beckoned. We again had to thread a needle navigationally; because there were several big Restricted Areas north of the Class C, and the path between the two was only around 3-4 miles wide. I was by now acutely aware of the handicap that resulted from our lack of a transponder, and this trip pretty much made up my mind to install one immediately after arrival in Connecticut.



To be continued next newsletter!