

JUNE 2020

PROPWASH

A NEWSLETTER OF EAA CHAPTER 517, INC.



Five Valleys Flyers



EAA Chapter 517, Inc.

From the Chapter President



JIM YOUNKIN

In the March PROPWASH, I talked about re-establishing evening program meetings on the third Monday of the month but then the Chapter had to cancel those programs due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Now that the CDC and the State of Montana are relaxing some of those restrictions, we will be setting up some EAA 517 events again.

On Monday, June 15, we will have Bryan Douglass make a presentation about the Miss Montana flight to France last June to participate in the 75th Anniversary of the D-Day invasion. Bryan has just completed a book about the Miss Montana project and the flight, which is available in paperback on Amazon.com for \$26.95. The book is called, “Every Reason to Fail: The Unlikely Story of Miss Montana and the D-Day Squadron.” He may have some copies available for sale at his June 15 presentation.

The EAA 517 Board met in May and determined that we would do Donuts & Coffee at the Chapter hangar the first Saturday of the month beginning on June 6



from 8:30 to 11 a.m. The current COVID-19 restrictions placed on restaurants, churches, and other civic organizations make it very difficult to think about doing our traditional pancake breakfasts this summer, but that could change in a few more months. The Donuts & Coffee event will feature donuts (or other pastries) individually wrapped by the bakery to maintain sanitation protocols. We will also have cans of fruit juice and soda available for those who don't

drink coffee.

With the nicer weather, we can now open the hangar bay door to allow fresh air to blow through the hangar and make it easier to “social distance” as necessary. I'm looking forward to seeing our members at these two upcoming events. There is no requirement to wear a face mask, but feel free to do so if you are in a high risk group.

Until next month,

Jim Younkin

Flight training begins for EAA 517's 2020 Ray Aviation Scholar

By Ray Aten

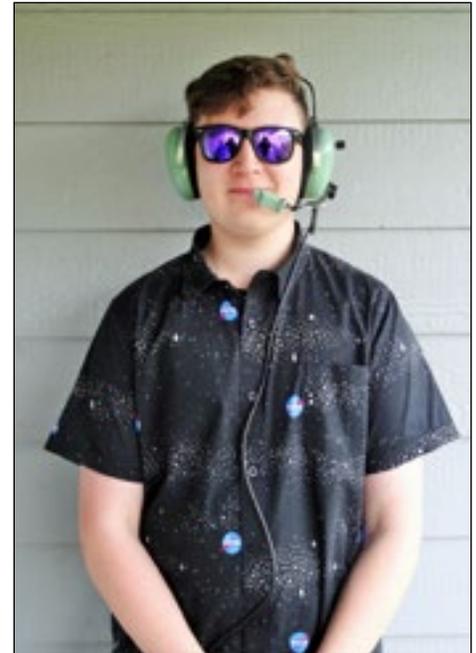
Our Ray Aviation Scholar for 2020 began his first flight training Saturday afternoon, May 16, nine days after the chapter was notified that Denten was approved as a Ray Aviation Scholar. Like last year, the path to this momentous occasion began with our chapter applying for and being approved to administer a Ray Aviation Scholarship for 2020. Initially, the chapter had three potential candidates. Following an interview it was clear that Denten was our choice, and he submitted his scholarship application to EAA. Part of his application included the following essay response and is an example of why Denten was our choice.

“I am very humbled and honored to be recommended for the Ray Aviation Scholarship by the EAA Chapter #517. I’ve always wanted to be a pilot since the age of 6, when I was invited into an Allegiant Air MD-80 cockpit to talk with the pilots. After a brief overview of the flight deck, the co-pilot said I could switch on the Auxiliary Power Unit. Ever since that experience, I’ve loved everything about airplanes and aeronautics in general. Living on a hillside, with a view overlooking the Missoula International Airport has provided me with endless hours of airplane observation entertainment. I research the airplanes, their schedules, flight times and listen with my handheld radio for their landing and departures. One of my most memorable examples of this occurred



when I listened to and watched Air Force One land and depart Johnson/Bell Air Field during the Missoula portion of President Donald Trump’s campaign rally. I also enjoy watching Neptune Aviation perform aerial maneuvers and practice dropping smoke jumpers just to the north of my house. A favorite hobby of mine is collecting Gemini Jet models, then researching international airports and constructing miniature versions of them. Over this past year the EAA has made an astonishing impact on my life. I’ve participated in multiple Young Eagle flights including: Wendover NV Historic Airfield, Bremerton, WA Airport, and Missoula, MT Johnson/Bell Airfield. I’m so grateful for this opportunity and appreciate your consideration of me as a candidate for the 2020 Ray Aviation Scholarship.”

Denten has chosen NorthStar Jet as his training center and Sam Giese as his instructor. I hope there will be



occasions soon when each of you will be able to introduce yourself to Denten, welcome him, and share your experiences and love of flying. His enthusiasm for and curiosity about flying is infectious.

EAA 517 has hangar space available



Jacob and the Aeronca Chief



By Jon Goldenbaum

This piece originally ran in the May/June 2020 issue of Vintage Airplane magazine.

Like many of us, Jacob Palmer was one of those kids who had to fly. He's been obsessed with aviation for as long as he can remember. He took a route familiar to most aviators — bugging his nonflying parents to take him to the airport, attending every local air show, and asking only for model airplanes when birthdays or Christmas came around.

In his freshman year of high school he discovered that an aviation charter school was opening at nearby Flabob Airport. At age 14, he was one of the first to enroll, and soon he entered a dream world. River Springs Charter School (now Flabob Aviation Preparatory Academy) had aviation labs and a modeling class, and best of all, Flabob's unique antique and classic airplanes taxied by the school every day. Soon he was

bumping rides in anything that flew, immersing himself in RC model aviation, and rubbing shoulders with the aviation characters who hung out at Flabob.

He volunteered to help at every Young Eagles event held by Flabob's EAA Chapter 1, escorting riders to airplanes and helping with parking and registration as needed. Soon he discovered that the Tom Wathen Center at Flabob had several active aircraft-restoration programs for young people, so he eagerly joined in, learning about tools, aircraft structure, and materials while helping to restore a Stits Skycoupe. This was a special project. Ray Stits had developed many of the first successful homebuilding kits at Flabob in the '50s before founding EAA Chapter 1, the first EAA chapter outside of Wisconsin. Of course, Ray is best known to aviation enthusiasts as the founder of the Stits Poly Fiber fabric-covering system. Working on the Skycoupe was Jacob's introduction to the rich

history of Ray, the EAA, and Flabob.

Even with all of this, Jacob had still never learned to fly. He was getting anxious. Several of his older schoolmates were learning to fly with the help of scholarships from the Wathen Center or Ray Stits himself.

One day during Jacob's sophomore year, a rather tired-looking Aeronca Chief flew into Flabob with a sign in the window that read "For Sale or Trade." He immediately called the number on the sign and found out the price was \$13,000. He excitedly approached his dad, but they both knew his mom would probably nix the idea. She was worried enough about the family Harley. "Well, how about trading the Harley for the airplane?" he asked his dad. Unfortunately, the Chief's seller had no interest in motorcycles. For months nothing happened. Then the seller called back. He had not sold the Chief, and he had a buddy who wanted the Harley. A deal was struck, and 16-year-old Jacob and his dad were the proud new owners



of the Chief. Since neither could fly, they tucked it away in a hangar at Flabob and proceeded to work on cosmetics and simple maintenance tasks. The money for flight training was simply not available; there were three Palmer kids to feed and educate.

Fortunately, in 2012, U.S. Air Force Pilot Training Class 70-05 decided to have a reunion at Flabob. These men became fast friends in 1969 while learning to fly for the Air Force. Most went on to Vietnam and then completed distinguished careers in the military and the airline industry. Every few years, the class gets together to reminisce and visit. In 2012, they chose Riverside, California, and Flabob. One of the 70-05ers was a Flabob regular who was active in the Wathen Center

youth programs. As part of the reunion, he convinced his buddies to kick in for a full flight training scholarship for a deserving young person. To win the scholarship, interested Flabob kids wrote essays. The 70-05ers picked the best submissions and interviewed the authors. You guessed it: The winner was Jacob Palmer.

Jacob began training at Flabob with Capt. Jack Emmons, a retired Swissair pilot, in Jack's L-4 Fighting Grasshopper. When it came time to start completing the more complex requirements for his private pilot certificate, he worked with Dave Rogers, a renowned instructor and mentor. Airport manager Beth LaRock personally coached Jacob through ground school.

Jacob flew every day he could,

and finally, in December 2012, at the age of 18, he earned his private pilot certificate in Dave's 172. Soon after, Jack gave Jacob his tailwheel endorsement, and it was time for Jacob to fly the family Chief. As you might imagine, after a short checkout, Jacob flew the wings off the Chief, taking it out at every opportunity.

Eventually the Chief started showing its age. It needed to be recovered and would no longer pass a punch test.

Jacob spent some time working with his dad in the family business, then went off on a mission with his church. After the mission, he returned to Flabob, determined to get the Chief back in the air. Although Jacob was preparing to head off to college, he decided to push himself

to get the Chief airworthy so he could take it with him. The Chief had a low-time, recently topped C-85-8F that ran well, so the emphasis went on the airframe.

Jacob's Flabob classmate and best friend, Tyler Howell, offered to help. Tyler had picked up some real skills in aircraft restoration at Flabob and was ready to pitch in. Like Jacob, Tyler was determined to finish all his ratings and pursue a career in aviation, so he wanted all the practice and wrenching he could get. The boys soon disassembled the bird, stripped the fabric off, and then stood back and wondered just what in the heck they were getting into. And, as often happens, challenges soon arose. A close inspection of the wings revealed cracks in the wood spars, particularly under the doublers. So the ribs came off, the cracked spars were removed, and the boys sought advice from Flabob's brain trust on how to replace them. They were getting pretty skilled at woodwork by this time so they tackled the tapering and drilling of the spar blanks themselves with the help of their Flabob mentors.

Soon they reassembled and trammed the wings and prepared for new fabric donated by friends at the Flabob Poly Fiber factory. The work on the wings went well, so it was time to take on the fuselage — a job Jacob had dreaded. His friend and fellow EAA Chapter 1 member Jimmy O'Brien, an A&P mechanic, offered to help, and piece by piece the fuselage was cleaned, repaired, and primed. New hardware and cables followed. As will happen, the work looked so good they decided to do more by adding a new interior and instrument panel. Jacob tackled the panel himself, installing a handsome



wood veneer panel with refurbished instruments.

Jacob and Tyler then started covering the fuselage and tail feathers. By now they'd acquired some real skills from covering the wings. Jacob said doing the fabric covering was "super fun." He had always liked modeling, and he soon discovered that covering the Chief was not that different from covering RC models. "It really isn't hard," he said. "It just takes time, and my time was cheap." Soon brothers Nando and Hauldo Mendoza, the young restoration artisans at Flabob's West Coast Air Creations, shared some of the tricks that go into completing a first-class covering job. They also helped with the stunning Ranthane finish, and the covering job was done.

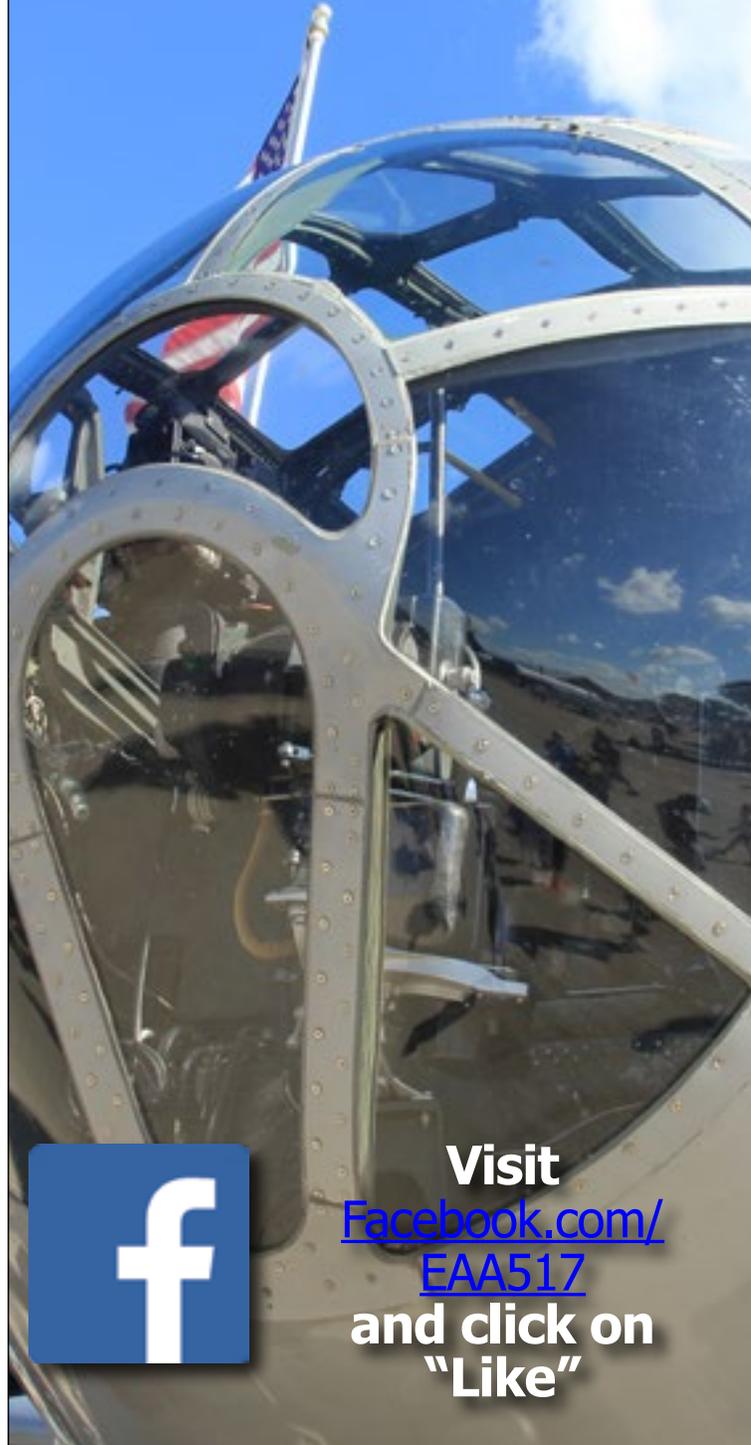
In April 2017, the Chief flew again. "Hands off and light as a feather," Jacob said. As planned, he and the Chief were soon off to college at Utah Valley University. Jacob admitted that the best part of college was meeting a charming

young woman named Jessica Bush who loved flying as much as he did. Cupid soon took over, and after a short courtship they were married. With new responsibilities, Jacob decided to focus on his career. He took a break from college to finish the ratings he needed for an airline job. When the ratings are done, he and Jess will return to Utah Valley University to finish their degrees.

You can bet that you'll one day find Capt. Jacob Palmer in command of an airliner. If anyone can reach that goal, it's him.

Classic post-World War II aircraft present real opportunities for young people like Jacob, or anyone else with the modest means to own such an aircraft. Jacob took the restoration route, but there are many ready-to-fly classics available for relatively little money. As the saying goes, classic aircraft are "affordable and fun." Jacob estimates he and his dad have put about \$20,000 into the Chief — a fraction of what they could have spent on a used airplane or kit.

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Opportunities at MSO

GENERAL AVIATION HANGAR

Delta Golf Hangars. These hangars are located near the east corner of the Delta and Golf taxiways. Construction was completed in November. One is available for sale. It's 42' w x 50' deep; door opening 12'6". The Hangars are individually owned and managed by a condo owners association. The hangars are gas heated and each unit has water and sewer. Interested parties can contact Mike McCue at (406) 240-9868 or mike@nw-tower.com.

FLY WITH THE CIVIL AIR PATROL

Private pilots. Expand your flying experiences with the Missoula Civil Air Patrol Squadron. Receive training to fly a CAP aircraft. Practice flights and the first flight evaluation (with a CAP designated Check Pilot) are paid for by the prospective pilot. Cessna 182 training runs about \$115/hour including aircraft rental and fuel. After the successful flight evaluation CAP pays for additional training or aircraft upgrade to the T206H.

CFIs: We are looking for CFIs who could assist with training other CAP pilots. Contact Peter Graf, 406.370-3066 grafpeter49@gmail.com Website <https://mtwg.cap.gov/about-us/units/missoula-composite>

BUILDER'S REPORT

Rutan

Ed Lovrien

Limo EZ – 50%

Van's RV

John Barba

RV-6

Zenith

Duane Felstet

CH-750 75%

Builders, please send updates to the newsletter editor at cburson@gmail.com so this list can be kept current.

FAA policy allows special flight permits for E-ABs needing condition inspections

May 21, 2020 – Following a request from EAA and AOPA, the FAA has released a policy that will make it easier for some owners of experimental aircraft to obtain special flight permits (SFPs) for their airplanes in order to reposition them for condition inspections.

Rather than requiring a full in-person “condition for safe operation” sign-off from an FAA inspector, which was previously required for SFPs, the policy allows DAR-Ts (designated airworthiness representatives supervised by a FSDO) with appropriate function codes to remotely conduct inspections for the certificates.

While EAA would ideally like to see more simplified flexibility on annuals and condition inspections during the COVID-19 pandemic, this policy will help many experimental aircraft owners, particularly those who have “out-of-annual” aircraft stranded away from their preferred maintenance shop.

“EAA continues to hear from members the need for other policy changes in light of the coronavirus’ impact on day-to-day life in the United States,” said Sean



Elliott, EAA vice president of advocacy and safety. “We continue to seek every avenue possible to find relief from or alternative ways to comply with regulations, and this new policy is a prime example of that. It is a small adjustment, but it will help.”

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