



## **Next Meeting-April 11. Yes!! Noon at the hangar. Maybe even burgers and dogs. Here's hoping normalcy is returning.**

**Ed Note:** I normally would have sent this newsletter out this past weekend but, with our meeting set back a week from normal, I chose to give myself a few extra days to finish it. Won't have that excuse next month.

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### **President's Message**

Things have been rather quiet in the flying realm this month. Five of us flew to Crescent City for lunch which was a very fun trip. My first Coast flight. Various activity around 3S8, of course the hot topic being Larry's retirement in July. I'm told a decision about replacement will be announced the first part of April. We will anxiously await that notice. Hoping to get back on track with monthly chapter meetings also in April. My plan is to have Andreas Blech tell his story of flying his Bonanza ACROSS THE ATLANTIC ! And back. Guaranteed to be an interesting talk. I want to gauge the attendance first so that we present this with a decent audience size. More later about that. Please try to attend our next meeting if you can. Weather permitting we will be having burgers and such. In other news, the rapidly rising fuel prices are affecting rental rates all over. I've heard to expect a \$20 hike in Medford rates, but rates here expected to remain the same for now due to negotiated fuel prices. My friend who owns a busy training school and rental operation in California now requires customers carry rental insurance! These changes do not bode well for the future of General Aviation in my opinion. Of course we have seen things go up and down over the years, but I don't expect to see anyone rolling rental rates back once they change. We can only hope for the best. I am concerned about our very low chapter membership renewal numbers, but hoping to see that change when we resume meetings. Time will tell. Hope to see some familiar faces in April.

Joe  
Joe W. us

## Treasurer's Report 3/25/2021

Checking account balance 1/31/2021	\$1,992.75
Cash box	\$200.00

### Receipts

Checks	dues	Gabe Johnson	\$ 20.00
	"	Mark Michael	\$ 20.00
			\$ 40.00

### Transfers

### Expense

check	Pacific Power	(\$ 22.49)
		(\$ 22.49)

### Deposits

checks and cash	\$ 40.00
interest	\$ .07
	\$ 40.07

### Ending balance

checking	\$2,010.33
cash box	\$ 200.00
<b>Funds available</b>	<b>\$2,210.33</b>

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## April Meeting

Joe tells me he has gotten good response to his 3/28 e-mail request for meeting attendance RSVP's. So it looks like Andreas will provide the program and we'll all get a first person account of crossing the pond in a Bonanza-both directions. Frankly, I didn't realize I personally knew anyone who had ever done this, so I'm looking forward to it.

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## Around the Chapter

### Only in Alaska

Pilots and fisherman are great story tellers. Wayne Pinger has written 3 novels about bush flying in Alaska. He sent me this first person account of his student flying experiences, topped off by a big surprise following his first solo, and swears it all happened exactly as related here. Most of us just got the tail of our shirt cut off. Wayne? Well, here's his story and he's stickin' to it.

### My First Solo

I found a Cessna 170A for-sale in Trade-a-Plane one Friday night in the summer of 1975. It came complete with an Omni and radio transceiver, a transponder, a cylinder head temperature gauge, and a non-functioning radio direction finder. On the phone, after hearing the engine hours and maintenance history, the owner and I agreed on \$5,000. The only problem I had was getting 9240-Alpha back to Fairbanks where I lived. It was summer and I pretty-much had all the time-off that I needed. My original plan was to fly commercial to California and live in a motel while taking flying lessons. Then In a week or so, after I learned to fly, I would bring the plane back to Alaska. A friend of mine who was a pilot said it would likely take more than a week, possibly as long as all summer, to get my license; my surprise. So, not to be deterred, I looked for a pilot to fly 9240A back to Fairbanks for me. Lucky for me one was found.

The Arctic Flying Club had a Cessna 152 trainer and my pilot friend suggested that I take flight lessons in it rather than a four-place tail dragger. Maybe a good idea but I passed on it. To me, it seemed that learning in the plane that I would later be flying, made more sense. Horace Black was a Bush-Pilot that was well known to some friends of mine. Besides nearly 20,000 bush-flying hours in his log book, he was also a CFI. My friends had been pleased with his instruction and bi-annual check-rides so I contacted him. Horace charged \$25.00 per hour and I felt lucky, I still feel lucky, to have had him as an instructor.

I recall many misconceptions I had about piloting but maybe the one strangest to me at the time, was pulling the throttle back to lose altitude and not simply pushing the yoke forward. That was not the way they did it in the movies and when I mentioned that fact to Horace, he asked if it might be better for me to get instruction there, at the movies, instead of taking up his valuable time. There were a few other things that he seemed to be doing wrong, but by then, I was smart enough not to question him. Throughout the summer long affair, I was never surprised to find out, to revisit the fact that there were two ways, distinctly different ways, to pilot a small plane. There was his way, or there was the highway; and either way, would be just fine with him. Horace was just about the least compromising person I have ever met.

I soloed at the Nenana airfield southeast of Fairbanks. It was a Bluebird-day and when he asked me to stop and he opened the door, I thought he was just needing a pee stop; he did that often. I remember doing three full stop landings with different flap settings and then I was instructed to do a few touch-and-goes. Horace patiently waited for me to stagger-lurch around the airfield as he stood in the sun making mental notes of all my mistakes. In spite of this helpful but hurtful critique, my feelings were that I had hit the Big-Times; I was thrilled. I was looking forward to telling my wife the news including every detail, and also, I was mentally planning my up-coming cross-country flights.

When flying back to Fairbanks from Nenana, we generally overflew the Alaska Railroad tracks. Horace wanted me to fly slowly enough to follow all the bends and keep right over the tracks at maybe 100 feet. Westerlies usually required me to slip the plane a little and it was generally a fun flight. Over the 34 hours that it took me to solo, and though I did improve the technique, there never seemed to be enough improvement for any kind of praise on his part.

When nearing Fairbanks, the Alaska Railroad tracks cross Sheep Creek Road just before Ann's Greenhouse, which at the time was a small farm. I was concentrating my efforts on keeping my little blue and white 170 right over the tracks and thinking I was doing fairly well, but still expecting no accolades. This was normally the point when Horace would tell me to climb to pattern altitude at FAI and head "for the barn". Instead, he just said: "Well done; I've got it." And he grabbed the yoke and made an abrupt right turn. Did I just get an Atta-Boy? As he did this, I noticed a taxi-cab that was just off Sheep Creek Road in the ditch. The driver's door was open and a man, I thought it was a man, was lying head down, half out of the driver's door. Because of the turn, the scene went by quickly and before I even had time to ask, we were doing a main wheel landing in Ann's freshly tilled garden/potato patch.

After landing we ran, I was surprised because though I thought Horace probably could run, I thought he likely never would. Horace was not a believer in expending energy unnecessarily. Anyway, we ran across the road and found the taxi in the ditch with the engine still idling. The driver was half in, and half out of the taxi; he was quite dead from an apparent gun-shot in the back of his head.

Horace just said "Wait here", I'm not sure we have enough runway to get us both in the air". He headed back to the plane and as he made the take-off run I also mentally questioned whether there was enough garden (runway) for the task. When approaching the road/track crossing, and still on the ground, Horace popped the flaps and the little 170 jumped into the air just before he was about to hit the side of the tracks. With not quite enough air-speed to fly, but with all 145-horsepower pumping, the little 170 jumped over the tracks and skipped lightly, just once, on the Sheep Creek Road railroad crossing, before clawing its way into the air.

I waited, what else was I to do, while he got enough altitude to call the tower at FAI and get an Alaska State Trooper out to Ann's Greenhouse. This next landing, with considerably more grace, was on Sheep Creek Road that at the time was just gravel and quite twisty; there were some very low power lines on the greenhouse side. Even before Horace got the plane turned around and parked off the road-way, a Trooper showed up.

Questions from the Trooper were “no BS serious.” I had been concentrating on flying and though I didn’t see it, Horace said that as we arrived over Ann’s Green-house, he had seen a school bus that was stopped at the tracks, they do that in Alaska. He also thought that the bus might have picked up a passenger, they also used to do that.

With that information in hand, the Trooper and the Dispatcher on the other end of the radio, operated like a well-oiled machine. First a call to Laidlaw, the school bus transportation company. Then a call on a CB to the proper bus. The bus driver was able to give a good description of the guy he picked up at the tracks and also, where he let him off. With this information, the guy that did the shooting was arrested a short time later when leaving a flower shop at the University Mall. This all happened inside of 40 minutes; accolades to the Troopers. I believe it was a drug thing gone bad and it barely made the Daily News Miner. But whatever it was, it left one taxi driver dead and one new pilot with very mixed emotions about the day he first soloed.

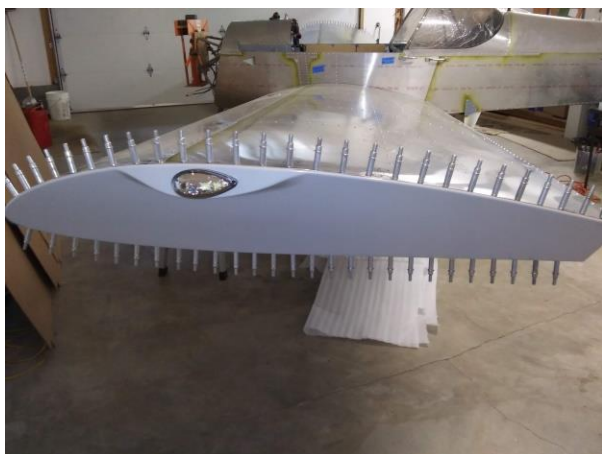
Cheers!  
Wayne

### Projects

We have two new members each with a new project underway. Gabriel Johnson evidently wants to expand his flying experiences into the homebuilt world and has started a Sonex. Mark Michael has a RV12IS underway. Maybe we’ll learn a bit more about each one at the next meeting.

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Phil is making major progress on his CH50 and sent me some pictures to prove it. He’s ready to paint as soon as the temperature warms up a bit. Maybe this week?



Wingtip installation with position/strobe lights.



Time to select the upholstery colors and materials.



A brand new, beautifully wrapped Catto prop. Phil’s caption said “finally”. A story there I’m sure.

Dennis Mitchell was working on his radio installation the last time I crossed paths with him a couple of weeks ago. He's pretty much got the panel finished. Should have taken a picture then, but decided to hold off until closer to deadline. Oh well, no one will confuse me with a news photographer. Just have to wait until next month. There's a possibility that he'll be ready to taxi by then, so maybe the next photos will include one with a spinning propeller.

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Dick continues to collect parts for his CH701 engine installation. The tab for mounting the air filter box and battery are welded on the engine mount and it has been powder coated. The north hangar rows power outage hasn't helped progress, but Dick hopes to rehang the engine in a couple of weeks.

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## **Around the Airport**

### **Going Up**



Sean McGillivray's new hangar site at the south end is growing a forest of long skinny trees. OK, maybe just very long studs. Construction is progressing rapidly. Several aircraft will call this hangar home when finished and I'll have to get up to speed on the new occupants. An AeroStar for sure and probably a Shinn and Maule.

### **County**

Power went out in the north-side county hangars weekend before last. It was traced to deterioration in an old direct-bury cable from the FBO building to Hangar Row D. During the troubleshooting, an empty conduit was discovered under the ramp from the fence in front of the FBO building to D row, installed several years ago but never used. Well, it's being used now. A trench was required to continue it from the fence to the main power source so the wiring run could be completed. Thanks to Jason for bird-dogging this one and working with the electricians to get the hangars back on line with minimal down time. It wasn't a quick fix, but the power should be restored by the time you read this.

The period for submitting applications for Airport Director has closed and interviews are now in process. Larry's successor will be announced sometime this month and his retirement starts July 1.

The next Airport Day planning meeting has been rescheduled for April 22. Since Airport Day has been set back to October 16, it was felt that monthly planning meetings this early in the year would not be productive. With any luck, maybe we can meet in person next time around.

While a firm start date has not been established, the main reason for rescheduling Airport Day is the upcoming removal of the underground fuel tank, extensive replumbing, and installation of a new above ground tank. This work will require several weeks during the summer months and will have significant impact on airport operations during that period.



## Pacific Aviation

- Five instructors are currently on staff. Medford is very active with 2 aircraft based there.
- March saw 2 students, one each Private and Commercial pass their check rides. 3 Privates are scheduled for April.
- Pac-Jet is very active with charter operations. Paperwork is being completed to get Pacific Aviation's Conquest approved for Part 135 flights.
- Dutch Bros sold one of their Conquests to a private owner who, in turn, contracted with Pacific Aviation to provide all services for the aircraft. This is essentially the same arrangement Pacific Aviation originally had with Dutch Bros. before they established their own flight department.

## Baker Avionics



Remodel Phase 1 complete-a new break room. Gotta keep the employees happy (a decent raise usually worked for me).

The FAA completed their inspection and left satisfied with what they saw of the operations. Greg said they especially liked the new break room. **(No he didn't.)**

Hangar 140 is now "officially" part of the Baker Avionics facility.

Genesys is flying Sean's Aerostar to complete certification of the new digital flight control system installed by Baker. It should be back home by the weekend. Could be the first of many.

## VSI Aviation

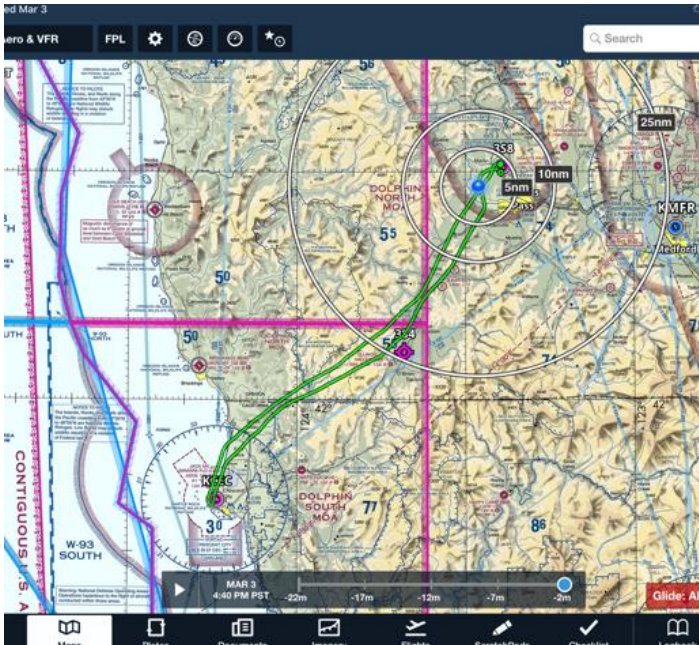


Ryan and Tony are prepping this beautiful C140A, previously owned by Jamie Jones, for its new owner. Ryan says its new home will be a grass strip in Idaho. The new owner's RV9A is also in the shop for upgrades.

The owner-assist RV10 project fuselage has been moved to the main shop. The inside has been painted and it's now ready for all the wiring to be installed.

## Further Afield

As promised, here are a few more photos of our multi-plane flight to Crescent City for lunch.



Fly to IV and take a dog-leg to the right. Reverse for the return. Piece o' cake as long as the mountains aren't hiding in the clouds and there's no coastal fog.



Liam Palmer joins Joe in a loose formation. A lunch flight, dual X-C, and a bit of formation practice all rolled into one.



Doing what we do best. CW from left: Andreas, Dave P., Dick, old white-bearded guy, Phil, Dave Mc, Liam, and Joe. Great lunch at the Sea Quake. Joe W. photo.



Joe shot this photo looking up the coast. On a clear day you really can see forever. Don't get no better than this.

## **Future Happenings**

I'm still in the market for more events to list in the activities calendar, especially within "reasonable" proximity. Note that EAA Chapter 292 has moved its dates for the annual Fly-in/STOL competition up a week from what they had listed in their March newsletter. Calling them tentative pending more clarity on the relaxation of coronavirus restrictions.

### **May through October**

Oregon Aviation Historical Society (Cottage Grove): A \$100 pancake breakfast destination the first Saturday of every month. The 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Jim Wright Memorial Stearman Fly-in will be held in August, followed by the Great Oregon Homebuilt Festival in September, both held concurrently with the respective breakfasts. I can highly recommend "Wings and Wheels" which is no longer in conflict with our Airport Day. This event will also launch the OAHS Traveling Museum which is being created in recognition of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Oregon Dept. of Aviation.

### **June**

June 26: OAHS Wings and Wheels, Cottage Grove. Vintage aircraft, automobiles, motorcycles, bicycles and more.

### **July**

Jul. 26 through Aug. 1: EAA AirVenture, Oshkosh

July 30 through Aug. 1: Oregon International Airshow, McMinnville featuring the USAF Thunderbirds

### **August**

**Aug 14-15:** Chapter 292 Fly-In, Independence

Aug. 20-22: Arlington, WA Fly-In and Airshow

### **September**

Sept. 10-12: Western Antique Aeroplane and Automobile Museum Fly-in, Hood River

Sept. 15-19: Reno Air Races

Sept. 25 and 26: California Capital Airshow, Mather Field, Sacramento featuring the USAF Thunderbirds

### **October**

**Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>:** **Grants Pass Airport Day**



## And Finally



With Airport Day rescheduled to October, Pacific Aviation's Lena Traeger is promoting harvest themes. She and Joe have been brainstorming interesting and fun ideas with that in mind and it's highly probable that pumpkins will play a significant part. Joe told Office Manager Lisa that he has ordered 100 of these large beauties and sent the bill to the county. I doubt that she took him seriously but, knowing Joe, I wouldn't put it past him. I'm sure he at least thought about it for, oh, maybe a half-second or so.

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## **EAA Chapter 725 Grants Pass Airport-3S8**

**Meets: 1st Sunday of the month-1:00 P. M at the Chapter Hangar**

**Summer months: Chapter hangar with barbecue at 12:00 noon**

**(Subject to prevailing coronavirus restrictions.)**

**Joe Williams.....President**

**Dennis Crawford.....Vice President**

**open.....Secretary**

**Phil Cloutier.....Treasurer**

**Stan Loer.....Newsletter Editor (stazel@cpros.com)**

**Ed Lee.....Web Editor**