

# EAA Mount Rainier Chapter 326 Newsletter

Thun Field – March 2007

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## Meeting Notice

**Tuesday, March 13th, 7 PM  
CAP Building, Thun Field**

### Program:

*A Drive in the Clouds  
The story of the Aerocar  
Jake Schultz*

*First Flight Ponderables  
Jim Triggs*

**Refreshments: Marv Scott**

## From the Secretary

Tuesday Feb 13<sup>th</sup> 2007. EAA Chapter 326 monthly meeting.

The Chapter was called to order by Jeff  
Bill Sayer presented about a new plane kit offering.

Visitors: Chris Woods – interested in RV7 or RV9  
Dave Fritzsche – looking to buy or build a plane.

Treasurer report: \$1799.79 checking. \$2283.20 savings

Thun Field Advisory Commission met. Jeff and a few others attended to see what it's all about. In general there were not any major issues raised by the group. Dave Thomas and Jim Hill are on the committee and are good representatives for the airport.

June 9<sup>th</sup> is Young Eagles day. Lance Newman and Bernie Sanders will coordinate the event. We will need many volunteers to complete the team. Please contact Lance to get more info.

Chapter fly out event. As spring returns it's time to start thinking about setting up a group to get things going. Robert is taking a look at possible options.

Chapter tool crib. A group would like to start building up a set of tools for chapter use. Specialty items like welders, engine hoists, etc can be shared by the group.

Another NW Aviation Conference is past. The chapter had a nice booth and good representation at the event with Gary McDonald's RV4 fuselage and a mock up of the American Eagle engine on display. Thanks to all who came out and worked the booth.

## Thirty Seconds Over Elma

By Ron Wanttaja

After buying my Fly Baby ten years ago, I was hungering for local fly-ins to take it to. Mind you, I wasn't picky. So when GENERAL AVIATION NEWS listed the "Wild Blackberry Festival and Fly-In" at Elma, Washington, I was all raring to go. And I don't even like blackberries.

The weather was fall-gorgeous...mostly clear skies, some puffy cumulous down around 2500 feet, about 60 degrees on the ground at Auburn.

Temperatures that low mean it's time to wear the leather flying jacket instead of the summer weight one. And with the leather jacket, I felt justified in wearing my old, tattered silk scarf, too. Vain? \*Me\*? :-)

We launched about 12:30 and took a generally westbound course. I pity those who can't fly an open cockpit plane on a sunny fall day, especially around Puget Sound. The route to Elma led over the finger-like inlets of the south Sound area...the Vashon Straits, Carr Inlet, Case Inlet. Dark blue-green troughs of salt water interleaved with green-backed islands. Powerboats spreading herringbone wakes. White sails rounding the points.

One thing I'm \*not\* vain about is my singing voice. It's bloody awful, but I \*like\* to sing. That's one nice thing about airplanes. No yelling neighbors, no giggling teenagers in the next car. All it takes is a precautionary shutting down of the radio before the first verse. And if anyone on the ground hears me, they probably think it's just a seagull with a bowel obstruction

*"So Paddy lay back ... take in the slack  
Take a turn around the capstan, heave a pawwwllll  
'Bout ship stations, boys, be handy (be handy)  
We're bound for Valparaiso 'round the Horn!"*

With all the boats on the sound, sea chanties seemed about right. Chanties make excellent songs to sing while flying...being designed to be roared at the top of the lungs with only a casual nod to the proper notes.

So I bellowed my way to Elma. When I got near, I turned on the radio and crossed midfield at 1500 feet. I could see a small plane taking off to the west. I crossed past the downwind leg, teardropped back, entered the pattern, landed, and taxied in.

It was a typical small-airport fly-in, except for one thing: The place was packed with Ercoupes! The owner was a member of the Ercoupe club, and the club had made the Elma Fly-In a yearly activity.

I wriggled out of the 'Baby, answered the usual questions, and headed toward the registration table. They had a chalk board with upcoming activities. Some I had missed...the precision landing contest, etc. But the board said "2:00 Flour Bombing".

I was surprised. I had been there the last year, but they'd had skydiving teddy bears instead of flour bombs. Small stuffed bears with handkerchief parachutes, dropped from a hundred or so feet up. The bloodthirsty side of me had enjoyed it...watching those 'chutes streamer and the bears pancaking onto the tarmac and the surrounding bushes.

"You've got flour bombing this year, not the bears?" I asked.

"We spent too much time digging the bears out of the trees. It's \$2.50 per bomb, and your bombardier is one of the kids who have signed up."

"Ohhh... well, guess I can't do it. Single-seat airplane."

No, they assured me...they'd love for me to participate. So \$5 later, I was the possessor of two flour bombs.

Having never flour-bombed before, I'd always wondered how to figure out what kind of trajectory to assume. I lofted the bombs, lightly. Just a kid's-fist-sized dollop of flour in a baggie. Not much mass, lots of drag. The Ghost of Tiger Cole leaned over my shoulder: "We'll just drop 'em like retarded snake-eyes...."

Fictional BNnies aside, I figured my ordnance wouldn't have much penetration into the relative wind. Not much lead, then.

The next problem was carrying them. No bomb racks on the 'Baby (yet :-). I could carry them in my lap...but they're likely to slide onto the floor where I can't reach them. Tendrils of white flour puffed from the bags as I looked them over. Of course I was wearing black pants. I could just see stuffing them in my crotch and having one "go off". It would leave a REAL interesting white splotch, it would.

I fiddled around my leather jacket and found the bombs fit well in the front pockets. Leave the shoulder harness a bit loose, and they'd be fine. Lock the throttle on final, reach into the pocket, drop the bomb, and firewall the engine.

Time for the briefing. "Come over at 50 or 100 feet," the organizer said, "Though we ain't gonna check. Your target is the word "ELMA" painted lengthwise on the runway."

I mounted up. Plane upon plane passed by...all Ercoupees flown by older men, all with excited kids in the right seat. Then I started getting nervous. I didn't really mind it if I missed the target. I just didn't want to get shown up too much by some kid in a 'coupe. I set my altimeter to zero and joined the parade.

I was just entering downwind as the first Ercoupe made its run. He almost merged with his shadow...no 100-foot-high run, this. I couldn't really make out where the bomb went. I continued around the pattern. Turning a wide base behind another 'Coupe, I set the throttle to about 2000 RPM, twisted the lock, and gingerly pulled a flour bomb out of my jacket pocket.

Turning final...well, most of you know that I have a Walter Mitty complex a mile wide. I should have been lining my Swordfish up on the Bismarck. I should have been hurling my Thunderbolt at a Jagdpanther tucked in a hedgerow in the Falaise gap. I should have been thumbing the mike switch on my F-84F, calling "Baker Blue Three is green and hot."

Instead, I was saying to myself, "Pleeassee don't let me look stupid compared to a bunch of kids and rudder-pedal-less geezers."

A quarter mile out, two hundred feet up. Speed 100. I see the letters, with a line of irregular white specks clustered to the left. Crosswind? I rudder a bit to the right. Over the threshold, 100 feet and dropping, speed 90 and dropping. I start pulling out. I've got my left hand hanging over the edge of the cockpit, as low as it'll go. Cecil once said someone had spread ashes from the Story that way. Might as well try it.

We're flat, about 75 feet up. Speed dropping, the singing wires dropping in pitch. ELMA slides toward the nose. The "E" touches the leading edge of the wing.

I drop.

Power on full. Glance at the airspeed...75 and climbing. Pull up. Shoot a glance over my shoulder, just a quick one.

Was that a hit, right near the center of the letters, slightly to the right of centerline? Did I just imagine it? Was it someone else's?

How the heck do I correct for next time?

All the way around, I wondered how I'd done. Should I drop the same way? Later? Earlier? Without anything to judge by, all I can do is try the same thing again.

I duplicate the run, but with a little more power. I don't look back.

Around one more time, for a full-stop. There are still lots of planes in the pattern, so I work on short landing, not a smooth one. I succeed totally, with a short but bouncy landing.

They direct me to the first available parking spot, which is right across from the letters. I shut down the engine and start to unbuckle.

Feet pound up. "Great job, buddy! Great job!"

I rise to the occasion with my usual wit. "Huh?"

The man waved toward the runway. There were but two white smears close to the letters "ELMA". One on the left leg of the "M" and the other on the right leg.

"You hit it *both times!*"

Yowza. So I did. I felt ten feet tall and covered with hair. I felt deep pity for any pirate vessel that happened to be on Puget Sound on my way back home.

As luck would have it, I didn't win first place. I was standing by a man as his son came by in one of the Ercoupees, and Sean nailed the center "V" of the "M".

Sean went home in the money, but I didn't care. I'll probably never hit the broad side of a hangar again with anything but a wingtip...but I had my moment of glory in Elma, Washington. And another glorious trip back home....

*"A rovin', a rovin', though rovin's been my ruuu-eye-ennn,  
I'll go no more a rovin' with you, fair maid...."*

## **Aging Aircraft (and Pilots)**

**Bob Mackey**

**Vice President, Falcon Insurance Agency, Inc.**

One of the most frequent questions I'm asked is "Do older pilots pay higher premiums?" Well the simple answer is yes, they do. As pilots get older, just like airplanes, two things happen with the insurance. First, insurance becomes less available (i.e. some

of the insurance companies will not offer insurance for older aircraft or senior pilots). Second, the insurance companies that offer insurance for older airplanes and senior pilots will charge more, but the point at which they start charging more varies from one company to the next.

Is this discrimination? No, insurance companies have data showing that older airplanes may have accidents resulting from mechanical failure more frequently than newer aircraft. At the same time, aviation insurance companies will cite losses arising out of pilots who are older. The statistical credibility of this information however is very thin because the pilot population is extremely small. Unlike the automobile insurance industry where there are millions of drivers in varying age categories, the aviation community is much smaller and therefore the statistics are not as clear-cut. In any case, aviation insurance companies typically will either decline to offer insurance for older airplanes and senior pilots or they may charge a higher price.

There are two things you can do to mitigate these costs. First, if you have an older airplane, it's extremely important that you work with your insurance agency to make sure the insurance underwriters know the quality and condition of your airplane. This may mean sharing with the insurance agent and the insurance underwriter information on the most recent annual inspection or upgrades that you've made to the aircraft. This would include avionics upgrades, airframe time, engine time, and anything else you can come up with to show your airplane is in tip-top shape.

With respect to a pilot's age, it may be worthwhile to consider getting an annual medical, as opposed to every two years and doing it on a voluntary basis so that the insurance agent can show the underwriters that the pilot is staying in good shape and able to continue to pass an airman's medical on an annual basis. Frankly, I've found as pilots get older they know the importance of maintaining their physical condition and this information will help ensure your insurability and possibly avoid an increasing price on insurance.

How much more do insurance underwriters charge for older airplanes? That depends. In some cases, the increase can range from 25 to 50 percent, depending on the rarity of the aircraft and the age of the aircraft. A Beech Staggerwing, for example, would likely have a much higher rating because 1) there are not very many maintenance shops that can or will work on these aircraft; and 2) there is a limited quantity of parts for repairs.

It's more difficult to quantify for older pilots, but insurance companies do charge slightly higher premiums for older pilots. In some situations, insurance underwriters may even restrict the amount of coverage available by not allowing a higher limit on passenger coverage or reducing the overall combined single limit coverage.

That does not mean older pilots and older airplanes have to quit flying; it means simply that they need to be proactive in sharing airplane condition quality and the physical condition to insurance agents and underwriters. It's important also to look for other ways to prove one's worth as a policyholder for the insurance company, such as getting an annual instrument proficiency test or taking an annual/biannual flight test, or taking annual recurrent training with a local certificated flight instructor.

If you're looking for good, solid insurance coverage through an agency that you can depend on, give Falcon Insurance Agency and the EAA Aircraft Insurance Plan a call. It starts with you and can go right through your insurance agent to the underwriters to make sure you're getting the best insurance possible at the best price.

## Spilled Rivets

I've done this once before myself...actually twice. I do have a great solution to the cleanup though. Here's what I did:

Took a plastic large peanut butter jar, and 2 pieces of hose. Tygon, or poly tubing will work fine, with an I.D. of 1/4" or more. Put 2 holes in the jar lid, and stick both tubes into the jar. One tube only goes through about 1 inch. That tube gets hooked to your shop vac. The other tube gets stuffed down to within an inch from the bottom. That tube is what you use on the outside end to suck up the rivets.

So then I vacuumed them up, into the jar, but when I vacuumed them I tried to scatter them enough to only suck same-sized rivets. Hopefully you'll maybe spill one size mainly, and only a few oddballs. After you vac up one size, just empty the jar and do another. You should be left with very few rivets to hand sort.

Tim Olson

## T-18 Project For Sale

Project includes:

- Engine O-290D (GPU conversion with chrome cylinders)
- Pacesetter wood prop 68 X 68
- Professionally built wing spar and ribs.
- With the exception of instruments, all parts and materials to finish the project are on hand.
- Terra:- COM, NAV, & OBS
- NavAid AP (head and servo )

Price: \$10,000 for partially completed airplane.  
\$8000 for engine. \$18,000 total.

Call Tom Worth at (253) 576-2730.  
Schedule a T-18 demo ride too.

As a pilot, only two bad things can happen to you:

- a. One day you will walk out to the aircraft knowing it is your last flight.
- b. One day you will walk out to the aircraft not knowing it is your last flight.

End

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