

PIREPS

A bi-monthly newsletter for Nebraska pilots and aviation enthusiasts



'Encourage and Facilitate the Development and Use of Aviation in Nebraska'

PIREPS

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15th Annual Nebraska State Fly-In

By Diane R. Bartels

Driving in from the west on the eve of the Nebraska State Fly-In at Wayne, my eyes were drawn to a collection of bright white lights on a hill adjacent the highway. As I came closer, the image revealed itself in the form of an old farm wagon with a figure representing Uncle Sam standing in its bed. Nearby, American, POW/MIA, and "Support Our Troops" flags flew on ten-foot PCV pipes. Deb and Dennis Dannelly year-round show their support of the 189th Army Guard which recently returned from Iraq and for their son, a member of the Lincoln Air National Guard, who will soon deploy to Kyrgyzstan, Russia.

In town, hundreds of yellow ribbons tied to trees and light posts lined the streets of Wayne in conjunction with their annual Chicken Days celebration. At the airport, the Nebraska State Fly-In was officially dedicated to the men and women from the Wayne/Norfolk area who serve in the military.

Twenty-six airplanes flew in from as far as McCook to enjoy coffee and donuts and a free omelet breakfast served at the downtown venue. Members of the Northeast Nebraska Composite CAP marshaled airplanes and served as security. Local historian, Stanley Johnson, shared early-day flying stories and photos, including one of pre WWII Civilian Pilot Training students standing in front of the current hangar.

Airplane awards were provided by the Nebraska Aviation Council: Antique- Norman Hand, Pleas-



Best Antique - Norman Hands' 1949 Navion



Best Homebuilt - Jerry Williams Wittman Tailwind

anton, 1949 Navion; Homebuilt- Jerry Williams, Red Oak, IA, 2000 Wittman Tailwind, Sport: Frank Cuba, Silver Creek, 2007 Kappa KP5; and Warbird – James & Craig Kohtz, Columbus, 1943 PT-17.



Best Sport - R to L, Frank Cuba's Kappa KP5, Rod Thompkins, Scott Morgan and Jerry Conradt



Best Warbird - Jim Kohtz's PT17 with son Craig. Photo by Merlin Wright

In appreciation of hosting the State Fly-In, a plaque was presented to Becker Flying Service, the City of Wayne, and the Airport Authority.



FAA Reauthorization

By Stuart MacTaggart

The Congressional activity surrounding federal aviation reauthorization issues remains fluid. I had hoped to be able to provide more of a wrap-up. However, given the dynamics, I am necessarily limited to a “snap-shot.” On 20 Sept., the House passed HR 2881, which funds the Airport Improvement Program, at \$3.8B and tiered to \$4.1B in FY11—ample funding for forecasted requirements. The bill provides for additional funding of the so-called, “Next Gen” Air Traffic Control modernization efforts, and retains General Aviation entitlements for non-primary airports, a program which is helping to bring our rural Nebraska airports up to par. Some aviation fees were included, such as aircraft registration and issuance of medical and airman certificates. However, the dreaded, “user fees”, were stricken in favor of a modest fuel tax increase—up 4.8 cents for AvGas and 14.1 cents for jet. This tax increase raises the price of jet fuel above diesel; so look for a repeal of the requirement for FBO’s to apply for a refund. Both the AOPA and the NBAA have praised the bill. The next step is up to the Senate. With S.1300 still containing the \$25 IFR user fee, there will undoubtedly be heated debate.



Stuart MacTaggart
Director, NE Dept. of
Aeronautics

New Pilots and Certificates



Private

Andrew Kocarnik – Lincoln
Frederick Gay – Lincoln
James Rippey – Bellevue
James Slabaugh – Omaha
Wesley Hock – Culbertson
Curt Werner – St. Edward
James Prochal – LaVista
Thomas Shaddy – Papillion
Adam Michaelsen – Omaha
Elizabeth Wier – Offutt AFB
Robert Barber – Bellevue
Michael Self – Omaha

John Harris – Omaha
John McCubbin – Pickrell
Travis Ammon – Valley
Kenneth Ewer – Elkhorn
Bryce Dickson – Lincoln
Robert Hilkemann – Omaha
Steven Kiene – Lincoln
Andrew Hixson – Omaha
Charles Barton – Omaha
Angela Burgett – Omaha
Brian Ault – Bellevue

Commercial

Sean Cappel – McCook
Dustin Babb – Omaha

Timothy Willey – Omaha

Instrument

John Harris – Omaha
Kristofer Terry – Bellevue
Lloyd Morrow – Wahoo
Daniel Reyome – Bellevue
Charles Birdsall – Bellevue

Randy Hellerich – Elkhorn
Rodney Lusk – Omaha
Jon Deshazo – Papillion
Timothy Cole – Lincoln

Multi-Engine

Dustin Bingham – Omaha
Dustin Babb – Omaha
Steven Sherwood – St Edward

Brian Devoss – Council Bluffs
Steven Bojanski – Omaha
Richard Buesing – Fremont

Flight Instructor

Ross Niedbalski – Columbus (SE)
Brian Devoss – Omaha (SE)
Michael O’Connell – Omaha (SE)

Sean Cappel – McCook (SE)
Eric Sissel – Lincoln (ME)
John Rued – Bellevue (Instrument)

Pooped!

By Scott Stuart

Hmmm, why is it that every time you read, and thank you by the way!, one of my stories that it is always about death by plane?? Jane and I are not too keen on TV news because it always seems to show the seamy side of everything. Not enough “good news” to suit. So, the story is once again about bad things that happen to aviators.



Scott Stuart

Wing contamination. Sounds innocent enough, but it will jump up and bite you as quick as any. And, the heck of it? You never have to suffer from it! Yet, some will do just that this fall/winter and we can read about them in the news! Remember Dick Ebersole’s charter jet not making it? Even big iron is not exempt. I am of course, talking about frost.

Pretty as a picture is frost, and as I recall some guy named Frost made a decent living as an author and never harmed a flea. Yet frost will bring you down as quickly as that other famous Frost did as a safety for the NY Jets.

There you are, free to fly on a frosty morning. You are rolling down the runway and thanks to ground effect, you lift off, such a wonderful sensation, only to be followed by that sinking feeling that you get high and hot: little or no climb performance!! It is then that you have run out of runway and ideas at the same time.

Clean your wing. Or, let the sun do it. I have used credit cards too, and, when the ambient temp is warm enough, a bucket full of water will do very nicely. Patience, frost is something we can all control, if we can control ourselves. Just like waiting out some inclement weather, frost too shall pass! All this from the safety of the waiting room at the FBO, too!

And, while you are at it, don’t forget the other two cold weather items that can bite! Carburetor ice on climb out, or final approach will sure make the sterile cockpit disappear at just the wrong time, too! Know the demands of the engine and the particular plane you fly. My Husky has an O-360, and boy does it make ice!! Yet, nothing in the book about carb heat and when to use it.

Pooped....did you wonder about the title of this piece and how it all fit? Simple. A friend of mine has a Super Cub on floats. Last month he departed the water and said it seemed the plane was “doggy”, slow to get off the water, slow to climb and slow to cruise. He landed ASAP and come to find out: wing contamination in August. Yep, the FBO had parked the plane under a tree that had many birds, and the droppings from them had contaminated the top of the wing!! Once the “stuff” was cleaned off, presto, away he went. It does not take much to degrade the performance of our crafts, and with the “loose nut” up front, maybe, just maybe, one more nail and it is a call to the insurance adjuster, if we are lucky. Let’s keep it clean out there!

Gear down and locked??



Pilots Do Dumb Things!

By Thomas Gribble

I sit at home reading aircraft accident reports and I say to myself, "Boy! There sure are a lot of dumb pilots."



I had ridden in military aircraft a dozen times before I began flight training. I was what they called a "qualified observer". This, of course, made me quite knowledgeable, aeronautically speaking. My job in the front right seat of the

SNB was to watch for other aircraft in the Naval Air Station Olathe traffic pattern. There were six of those Twin Beech trainers providing realistic training for we student GCA controllers. I don't recall seeing any of the other five aircraft.

By the time I began flying lessons I knew all about airplanes and how they flew, so getting the ticket would be a snap. And it was, quite literally, a snap. My first half hour at the controls proved it.

Aware of my background, the instructor (who learned to fly in 1929) knew there was no need to give me any pre-flight instruction. He merely told me to get in the front seat of the Champ and said, "Don't touch any thing!" He fiddled with a switch and a couple of knobs, then walked around to the front of the 7AC and gave the prop a spin. The engine coughed to life and settled into a rhythmic idle as he ducked under the wing and slid into the back seat.

He said not a word (with my vast store of knowledge, he knew there was no need for talk) as he taxied to the far end of the all-way grass field. Once there, he revved the engine for a few seconds. I wasn't sure what he was doing back there in the rear seat, although the switch he had monkeyed with prior to starting the engine, along with another knob, was located just behind my left elbow.

Satisfied with whatever it was he had been playing with, he took off and, after climbing to a considerable altitude, told me to take the controls and continue climbing. As soon as I did, I knew right away there was something wrong with the airplane, for it kept turning to the left.

In an attempt to hide the fact that the airplane was not behaving properly, he told me to make a climbing left turn.

I pushed the stick to the left. To keep the Aeronca from now turning even more rapidly to the left I applied right rudder. This seemed to stop the turn completely, so I pushed the stick further left. Now the climb ceased, so I pulled the stick back. This soon became an ongoing process: left stick, right rudder, pull back; left stick, right rudder, pull back.

Suddenly the earth and sky swapped places as quickly as you can snap your fingers. The instructor's harsh shout of, "I've got it!", is the last item I recall during that flight, although it is recorded in my logbook as lasting a half hour.

My latest flight, just yesterday, was to Sidney. Before heading

Continued on Page 6, Right Column

ADM!!

By Lee Svoboda

An area in the Practical Test Standard (PTS) that probably does not get enough attention is the front portion of the PTS. There are several paragraphs that provide valuable information for both instructors and applicants. One of the more important paragraphs is titled, "Special Emphasis Areas". There are several high priority areas listed, however, the one I have selected to discuss is, Aeronautical Decision Making (ADM). Although this area is not specifically addressed under each TASK, it is essential to flight safety and will be evaluated during the practical test.



Lee Svoboda

ADM, is kind of a fancy set of words for what we do every time we fly. Probably one of the best examples of poor ADM occurred during a recent private test. During the preflight I kept mentioning that it sure was windy. However, as we know, young men sometimes think they can handle anything in an airplane. Well this young man elected to fly and the higher altitude air work went just fine. However, as we turned final for the first landing, he turned to me and announced, "I have never flown in wind speed this high before". Well, I'll bet you can imagine what I wanted to say in response to the young man. I didn't say it and he didn't pass the test.

Whether to fly is the first ADM we employ each time we prepare to fly. The decision to fly or not to fly is influenced by many factors, such as weather, aircraft equipment and condition, our condition and currency, importance of the trip, weight and balance, fuel, etc.

Then once airborne, the decision-making continues. Headwind higher than forecast, ground speed lower than anticipated, will an extra fuel stop be required? Around or through the weather, upon arrival in the destination area, lower ceilings or higher surface winds, all require constant ADM'ing.

Now that we know what we are talking about, how does an examiner test an applicant? The example of the young man on the windy day was easy because Mother Nature presented the situation. But what if the winds are calm, the sky is clear, the airplane is new, and the applicant is very knowledgeable? Then the examiner goes to what the FAA is advocating and that is scenario based testing. Applicant, here is the situation, with your knowledge and experience, what are you going to do? And these scenarios could be presented to the applicant both on the ground and during the flying portion of the practical test.

So instructors and applicants: ADM is here. You can expect examiners to go more and more toward scenario based testing which requires the applicant to make decisions based on their knowledge and experience which will affect safety and risk management.



Norfolk's Fly-in

A ceiling of 1800' with visibility around 5 miles dampened fliers enthusiasm for attending Norfolk's Fly-in breakfast on July 21. For those who braved the "elements" and came anyway it was a great time. EAA Chapter 918 in conjunction with the Norfolk Airport Authority hosted a fine breakfast of pancakes, sausage, coffee and juice.

This was the same weekend that Boyd Coddington and his wife appeared at the car show adjacent to the northwest edge of the airport. Boyd is a regular on TV, building custom hot rods which are nothing short of spectacular! One of his cars was on display along with his customized trailer which accompanies him to car shows all over the U.S.



Dr. Pietz and Ken Eggers

Back to the Fly-in breakfast! Two interested people who attended were Dr. Pietz and "Master Pilot" Ken Eggers, both from Neligh. Dr. Pietz practiced in Neligh for many years and has been instrumental in getting FAA grants for improving the Antelope County Airport while Ken is a long time aerial applicator.

David Brown and his sons, Garrett and Greyson, came all the way from Richland, MO for the events. They were the special guests of your editor along with his wife Gena and Great Grandmother, Eula Wilson. Chris Emundson, publisher of the "Nebraska Life" magazine, was there with his 1948 Stinson Station Wagon and graciously provided David and his sons an enjoyable flight over the city of Norfolk.



Greyson, Garrett, David Brown and Chris Emundson

The Nebraska State Patrol came in to display their helicopter, providing

information to bystanders concerning its capabilities and uses. LifeNet's helicopter and aircrew flew in about 10am. Dan and Gary Petersen arrived in their 1942 Waco UPF biplane while Kurt Muley came in with his Pitts. Several Challengers and a Kit Fox were also there.

Airport Manager Jerry Adams had a "hayride" shuttle running which would take you to the car show and back. One of the more interesting vendors at the car show came from Sioux City with his "Boss Hog" stainless steel barbeque smoker. It displayed the US and Iowa flags, had a tin, top hat, pig ears, a moving mouth and eyebrows. The barbeque was very good!



"Boss Hog" Smoker

When the Wind Stops Blowing!

By Kevin Rutland

It wasn't looking promising. July is always hot, humid and usually windy in Nebraska. And Friday had all the indications of living up to expectations. The forecasters even agreed on this, with the temperatures due to go through the nineties, and the winds to gust up to 30mph.



Kevin and Anne Rutland

The David City airport was all set for a great weekend, and the local pilots were all set for fun, but only those able to fly in early on Friday stood much chance of making it, so I was not too surprised



Ramp Scene at 8th ANUG

to see just a handful of airplanes on the apron. The weather hadn't prevented a large contingent of Powered Parachutes (PPs), several Powered Paragliders (PPG), and a trike from arriving by road. Numbers were swelled by those of us, not bringing a flying machine, but still enthused to be a part of the annual get together, July 6-8. As we all enjoyed an evening BBQ provided by the David City Chapter of the EAA.

"When The Wind Stops Blowing!"

Continued on Page 5



"When The Wind Stops Blowing!" *Continued From Page 4*

City Rotary Club, the wind still blew, except in the main hanger, where we could have done with a breeze. Time was still well spent catching up on the news and activities over the previous year, and there was even a large birthday cake to fill any remaining voids.

Eternal optimists live in hope. And their persistence paid off. We had returned to the camping area to continue the chat and the stories, when I decided it was time to go and get some photographs of the parked airplanes. As I wandered around the corner of the control building I realized that there was activity out on the grass runway. The PPG guys were doing some kiting in the breeze, and a couple of PPs were testing their engines. As I continued to look for interesting shots I could feel the airfield coming alive. Against all the odds, the wind was dying. Within ten minutes the sky was filled with activity. I had action all around me and it continued until the official time after sunset was reached. Even better the relenting wind had permitted more pilots to fly in. Some flew in and out, and a few camped overnight.

Anne and I had booked a room at David City's Rose Motel, as we like our creature comforts, but those who camped had a great night as the humidity and temperature dropped away.

Perfection has a price they say, and sure enough we awoke to a strengthening wind and rapidly rising temperatures. When we arrived at the airfield, most of the attending pilots and campers had already enjoyed a biscuits and gravy breakfast provided by the Rotary Club. The wind didn't prevent a Powered Parachute from taking to the air and showing everyone else that PPs can handle stiff wind conditions. I'm guessing that the wind was around the 15mph mark and it may have been gusting higher. The only other aircraft to fly during the morning were the visiting RVs, and other light aircraft.

In the afternoon, a couple of Yaks flew in, treating everyone to a great exhibition of formation flying as they flew around the city. Although the winds were high, the humidity was low, and it was pleasant to sit in the shade and chat.

Anne and I had to leave before the planned candy drop but I gather that it went off well as the wind obliged again.

2007 will be remembered by many as the year they were unable to fly in to the 8th Annual Nebraska Ultralight Gathering, but for those of us who made it, the event was worth attending. And one in eight is still a great record.

Editor Note: Check out Kevin's web site at <http://awfullygoodstuff.com> Lots of great information about ultralights.



PPs Formation Flying

National Air Races Grand Champions

By Pat Keefer

Harlon Hain and Charlie Daubs of Bellevue, two of the only 90 pilots trained to fly the record-setting SR-71 Blackbird, haven't lost their touch on the flight controls - they won two of the three National Air Races and had the best overall performance in all three events, claiming the Marion Jayne Perpetual Trophy as Grand Champions in the July 15-20 competitions.



**Harlon Hain and Charlie Daubs With Their Race
Winning 1969 Piper Comanche**

They placed first in the Wichita 300 Air Race and in the Stevens Point 300 Air Race which are navigational challenge speed races with only a compass and map for help. They placed second in the 1900 mile Marion Jayne Air Race where weather knowledge is key. Harlon claims to be 80 and 3/4 years old (sort of makes you smile, doesn't it) and is a colon cancer survivor. He raced to third in the 1992 Round the World Air Race. Immediately following the National Air Races, Harlon and Charlie flew back to Nebraska and left the following morning to support the Wyoming Stampede. The youngest competitor in the National Air Races was 17.

Council Bluffs Fly-in

The weather was perfect and the temperature was fine. A great day for a fly-in breakfast and since I only live 18 miles away, a short drive to the airport for a lot of fun! On the ramp was exactly what I had hoped for; "Gunfighter", the P51 Mustang flown by



"Gunfighter Flanked by Three Swifts"

Reg Urschler and Larry Lumpkin and three Swifts all lined up in a row!

Inside the maintenance hangar was another great pancake and sausage breakfast cooked by the original "Pancake Man", Jim Kuper, who started his business 21 years ago. Another visitor who came to the eating area was a skunk! This one was on a remotely controlled car chassis but you didn't notice



Jim Kuper

Continued on Page 6, Left Column

**Council Bluffs Fly-in****"Nice Kitty" Wheeeew!**

decorated with so many gadgets and gewgaws that you saw something new every time you looked at it. Rich told me he often rolls the skunk from under the truck, getting some unusual and animated reactions from unsuspecting spectators!

Two of the guests who drove in with me was my grandson, Mitchell, and his dad, Ray VanCleave from Houston, TX.

**Mitchell in "Gunfighter"****Continued From Page 5**

the wheels until your heart rate had slowed down. Its owner, Rich Molden, also brought his award winning Ford truck to the event which would squirt you with a stream of water or make strange and unusual sounds. It was a visual feast just to get near the old truck which was highly

**Rich Molden and His "Truck"**

Larry Lumpkin suggested we put Mitchell in the cockpit of "Gunfighter" and get a picture. He was all "thumbs up"!

Lisa Smith, owner of Advanced Air, Inc., told me 454 people ate breakfast while 35 aircraft flew in and 15 antique automobiles drove in. Another great fly-in breakfast!

Low Level Flying

By Kevin Rutland

How about doing some flying just inches off the ground? It can be done, and safely, if you have the right machine. OK, I may not be talking about a flying machine that would instantly jump into your head. The craft I have in mind is one of the least known or seen machines, especially in this part of the world.

I'm talking about hovercraft. There is a growing awareness of what these fun machines are able to do. Not only can you have one that will fly about eight inches off the deck, but you can get machines that actually fly along several feet off the ground or water, making use of ground effect.

Hovercraft are able to pass over land, water, sandbars, snow and even ice with very little effort. To give you an idea of what is possible, I will describe my current machine, a UH13PT. This 13 feet long craft has a 6.75hp lift engine and a 13hp thrust engine. Weighing in at around 300lbs empty, it can carry about 350lbs of payload, usually myself and my wife, plus fuel, and will happily

cruise along at around 20-30mph. Not bad for 13hp! The craft is constructed from a combination of foam, plywood and fiberglass and has a positive buoyancy of around 1000lbs. The cost of my machine is around \$1200 including the engines. I burn about a gallon per hour and have been out on trips of around fifty miles with half a tank of fuel left when we got back to the ramp.

Bigger machines can be built to carry up to six persons, and will cruise along at 50mph, making use of a converted car engine. If you want something more exotic, then how about a 21 foot craft that has small wings and will fly in ground effect? If you want it, it is out there.

The great news is that we have the perfect rivers around us for experiencing the thrill of hovercrafting. The Platte and Elkhorn Rivers, although too shallow for anything other than airboats and tube rafters, are ideal for these machines. The lower the river gets the more fun can be had. Also, the rivers are so underused it's like taking a trip into the wilderness as the maze of passages allows for endless variations of route. Even if the river is up, the hovercraft is able to travel in either direction, with the current causing no noticeable effect in the cruising speed. The wind is more of a controlling factor, as it is for most slower speed airplanes, but the typical weather we experience is perfect for hovering.

Hovercraft have quietly come a long way. Perhaps quiet is not the best word to use as there are still issues about sound levels, but with larger slower propellers and well muffled engines it is possible to come up with an acceptably quiet machine. I will say my own machine is not as quiet as I would like, but I'm swinging a 36" propeller and use the standard mufflers on both engines. I

**"Hovercrafting on The River" Anne Rutland in UH13PT**

have intentions of building a large duct and propeller and setting up a reduction drive to lower the sound footprint. With a large body of builders sharing knowledge and experience, every year craft get quieter and more efficient.

Hovercrafting is a great pastime for those of us with a creative, and problem solving nature, as well as for those who only want to get out on the river and have fun aiming at sandbars, and surprising passengers as we float over the obstacles (for normal river craft) on a soft cushioning platform. Hovercraft are very cheap to build, or reasonable priced to purchase. Creativity is encouraged. Many



first timers go on to try and design their own second machine.

Other enthusiasts, with a quest for speed can achieve seventy mph or more with the correct mix of engine, propeller and craft design. If racing appeals then you could join in the competitions springing up around the country, and eventually represent the country at international level.

The Hover Club of America (www.hoverclubofamerica.org) is the governing body, and an internet search will bring up plenty of sites for anyone interested in building or buying one of these interesting machines. Locally, the Midwest Hovercraft Club welcomes new members and encourages interested individuals to give hovering a try. If you go to www.Groups.Yahoo.com and type in the club name you can find out more about hovercrafting, or email me: ulavenger@yahoo.com

If you are looking for a new way to have fun then give hovercrafts a try.

EAA Chapter 569 & "The Tin Goose"

With Excerpts From an Article by the EAA

EAA's Ford Tri-motor was in Lincoln from Sept. 20-23 giving rides for anyone who wanted to climb aboard, of course they had to pay \$50 for the privilege. Sponsored by EAA Chapter 569, the Tin Goose performed admirably and provided a lot of nostalgia for many people.

The first three Tri-Motors built seated the pilot in an open cockpit, as many pilots doubted a plane could be flown without direct "feel of the wind".

Ford Motor Company built 199 Tri-Motors from 1926 through 1933. EAA's model 4-AT-



EAA's Ford Tri-motor

E was number 146 off Ford's innovative assembly line and first flew on August 21, 1929. It was sold to Pitcairn Aviation's passenger division, Eastern Air Transport, whose paint scheme is replicated on EAA's Tri-Motor. This is why our Ford resides in the Pitcairn hangar at Pioneer Airport. Eastern Air Transport later became Eastern Airlines.

In 1930, NC8407 was leased to Cubana Airlines, where it inaugurated air service between Havana and Santiago de Cuba. The airplane was later flown by the government of the Dominican Republic.

EAA's Ford Trimotor returned to the U.S. in 1949 for barnstorming use. In 1950 it was moved from Miami, Florida to Phoenix, Arizona and was refitted with more powerful engines for use as a crop duster. With two 450hp engines and one 550hp engine, it

became the most powerful Model 4-AT ever flown. In 1955 it was moved to Idaho and fitted with two 275 gallon tanks and bomb doors for use as a borate bomber in aerial fire fighting. Then in 1958, it was further modified for use by smoke jumpers.

In 1973, the aircraft was still being used for air show rides, including the EAA's Fly-In at Burlington, Wisconsin. While at the 1973 EAA Fly-In, a severe thunderstorm ripped the plane from its tie-downs, lifted it 50 feet into the air and smashed it to the ground on its back.

After an arduous, twelve-year restoration process by EAA staff, volunteers and with assistance from Ford Tri-Motor operators nationwide, the old Tri-Motor once again took to the air.

Pilots Do Dumb Things!

Continued From Page 3

for the airport my wife asked if the battery in my handheld was charged up. "Of course," I growled! I flew less than an hour last week after having the radio on the charger for a couple hours. No need for more charging now.

At Scottsbluff I could barely hear the ASOS. That darn thing needs fixing! And both aircraft in the pattern need to fix their radios; they're garbled. Upon broadcasting my takeoff intentions, I could not hear a side tone in my headset. Nor could I hear a response, though I had the volume full up. Probably just my foam ear plugs blocking my hearing.

Approaching Sidney, I could not hear their ASOS, either. Are they all bad? When I announced my planned landing on runway 20, there was again no side tone. Finally, on base leg, I could hear a faint voice on the CTAF, but I could not understand what was being said. Those darn ear plugs again!

On taxi-out, I still could not hear their ASOS. I did a short run-up on the taxiway, gave the traffic pattern a quick visual scan, and then broadcast (again with no side tone) my intention to take off on the grass runway 20. Hearing no conflicting traffic, I taxied up to the edge of runway 12/30 before laying the whip to the Continental for take-off on 20.

I was off in short order and crossed the end at 700' AGL before turning crosswind. As I rolled out of the next turn onto the downwind I saw a jet moving slowly at the far end of runway 30. Where'd that come from, I wondered? Is it taxiing for take-off on 12? I don't remember seeing a jet on the ramp. You don't suppose it just LANDED on runway 30?

As I watched, the jet turned around and began taxiing toward the ramp. The jet "DID" just land on runway 30. How come I hadn't seen it? How close to the threshold were they when I began my take-off roll? Did I cause the pilots any angst, wondering what the dullard Aeronca driver was doing? Did they anticipate a go-around due to my carelessness?

When I got home I put my handheld on the charger for fifteen hours. It's up to a full charge now, but I'll put it on the charger again for several hours before I head for the airport next time.

Every flight is a learning experience and I still have a lot to learn. I'll probably do many more DUMB things, so keep a sharp lookout for me. And, I'll do the same for you.

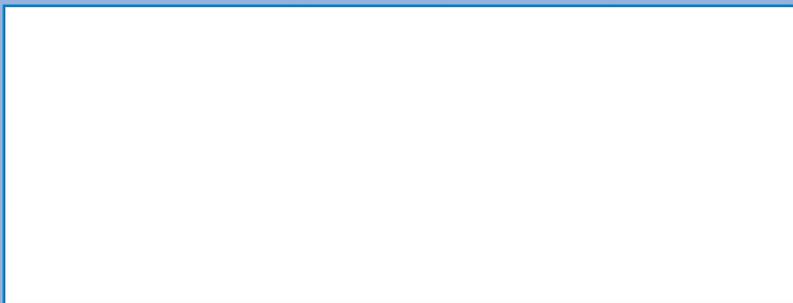
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Calendar of Events

- **York Airport (JYR)**, EAA Chapter 1055 Fly-in breakfast on the 1st Saturday of every month. 0800-1000. Free to PIC.

- **Crete Airport (CEK)**, EAA Chapter 569 Fly-in breakfast on the 3rd Saturday of every month. 0730-1030.

January 23-26 Kearney (EAR) 2008 NAC Aviation Seminar at the Kearney Holiday Inn. Jan 23, 7:30pm Wings program presented by UNO's Bob Moser, Jan 24, Thursday, numerous sessions of interest to pilots and mechanics; luncheon speaker Charlie Thompson (a humorist who will brighten your day. He will make you laugh, but he will also make you think), breakout sessions in afternoon; evening banquet speaker is Howie Franklin (former Chief flight attendant on Air Force One). Airport of the Year Award, Aviation Hall of Fame Awards & Project of the Year Award. Aviation Maintenance Seminar Friday and Saturday, IA renewal. Pre-registration fee is \$75 early, at the door \$95. Both, early \$120, at the door \$150. More Info: 402-729-2250 or 402-223-5349

February 18 - 20 North Platte (LBF) - NATA Convention at the Sandhills Convention Center & Quality Inn & Suites, 800-760-3333 or 308-532-9090. State that you are with The NATA Convention to confirm the group rate. Registration fee is \$75 which covers the PAASS recertification program. To recertify, attendees must attend the PAASS session on Tuesday and the recertification session on Wednesday. There will be a Monday afternoon session at 2 p.m. on 2007's fungicides performance.

Flight Services Comments??

The FAA has established a new toll-free number for pilots to comment on Lockheed Martin flight services. The number is 888-FLT SRVC, or 888-358-7782. Comments will be recorded and forwarded to Lockheed Martin, which will take action and respond to pilots within 15 days.

Lockheed Martin has also developed a web based comment/complaint form to be used by the FAA, pilot community and other government organizations that are serviced by Lockheed Martin Flight Services. **The new form can be accessed at: <http://fs-feedback.gosysops.info>** This will take you to the FAA System Operations. Scroll down and you will see the heading "Flight Service Feedback form." When you select this you will be prompted for an ID and password. Use the case sensitive ID and password as follows: **ID: FAAFeedback01 Password: 07!feedback** Fill out the form and select "Submit."

Airport of the Year 2007

Does your airport deserve recognition? How does your airport stack up against the others you have visited over the year? Have the management and staff of a particular Nebraska airport performed above and beyond??

Nominate a favorite airport for statewide recognition as NE Airport of the Year 2007. Go to: www.aero.state.ne.us Once there scroll down to "Airport of the Year" form, print it, fill it out and mail to: NE Department of Aeronautics, Attn: Editor of PIREPS, PO Box 82088, Lincoln, NE 68501. Must be received by

The award will be presented during the NE Aviation Symposium held at Kearney during January 2008.