

EAA CHAPTER 1128

Two Harbors Helgeson Airport

www.1128.eaachapter.org

It's hot and sticky at the lake tonight but the lightening show is magnificent. Considering the ten or eleven months that never get too hot I'm trying not to complain. Our September meeting will be on **Thursday, the 5th at 6:30 at Two Harbors Helgeson Airport.** We will meet by the admin building then adjourn to the ukie flying field for some fun flying, everyone will get a chance to fly!

LAST MEETING

The August get-together took place in Hangar 1 thanks to Carl Murphy. Mike and Ryan spent a lot of the day setting up the screen and projector. We knew there were plenty of chairs in the room right next to the hangar but it was locked. Several would-be spies tried their best non destructive lock picking techniques but no one penetrated the vault. Camp chairs appeared from vehicles and seating became a non-issue. Mike opened the meeting with another thanks to the volunteers for the pancake fly-in and told us the Chapter had \$1015.00 profit because of their hard work. He and Seth were planning on attending the Cloquet chapter's cookout/meeting the following weekend and invited all members to join them. Seth went over the schedule for the Fly-in Movie night and recruited some volunteers. We watched the "Ultimate Aviation" DVD and enjoyed the variety of the subjects. Watching two WWII Grumman Bearcat fighters perform precision aerobatics Ray leaned over and said, "I like the Hellcats better." After the video Matt suggested we organize a lending library of aviation videos and became the first participant. All the members pitched in to dismantle the display equipment and cleanup was quick. There was still plenty of daylight after the meeting so I pulled Miss Chaos out into the evening air and took her for a spin.

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Mike, Seth and Dan went to the Cloquet meeting and enjoyed the hospitality. 1221's ambitious fly-out schedule continues with three destinations in one August week including Brainard, Eveleth and our very own field of dreams for the fly-in movie.

Chapter 272 will have their annual fall fly-in and Young Eagles rally on September 7th. They are currently investigating the Build-a-Plane initiative in the hopes of involving more young people in experimental aviation. Meetings are still the third Thursday of the month at 7:00.

ETC.

Sad news reached us this month, EAA's founder Paul Poberezny lost his battle with cancer at age 91. Charismatic, larger than life and driven by his dream, Paul was comfortable with presidents of industry, presidents of nations and the kid down the street with the balsa wood glider. Master pilot, skilled mechanic and gifted airplane builder he always said EAA was not about the aircraft, it was about the people and he lived that attitude right up to the end. He will be sorely missed by all but his legacy will live on far into the future.

The power of mother nature continues to amaze me. My daughter Gina and I sat out on the deck last night and witnessed the most magnificent light show I have ever experienced. The lightning

was almost continuous so we could trace the rapid movement of the angry clouds and the strobe effect added a trippy vertigo to the party. Before sunset we had watched a brilliant white anvil cloud develop right before our eyes and marveled at the immense forces on display. I don't know how many people think of the sky as a dynamic living entity but she surely is. Those of us who travel in the sky's good graces should never forget that is just one face of the great, living sea that surrounds us all.

Part 103 of the Federal Aviation Regulations is short, to the point and (rare for government) written in understandable English. A quick one page skim will tell you all you need to know about Ultralight Vehicles. Having read it several times I can tell you that there is absolutely nothing practical about an ultralight. If one concocted a way to make them practical I'm sure it would be against the rules. But I did, and I got away with it!

Before Oshkosh I dropped my car at my mechanic's shop in Two Harbors. My friend Bill gave me a ride home and didn't seem to mind but it was an hour out of his way so I began cooking up a scheme. After Oshkosh I brought Fifi home to the lake instead of leaving her at the airport and tied her down in the backyard. It was nice having her close. When my car was finally done I drove the Merry Yacht to the airport, removed my bicycle and pedaled to the shop to retrieve the car. My plan was coming together. I watched the weather closely the next few days and on Friday it was perfect. As soon as I got home from work I untied Fifi and gave her a thorough pre-flight inspection. The afternoon cumulus clouds were well spaced and benign and the blue sky between beckoned.

Fifi's tiny tail wheel has a tough time with the gravel on my road so I lifted it into a small trailer and towed her backwards to my neighbor's airstrip. The Flying 'C' Ranch has not been maintained for years and the alder brush is trying to take over the runway but the lawn is mowed and that's all Fifi needs. I chatted with Bunny Covington for a bit and then fired my girl up. We spooked a family of honkers at the water's edge then spun around and launched into the warm summer sky.

I busted into a huge grin and my tension blew away on the wind. With the trailer adventure and the severely limited runway I had worked up some apprehension that I didn't recognize until it disappeared. Now the world opened up before me in that low angle sunlight photographers love. Without windows or obstructions to my view I became part of the environment only the birds can call home. Leveling off just above the trees I took a tour of our twin lakes and waved at everybody out enjoying the evening. They all waved back. Turning south I let Fifi follow the highway and became the human movie camera, recording every stunning image in my permanent gray matter memory. There are lakes, rivers and swamps all along the route that one never sees from the road and private back yards are mine if I care to peek. Crossing the ridge at five mile hill I let Fifi's nose drop and we zoomed down the long grade towards town. Lake Superior filled my view and I chuckled as I almost missed my turn at co. rd. #12. I could see the airport but it was fun to follow the same route I usually drive. There was a Cessna on final for runway 6 and a Champ rolling out on 15 so I swung over Ryan and Emily's house while the traffic cleared. They were both outside and we exchanged big waves.

Fifi set me down gently and as we taxied back I allowed myself a little satisfaction for pulling off my scheme. I harbor no illusion that ultralights will ever be practical commuters but I proved that with a little creativity they can at least be useful. And I logged some rare cross country flight time in Fifi's logbook.

All the aviation magazines I read get letters from people griping about the high cost of flying. Those 45 minutes I spent with Fifi cost me \$8.60. Considering her ability to hide in a hangar corner for the winter and the fact that I do my own inspections (anyone can with an ultralight) my annual costs are just slightly more than the cost of gas. If you must have a big, fast, comfortable cruiser to travel the country it will be expensive but airline tickets aren't free. My point is, flying is just as expensive as you make it. Please don't reject the idea just because you think you can't afford it, you can!

.....Happy Landings!.....

