

EAA CHAPTER 1128

Two Harbors Helgeson Airport

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I've always said winter was my favorite six months of the year but this year it's going on seven and enough is enough. The days are getting longer at least and the sun is strong when it shines. Our next meeting will be at **6:30 on Thursday, April 4th** in the **Community Room at Two Harbors High School**.

Last Meeting

Seth had a cool video playing as the members filed in. High performance rigid wing hang gliders played in ridge lift at some mountain site. Mike opened the meeting with the 'Aviator's Pledge' which he had appropriated from Red Green: "I'm a pilot but I can change, if I have to, I guess." Matt said the student tour of Duluth International was tentatively scheduled for April 12 and he was going to try to arrange a tour just for the teachers on March 22. Seth asked for ideas to improve our pancake breakfast and pointed out the sign-up sheets for treats and presentations at future meetings. Bill gave our treasury total as \$1059.05 and promised to spend the nickel. More videos followed, some really huge radio control aircraft and a reprise of the Christmas party song. Ryan gave a report on the U control model. He had purchased the kit and said it might be possible to copy the parts for a second plane but it wouldn't be easy. Ron gave a really interesting presentation about the 1911 Wright Brothers' glider. He had been involved with building a replica of this unique aircraft and knew every detail. The process was as much detective work as construction work. They had 43 old pictures and 3 pages of diary entries but no plans or blueprints of any kind. The original only existed for seven days but apparently that was enough to satisfy the evolving curiosity of Orville and Wilbur. You could tell Ron enjoyed explaining the engineering aspect of this enigmatic aircraft and we learned a lot. We also got some insight into the personalities of the Bishop's Boys in the bargain.

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Mike and I attended chapter 272's last meeting at Mark Marino's Hangar 10 at Sky Harbor. The Lark of Duluth was assembled inside the comfortable hangar and it looked airworthy. The craftsmanship was flawless and the woodwork was high-end furniture quality. A few parts were present but not installed like ailerons, tip floats and fuel tank and the gear reduction unit was on order but those details didn't diminish the majestic presence of the completed airframe. Mark and Tom Betts took turns describing their long hours re-creating a piece of history. It appears they are on track to have her ready for the big Festival July 12-14.

Chapter 1221 continued their busy fly-out schedule last Saturday with a trip to the Grand Ely Lodge for lunch. Their regular meetings are the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 in the terminal building at Cloquet.

ETC.

Mike Shannon has been busy wringing out his just completed Rans S-7. His forty hour test program is nearly complete but that won't be the end of his quest to make it the best. I watched him shoot some landings and that pretty blue bird climbs out like it's weightless!

Mike Busch is still sneaking in some build time on the Rocket when he can pry himself away from his contract job at Cirrus. The good thing about work is you can afford airplane parts, the bad thing is you don't have the time to make them into an airplane.

Ryan Murphy has the new fairing and instruments pretty well sorted out on his Flighstar and is thinking about new brakes. Now he just needs to mount a kiddy seat.

I completed the annual condition inspection for Miss Chaos today. I would have put some daylight under her wheels but the Airport Commissioners were waiting for me. Maybe tomorrow.

My good friend Jim has planned a bucket-list trip for the Rans S-6 that we built in my airplane factory. He has laid out a course for Lakeland Florida to attend the Sun-n-Fun airshow. My favorite part of the plan is, I'm in the bucket with him! This is going to be an epic adventure. Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer floating down the Big Muddy on a raft we made all by ourselves. The fact that we both qualify for Social Security doesn't make us any less the adolescent explorers. We will savor every new vista and celebrate every hill scaled with old eyes but young hearts. As with any great experience the sharing will make it all the greater. Sharing a tent might be a little less than thrilling when one of us will be snoring or farting and both of us will be getting up to pee at odd hours but that's all part of the adventure. Those things are like the mosquito bites at summer camp, you never remember them when you look back at your glory days. Jim and I made a good team as kit plane builders and we will make a good cockpit crew, look out Lakeland!

I have been going through my pictures and notes trying to create a cogent presentation about the building of the S-6 for our next meeting. What a brain freeze! Every time I open a folder of pictures I am transported back to the moment and I re-live the whole episode. This was a really big life event for me and it's hard to step away from the emotion to casually describe it. I hope I can distill the whole year down to half an hour of inspiration because I want to show you that you too can do it and you will never regret the effort. See you there!

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