

EAA CHAPTER 1128

Two Harbors Helgeson Airport

www.1128.eaachapter.org

It's warm and humid at the lake tonight, *warm* being a relative term. Such as it is, flying season is upon us. Check in with your fellow aviation enthusiasts at our next meeting. We will get together at the airport for the first time in ages. **Thursday, June 6th at 6:30** is the time, **Two Harbors Richard B. Helgeson Airport** is the place. We will be flying 'U' control modal airplanes (Ukies) and by 'we' I mean Mike and Ryan. They will display their skills and talk about training students.

LAST MEETING

It was still bloody cold at the May meeting but we were looking ahead to a busy summer. We laid out the schedule for our big Heritage Days fly-in and discussed the Lark of the Lake festival happening on the very same weekend. Seth reported on progress to secure some of the 'Age to Age' grant funds for our work with kids and reminded us the DLH tour was coming up. We talked about meeting at the airport during the temperate months (weeks?) Mike said he and Ryan and Bud had tested some Ukies for a possible demonstration. Mike's broke in half! Before takeoff! Bill reported \$1025 in the treasury then wrote a check for postage and printing of the Oshkosh Report. Seth gave an update on the Airport Commission including the new commercial hanger construction. The presentation for the night was a slide show of building a two seat high wing kit plane. It was narrated by one of the builders and he did a masterful job! He even sang a flying song in the middle of the show. Very entertaining!

341

Chapter 272 held their annual Oshkosh work party on the weekend of May 17-19. I was fortunate enough to participate in a couple of these sorties years ago and I'm so glad they are continuing the tradition. Chapter President Bill Irving was awarded a 700 mission patch from the Young Eagles office and a new jacket and shirt to display it on. Bill has flown 773 young eagles at last count. Way to go, Bill!

Whenever I talk about 'Flying Season' I think about the guys in Chapter 1221. Their season is roughly 365 days long and I'm sure they wonder what I'm talking about.

ETC.

There are a number of great flying events coming up. Our big fly in is just over a month away on July 14. The Lark of the Lake festival lasts that entire weekend so there's no reason we can't participate in both. From July 29 to August 4 there is a little fly in at Oshkosh Wisconsin. When the Commemorative Air Force leaves Airventure their first stop is Duluth. They will bring their B-29, B-24, B-25, P-51 and other historic warbirds for three days, August 5,6 and 7. Rides will probably be available and they will certainly be expensive but what is too much to pay for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity?

Meanwhile homebuilding fever spreads here at home. Mike Busch is getting close to first engine start on his F1 Rocket. The old adage "90 percent done and 90 percent to go!" describes his current state but he is well into the second 90 percent.

Ryan and Dan Murphy are doing open heart surgery on their second Flightstar. This one is a two seater with a full enclosure and it should be airworthy before long. Another new addition to the Murphy collection is a beautiful Dyke Delta. This bird took home a trophy from her first Oshkosh appearance and should be prompting frantic UFO calls to 911 soon.

Dale Nordwall did some makeover work on his Avid Flyer over the winter and has brought her back to the airport.

Jake Hayes just completed the second wing of his Carbon Cub and continues to make progress as time permits. As one of the first builders of this exotic bush rocket he has spent a lot of time helping the factory re-write the manual.

Other hangars at Helgeson International contain kits for a Murphy Rebel, a BushHawk (or three!) and a Piper Aerostar basket case being rebuilt. Steve Merrill's beautiful Piper Chief is back after extensive modification as well.

Mike Shannon has completed the test period in his pretty Rans S-7 but he knows one is never really done building their dream machine.

None of these fellows are particularly shy about showing off their work so come on down to your airport and check them out.

I have made many visits of late due to the close proximity of my summer job. In fact I stop by nearly every afternoon and when the weather cooperates I take my girl out for a dance. Miss Chaos shows her enthusiasm by starting on the first pull of the rope and running like a fine watch. I don't know why so many pilots look down their noses at two-stroke engines, this Rotax 503 has given flawless service since she was new and continues to sip gas and provide the power for my wildest dreams. Without the economy of this fine power plant aviation simply would not fit in my budget. I love disproving the theory that sport aviation is for the well heeled and I have more fun on 46 horsepower than my doctor has in his Maserati.

Recently I have witnessed the swollen streams and budding leaves of spring from my lofty perspective and feel closer to the rhythm of the planet for being above it. I watched the lakes slowly shed their icy covers and turn from drab gray to vibrant blue. I have seen the shipping season ramping up on the big lake and the return of migratory flocks from their winter homes. Near Knife River one day I spotted a flock of swans flying up the shore and flew high cover for them for a while. Another day I circled in a thermal with a huge bald eagle and he glanced at me a couple of times but was clearly not the least bit concerned. I chased a couple of seagulls and found my dog fighting skills sadly lacking. They are masters of their element and I count myself lucky just to visit this dreamy domain from time to time. Life on earth can be a bit dreary and downright awful some days but I never have a bad day in the sky. I'm surprised the FDA doesn't classify flight as an anti-depressant and try to regulate it.

There have been scary times. Like the time my skydiving parachute destroyed itself upon opening in 1969 or the time I flew smack into hard IFR on my way home from Oshkosh 1994 (in my Kolb!). Every flight offers teachable moments in the form of little whispers into your subconscious but these extreme moments deliver their lesson with a smack to the back of the head. As humbling and painful as these experiences are the end result is far from depressing. The opposite in fact, I always seem to feel more alive and engaged while my bones or ego slowly mend.

No prescription drug could come close to the anti-depressive qualities of flight and considering the long and frightening list of side effects the drug companies rush though their commercials, flying is much safer. Besides being benignly addictive the only potential complication is that you could crash and die. Since we all face that very same possibility every time we come to the top of a flight of stairs, it's a risk I'm willing to take. And the reward is priceless.

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