

EAA CHAPTER 1128

Two Harbors Helgeson Airport

www.1128.eaachapter.org

There is a skim of ice on the lake tonight but it is toasty by the wood stove. My girls sit in their hangars waiting for a nicer day. I miss them. Our next meeting will be on **Thursday, November 7 at 6:30** in the **Community Room of Two Harbors High School**. It will be a good one.

The sense of accomplishment and sheer joy of being a chapter officer is a closely guarded secret but this month you could get in on the fun. Our required annual elections have been far from annual and duties should change hands from time to time just to keep everyone involved. You can get on the ballot by calling Mike or just announcing a desire at the meeting. Here's what it looks like so far. President: Mike Busch Vice President: Seth McDonald Treasurer; Bill Fieldson
Steve Wattnem Ron Blum

Secretary/ Newsletter Editor: Engine Young Eagles Coordinator: Matt Ferrari
Ryan Murphy

There will be a second ballot for board members. We will pick three names from this list:

Bud Gorman
Dan Murphy
Mike Shannon
Engine

Come out and put your name in the running for any of these positions or at least come out and vote.

LAST MEETING

We met at the High School for the first time in a while and enjoyed the comfortable chairs. Seth provided treats and his usual tech expertise. He ran a flying video while the members filed in and then showed the official Airventure 2013 video.

Bill reported \$2004.93 in chapter funds and then wrote a check to cover paper, ink and postage for the newsletter. He also reminded us chapter dues will be due this month.

Seth put up a slide titled What's Next? The possibilities listed were; Work weekend (at Oshkosh), Hangar Dance (Big Band music), Speakers, Demos, Tours, Fly-in Movie, Poker Run and more Ukie building.

Mike reminded us that EAA is an organization of airplane builders and said he was disappointed that the effort we put into involving kids did not seem to pay off in youth participation.

Seth gave an Airport Commission update then showed a slide of the new chapter T-shirts and put out a sign-up sheet. He got lots of orders.

Mike told us the rules of our chapter include yearly elections for chapter officers and encouraged everyone to participate in a leadership role. My favorite quote from him was, "The more you put into an organization the more you get out of it." He cajoled a few members into stepping up to a spot on the ballot.

Dave Smith told us he had inherited a Bakeng Deuce project from his father and asked if anyone might have an interest in helping complete it.

Good meeting.

Chapter 1221 members attended a meeting at Monaco air last month. The Chief of Safety at the 148th Air National Guard gave a briefing and many local aviation concerns were represented. Chapter member Rich Mattson posted a couple of notes about his wife's cancer diagnosis. You and Jean are in our prayers Rich. Chapter meetings are the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm.

Chapter 272 had a successful pancake breakfast September 7th. They are exploring the Build-a-Plane program. Chapter meetings are the third Thursday at 7:00 in their beautiful club house on Bong Field.

ETC.

Dick Helgeson was persuaded by Commission members to host another Christmas Symposium this year and even though he was in the hospital dealing with pneumonia at the last meeting he called to make sure we each knew our responsibilities. For three and a half decades Dick has been organizing this party for his beloved airport and we all need to be there for him. Our December chapter meeting and the Airport Commission meeting will take place before the festivities start rolling. Mark Friday, December 7th on your calendars and show up early.

One recent Sunday I was delighted to see the Superior Dragonflyers video being replayed on Venture North. I was transported back to that fine spring day in 1998 and I could feel the wind in my face. For six years we were the coolest game in town. If not for the 2004 activation of the 'Light Sport Pilot' rule we might still be at it. I never liked getting up at oh-dark-thirty to drive in but once the Dragonfly fired up my smile never faded. From sun up to sun down we flew non stop teaching budding hang glider and ultralight pilots. Being the tug pilot and ultralight instructor I was involved in every flight and logged hundreds of hours in conditions ranging from butter smooth to just plane crazy!

The relative calm of early mornings and late evenings were perfect for introductory flights and I had time to enjoy the view and relax a little. When the afternoon air got unstable the real fun began. Advanced hang glider pilots wouldn't even assemble their gliders until the cumulus clouds started popping. Rising columns of warm air are the glider pilot's fuel but they are often small and all the air outside the thermal is rushing the other way, down! Imagine having one wing in fast rising air and the other in a ton of sink, it happened all the time. At first I was freaked out that full control deflection could not keep the Dragonfly level but I soon learned that all conditions are temporary and I'd be applying full deflection the other way shortly.

One afternoon I pulled an advanced pilot off the launch dolly and immediately got smacked by a violent thermal. When I finally regained control I realized the tow rope was slack and returned to land. When I asked him about it he said, "As soon as I saw your wings go vertical I pinned off!" Smart fellow. On another tow the rising air felt like a hammer under my seat but the wings stayed level and I had a moment to check my vertical speed. When that pilot finally came back down I asked him, "Did you see we were pegging nearly 2000 feet per minute up?" He laughed and said, "I wasn't looking at my instrument, I was hanging on for dear life!"

When I look back at my experience flying a very light aircraft in very heavy air I see it was the best possible education in fluid dynamics. This vast ocean of air that surrounds us has more mood swings than a manic depressive off her meds and those of us who would suspend our fragile bodies in her arms would do well to treat her with respect. I spend time every day looking at the sky and trying to understand what is going on and only when I think conditions are conducive to happy aviating do I open hangar doors. I'm getting conservative in my dotage but I'm really glad I had the opportunity to throw caution to the wind and find my place in the sky.

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