

EAA CHAPTER 1128

Two Harbors Helgeson Airport

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It's warm and muggy at the lake tonight, so what's new? I can't recall a wetter summer and it seems to be running right into fall. Mike Shannon has the right idea, he put his Rans S-7 on floats! Our next meeting will be **Thursday, October 5th, 6:30 pm** in the **High School Library**. The Community Room, our usual meeting place, is booked for another function. Just walk all the way down the main hall and you'll see the library on the floor below.

Last Meeting

We rolled out our aircraft for Seth's camera on a warm and sunny ramp. He took a lot of pictures of those present but asked me to ask you to send him photos of your plane if you weren't there. In the A/D building Mike convened the meeting after Mike Gaboury told the story of his struggle to get shoulder harnesses properly installed in his Beechcraft Musketeer. He (Mike B.) welcomed visitor and potential new member Jon Anderson and explained our mission and madness. Seth said our October meeting would be in the school library due to scheduling conflict. We were reminded of the open house at Grand Marais airport on September 23 and the Fall Color Tour on the same day. Mike said he would bring a power point presentation covering his participation in the EAA headquarters Air-Cam build. Engine talked about his meeting with the head of Red Swan Catering concerning our Christmas Party and passed around a menu for member votes on the entrees. Seth showed one of the five plastic wolf cutouts he had secured for goose control. He said they should be moved around randomly and got volunteers immediately. Mike suggested leaving the grass a little taller around the pond to keep the geese guessing. He also asked if we would like to make a chapter field trip to Air Corps Restoration in Brainerd to see their work on classic Warbirds. Seth reminded us of the upcoming fly-in at the home of Jim and Cathy Nelson. Dale Nordwall said he had a complete flight simulator package including computer and controls which he is willing to donate to any interested individual. The treasurer phoned in a chapter bank balance of \$5402.54 and remotely collected dues from one member. It was still light as we adjourned and some of us went right to our hangars.

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Members of all three chapters enjoyed fine food and fraternization at the Nelson's big fall get together south of Superior. Three intrepid pilots braved the low ceilings to bring the entertainment and there were dozens of drive ins. Jim's Glasstar Sportsman is looking beautiful in fresh paint and is 90 percent done with the legendary 90 percent to go.

ETC.

After years of searching Mike Shannon has finally found the perfect floats for his beautiful Rans S-7. To get the installation true and the balance correct he actually launched it in the airport pond. His work is meticulous and it may be parked on the lake in front of his house as I write this. Good Job Mike!

Bud has been diligently working toward his private pilot check ride. I can tell when he is flying with instructor Nancy Smith because they trade off giving me grief on the radio.

Brian Hubbard brought his new (to him) Aeronca Champ up from St. Paul and found a comfy spot in Steve Wattnem's hangar. What a nicely maintained airplane!

Mike Busch has been conscripted by Lake Superior College so he is not spending as much time as he would like preparing to fly his fire breathing Rocket. As with the HQ Air-Cam his skills and expertise are always in demand and he has a hard time saying no.

The Fall Color Tour did happen last Saturday but many stayed on the ground due to threatening weather. Nine planes flew in eventually and eleven departed up the shore for Grand Marais. That math actually works because two of ours, Mike Gaboury and Dave Smith joined in on the fun.

Miss Chaos is back in the air with a zero-time engine and electric start. This was not the first time I have been up to my elbows in Rotax guts but with all the changes I made it was a nerve wracking first start. With a full rebuild from the crankshaft up, there are a lot of details that need to be precisely correct and I was also concerned about the starter installation. One benefit of adding an electric system was finding a fault in the old wiring. I had installed wing tip strobes during the initial build but they ran off of the engine's lighting coil and required no battery or regulator/rectifier. As the years went by I started to get an annoying buzz in my radio every time the strobes fired. Eventually I put a switch in the circuit and just turned them off. While installing the new wiring I came across a poor connection in the strobe ground wire, fixed it and crossed my fingers.

The lithium battery I opted for turns out to have some rather restrictive temperature limits so I put it in the cockpit rather than under the hood. Just one more unknown to keep the tension up. After one last, careful inspection I rolled my girl out into the sun and climbed aboard. The familiar pull start handle was gone so I gave her two quick shots of prime and pushed the big, black button. Grr,,rr, wham! She fired right up and ran smooth and steady. I was elated! I hadn't been aware of the sweat on my brow until her sweet prop wash cooled my head. I let her idle until the exhaust gas temperature came alive then shut her down and jumped off of the wing with a whoop like a young, triumphant fighter pilot.

I wasted no time tying her down on the ramp and performing the Rotax break in procedure. This was another hour of tension running in steps from low to mid and finally full power holding the fire extinguisher in my lap and hoping the ropes held. When the last step required two minutes at full power I decided that sounded a lot like a take off so I jumped out, untied the ropes and went for it.

Pure bliss! Miss Chaos leaped off the runway and streaked for the open sky, free at last from the hard cold ground. Our spirits soared together as we tossed the horizon around the windshield and pulled some serious Gs. You could have seen my grin from Wisconsin as we danced over the big lake and the turning leaves of autumn, what a perfect day! With all of my tension released I remembered that bad ground connection and flipped on the strobes, voila! No buzz, perfect. I pushed my girl's nose toward the grass runway but didn't bother to slow down for landing. The trees whizzed by at 100 plus miles per hour as we warned the ground bound critters to get out of the way and swooped back into the warm, blue sky. When at last her wheels touched down I gave a sigh and realized I was plum tuckered out. Back in the hangar I gave Miss Chaos a kiss on the spinner and closed the door.

The next day I opened her cowl and checked to see that everything was just as I had left it. It was. My girl has a brand new heart and many more years to delight me. I have a new appreciation for her strength and spirit. Life is good!

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