

EAA CHAPTER 1128

Two Harbors Helgeson Airport

www.1128.eaachapter.org

It's a lovely evening at the lake, clear, calm and warm. A perfect night for a Fifi flight but she's half an hour away and I have a letter to write. Our next meeting will be on **Thursday, September 7 at 6:30**. We will meet at the airport and if the weather cooperates we'll roll out our planes for a group photo.

Last Meeting

Our August meeting was mostly reminiscing about Oshkosh. Mostly by me. Seth reminded us of the upcoming Fly-in movie/BBQ. He also showed us a copy of the email Casey sent concerning UAVs (drones). Local radio control fliers are being contacted as well. A possible fly-out to Grand Marais in September was mentioned. Seth said Mike would like a picture of all the chapter member's airplanes and asked if the September meeting would be a good time to stage said photo. Then we told more Oshkosh stories.

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Chapter 272 hosted a presentation called "Finding Loren" by a Minnesota man who went on a journey to Italy to locate the remains of his father and the P-47 Thunderbolt that brought him there. I'm sure it was an emotional story, I'm sorry I missed it.

Chapter 1221 had another of their famous fly-outs tonight (Tuesday). They flew down to Voyager Village for dinner. How Fun!

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The fly-in movie was a tremendous success. The BBQ saw a couple of planes from Cloquet, a Cirrus employee and our friend from Cotton in his trike. A lot of chapter members chowed down on burgers and beans as well. The movie crowd was the best ever with lots of kids in attendance for the Disney/Pixar film "UP". Major kudos to Seth who did all of the work to make this happen.

Chapter charter member Bill Fieldson took a header off of his back steps, broke a rib and did a lot of other damage. He's currently recovering on the 9th floor at St. Mary's but is able to talk on the phone. Give him a call at 218 786 4000 and cheer him up.

I finally decided to surrender to my bad shoulder and install electric start on Miss Chaos. Don't get me wrong, I can still yank the devil out of that starter rope but if I should flood the engine the resulting 12 to 15 pulls wear me out. Besides, I have Empty Shop Syndrome without a new airplane to build so I'm enjoying the tool time. I have been putting off the 300 hour rebuild of the Rotax 503 so I could keep flying all summer but once I get out the wrenches, there's no stopping me. I honestly thought that I could just yank the cowl, slam on the new starter and go fly but when I saw how much easier it would be with the engine off the plane, the decision was made.

I had this motor apart at the recommended 150 hours and it looked brand new inside. Not this time! She is showing her age in a number of ways and I'm just delighted to find out in the shop rather

than in the sky. New crankshaft, pistons, seals and gaskets have been ordered and they are not cheap but I will have a brand new zero-time engine to show for it. And peace of mind, which is priceless.

While I wait for the parts I am learning how to install an electric system in Miss Chaos. By trial and error mostly. I built a sub panel for the regulator rectifier and the starter relay then mounted it to the firewall. I bought a cheap little sheet metal brake at the Chinese Tool Store and bent up a battery box. (Airplane building is the best excuse to buy new tools.) I even installed the big, black starter push button on the instrument panel. In the spirit of keeping it experimental I opted for a lithium iron phosphate battery. It puts out the same cranking power of a ten pound lead acid battery but weighs only one pound! If I can keep it from catching fire it will be great.

What do they call a pilot with his airplane in the shop? A mechanic! Fortunately, you can still call me a pilot because I have Fifi. We rekindled our affair at Oshkosh this year and she continues to delight. Her Rotax motor is running like a Swiss watch and her manners are impeccable. She's my new after work date and I couldn't be happier. We cruised the lake shore the other night and got big waves from everyone on the ground. She's such a crowd pleaser and open cockpits were just made for waving back.

Okay, I'm a lucky guy. Crazy lucky but I am not writing this as a boast. I believe my job is to relate the joy of my passion. Learning to fly is hard work. But it's the most rewarding work you'll ever do. Building airplanes and rebuilding engines is taxing work. But there's no better way to learn about the physical world around you. What you learn the most about however, is yourself. You will discover whole new levels of commitment, tolerance and persistence that will drive your entire life. Succeeding at a difficult task lifts your self esteem like nothing else. And seeing the world from above on the wings of your own effort is the ultimate reward.

That my friends is the reason for and the mission of the Experimental Aircraft Association. Aren't you glad you're a member?

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