

EAA CHAPTER 1128

Two Harbors Helgeson Airport

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Summer doesn't want to quit and that's alright with me. A bright half-moon is reflected on the lake's smooth surface tonight and all the windows are open. Another perfect evening! I hope you have been enjoying our unusually good weather. Our next meeting will be at the **Two Harbors High School** on **Thursday, October 1** at **6:30**. As always a board meeting will convene at 6:00 and all members are welcome.

Last Meeting

August was our first meeting back at the Community Room in the high school. That means Seth was able to work his video magic. He showed pics from our Open the Hangar cookout and pancake breakfast, Jake's Carbon Cub with the wings on, and Bud's new Cessna 150. We saw Mike's F-1 Rocket take off on her maiden flight and make a screaming low pass thanks to Bud's camera skills.

Mike reminded us of Jim and Cathy Nelson's annual fly-in happening on the 19th. He also said our chapter Young Eagles event will be delayed until spring to work with the school schedule. Seth reported 35 attendees at the Fly-in Movie and said next year the feature will be Top Gun. Chapter officer nominations were announced for the October meeting. Our Christmas party was set as December 11th at Superior Shores. Mike told all the members to call our Senators and urge them to support the Pilot's Bill of Rights. Steve reported \$4032.98 in chapter coffers and said we made about \$1100 at the pancake breakfast. Bob talked about the progress he and Bill are making on the Pietenpol project. Good meeting!

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All three chapters were well represented at the Nelson's Jimbolaya Jam. More about that later.

ETC.

Our little airport has been busy with all this great flying weather. There are positive vibes emanating from hangars buzzing with happy progress toward long held goals. Our most senior pilot, Jim Hayes is flying almost every day and our most junior pilots are on course to emulate him.

My dear Fifi spent too much time with wings folded after Oshkosh but she is now whole and airworthy once again. One of the stainless steel leading edge guards was threatening to leave her propeller so she had to wait while I replaced it. Rolling her down from the trailer gave me a nice, warm feeling like love at first sight all over again. After going over every minute detail I was firmly smitten and ready to dance. She was ready too, starting on the first pull and purring happily in the late sun. We taxied to the grass to avoid the traffic jam of Canada geese on the main runway. Smart application of throttle brought a joyful noise and a leap towards the heavens. There is nothing like the view from an open cockpit and the rush of the air can revive the most jaded heart. We glided through the butter-smooth evening sky without a care. She carried me over the tall trees and the shining big sea waters without the slightest complaint and our love was sealed. When her wheels kissed the grass I couldn't bear to stop and she needed little urging to go around again. Round and round we went until the light faded and our time together was ended. I was delighted to find my brake modification worked

flawlessly and her ground manners were impeccable. I tucked her into her hangar with the promise to return soon and she kissed me on the cheek. What a girl!

Meanwhile, my other girl (yes, I am a lucky guy) took me on a big adventure last Saturday. For our sky-trekking friends at Chapter 1221 a 35 mile cross country is just a yawn but this was a big deal for me. I didn't build an aerobatic hot rod to fly straight and level so we don't travel much. I have attempted twice to fly to Jim Nelson's annual party and both times the weather exceeded my personal minimums. This year the gods smiled.

We launched into a brilliant blue sky not far behind Dave Smith's Bakeng Deuce. Forgoing the usual flamboyance we aimed southwest toward the point of the lake and climbed smoothly. The Northshore Inline Marathon was happening and the Scenic Highway was peppered with skaters. We floated past them but due to a decent west wind we fell behind cars on the expressway. We shared the air with several raptors on their migration and actually had to maneuver a bit to avoid their determined path. Switching radio frequencies I heard a Beaver on floats and two helicopters giving rides from Bayfront park where the Balloon Festival was under way. Turning south over the lift bridge I saw a sparkling oval in the water off Barker's Island. Racing boats chased each other around the buoys and they were going faster than me. We skirted Superior's traffic pattern, pointed straight south and began to search for our destination. Everything that wasn't swamp looked like a landing strip to me but soon a hayfield with airplanes on it came into view. "This must be the place!"

I had been concerned about the short field but Miss Chaos glided to a stop with hundreds of feet to spare. Smiling faces greeted me as I motored up to the hangar. Seven or eight planes rested in a semicircle and more were on the way. The Nelson's hangar was filled with tables, chairs and more smiling faces under the proud wings of their Glassair Sportsman project. Jim's signature creation, 'Jimbolaya' simmered in a huge pot and a long sideboard was loaded with fruit, potato salad and some luscious home made bread. Mark and Sandra brought ice cream for desert and happy chatter filled the air. An informal tour group made the rounds of parked birds with observations, questions and the occasional 'true' story. The weather was perfect, the company exceptional and the food was delightful. Jim and Cathy made sure everyone had all their needs met and then some. You will never meet a more caring, generous couple.

My second wife, observing Evening Grosbeaks at the feeder called them "biker-birds". Asked why she stated, "They come in a mob, make a bunch of noise, eat all your food and then disappear!" I'm afraid fly-in pilots fit the same criteria. When all the bellies were full and all the lies told, propellers began to spin. I was sorry to have to leave but Miss Chaos absolutely refused. Apparently she was quite content sitting in the warm sun and would not reward my best efforts with even a pop. I tried no prime, then a little prime, then a bunch and yanked and yanked on that rope. Nothing! Finally I pushed the throttle up and she sprang to life. Well, I got my after lunch exercise.

After takeoff we turned back to give a smart salute over the hangar. The wind that slowed our progress on the way down gave us a boost and soon we were scooting up Park Point. The power boats were still racing and their wakes still sparkled. Canal Park and the Lakewalk were full of people enjoying the beautiful weather. Turning up the shore we left the city behind and actually passed traffic on the expressway. I let Miss Chaos have her head and soon the horizon was doing its familiar dance through the windscreen. Straight and level is over rated in our opinion. Eventually our home aerodrome hove into view and we reluctantly returned to the planet.

What a marvelous day! I enjoyed the hospitality and comraderie of a bunch of really nice folks. Despite her reluctance to leave, my girl made a good impression on people who know something about airplanes and I got to see our world from a higher perspective. Where is the next fly-in?

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