



Experimental Aviation Association, Creswell, OR

EAA 31 Newsletter

NULLUM GRATUITUM PRANDIUM

March, 2007

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Special points of interest:

- * 50th anniversary of the club
- * Fly-in scheduled for September
- * Group considering project construction
- * Next meeting: April 4
- * Next breakfast: April 14

Buying a car is easy, you find some features you like, maybe you read Consumer Reports if you're really ambitious, but in the end, it's just a box that takes you from point A to point B. You can hit just about any dealership, and you'll probably go with the place that gives you a slightly better deal. Buying a plane, I'm discovering, is somewhat different.

For one thing, I've never gotten as passionate about the subject of prospective cars. I've never spent hours on a Ford webpage arguing the merits of an air-conditioning duct from one model to another. I've never read through old GM newsletters to see what modifications people made to their Buicks in 1986, and I'm pretty sure I haven't spent hours explaining that even though Princess Diana was killed when her Mercedes crashed, it's unfair to blame the vehicle itself.

After months of research, I had the model I wanted in mind. I knew my price range, so I had an agent put together a list for me. I talked to him about what features I needed (O-320,



By Ben Hallert

light IFR, etc), and he gave me weighted lists with personal notes about the sellers, past buyer experiences, etc. I painstakingly went through each entry, marking up my printout with highlighter, and eventually picked a likely candidate. I vetted the builder and aircraft by asking about them in a mailing list. The mechanic I picked to check it out was coming in from out of state, but it was a sound investment because he's intimately familiar with this model and the model specific directives. By comparison, when we purchased our most recent vehicle, while we knew we probably wanted a minivan, we had never really even heard of a "Chevy Venture" until we saw one on the lot.

For my aircraft purchase, I couldn't sleep that week. I didn't want to get emotionally attached to the plane because I wanted to make

an impassionate decision, but the closer I got to the big day, the louder I had to tell myself to knock it off. This is a big investment, and one that's intensely personal. Ever since my flight in one of these planes last May, a day hadn't gone past since I'd visualized owning a LongEZ, but I wanted to make sure it was the right one. With the minivan, on the other hand, we didn't really think about buying one until a day or so before our visit to the local dealerships. "Sure, we probably should upgrade the car so we can carry more groceries with kids onboard" was the basic decision process.

Waking up at 4:30AM on the big morning, I drove to Portland. I met up with my mechanic and the owner and we began going over the plane bit by bit. The cowlings were off, and we carefully inspected the engine. My guy pointed out quirks in the install, showed me how the baffling needed work and why, and painstakingly analyzed the aircraft for defects. After 4 hours, we had a laundry list of little items, sorted into "Must be fixed for safety", "Should be fixed for the long term", and "Here's a neat idea..." A mistake here could mean an inflight structural failure because a

Adventures in purchasing (continued)

wing fitting had corroded through, or a snapped engine mount. The mini-van, on the other hand, was pretty straight forward. Five minutes under the hood and I was able to do an 80/20 assessment on its mechanicals. Anything I'd miss between that and a test drive probably wouldn't be an issue until later, and even then, the worst that could happen would probably be calling AAA.



You've got the look, plane, but it wasn't meant to be...

Finally, I decided to slide into the cockpit. The LongEZ is a challenging plane to mount if (like this one) it doesn't have a step. You hop backwards onto the wing root while stabilizing yourself on the longerons, then scoot your butt forward into the seat, being careful not to break something on the panel. The current owner was a bit shorter than me, so I had to slide my feet past the pedals. "No problem", I thought, "we'll fix that later." When we bought the car, a quick test drive later and we were making an offer. Wifey wrote a check, I made approving noises, and we were out the door in minutes.

With the plane, I was feeling good in the cockpit. Sure, we had found mechanical problems, but they were fixable and would help with negotiation. Nothing huge, and we expected some stuff. I made the appropriate airplane noises and checked out the controls. My mechanic guy walked to the front and looked into the maintenance hatch in the nose. "Uh oh", he said. It's amazing how those two little words can focus your attention. It turned out that my feet were up against a bulkhead, as in less than a half inch away. No room to move the

pedals because even if we relocated them, there was no room for them to move. We plotted, we schemed, but in the end we realized that short of leg surgery or putting a new nose on the plane, this specific LongEZ was not The Plane for me.

I drove home a bit sad, but wiser. When I bought the MiniVan, I didn't need to call ahead to ask what the measurements were from the back of the seat to the pedals. Perhaps I'll remember to ask that next time before heading out with checks in hand.

Cars and planes have motors and go places, but I suppose that's about where the similarities stop and the differences begin. - Ben



Vote for the best aviation movie

Visit <http://www.airventure.org/movie> and vote for your choice of the best aviation movie of all time. The page will be open through May 2, 2007, with the overall top vote getter to be shown on the big screen at the Ford-Eclipse Fly-In Theater during the week of EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2007.

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Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7PM, with dinner starting about an hour earlier.

Monthly pancake breakfasts are held on the second Saturday of the month, usually around 9AM in the morning.

Founded in 1957, EAA Chapter 31 is one of the oldest Experimental Aviation Association chapters running. Located on-airport at 775 Creswell, OR, follow the Snoopy sign to find the clubhouse.

<http://eaa31.org/>

Crow-Mag Happenings

Phil Writer reports that the Ercope project has been sold! Hopefully the new owner will get that bird up in the air soon, it'll be great to see it flying again.

Young Eagles pilots needed

Following up on an item from our last meeting, we're looking for more Young Eagles pilots!

The requirements are pretty simple, you've got to have aircraft liability insurance (with passenger coverage on whatever plane you own or rent that you'll be flying them with). If you buy insurance for Young Eagles, it can be tax deductible! If your insurance is \$100,000 or more, the EAA automatically kicks in an additional \$1,000,000 umbrella policy to protect you. It's automatic, no forms needed. The FAA also kindly asks that you have a valid pilots certificate and

medical. It's just one of their little "things".

Pilots who have expressed interest so far include:

- Brent Burgess
- Bruce Curtis
- Phil Groshong
- Roderick Johnson
- Bob Severins
- Randy Stout

If you want more info, call Ben Hallert or visit youngeagles.com.



Flown any Young Eagles lately?

Ken Schmitt demonstrates stud removal/helicoil installation

Technical counselor Ken Schmitt favored the chapter with a demonstration on stud removal and helicoil installation at our March meeting.

Ken began his presentation by discussing FAR Part 43, Appendix A, Paragraph C - Preventive Maintenance. Ken's an A & P so he can make repairs on his certificated planes that most cannot. He went through the

areas of preventative maintenance that an owner is allowed to perform, and outlined those areas that are not allowed. Ken then demonstrated techniques and procedures for removing broken studs and replacing studs using helicoils. Thanks, Ken for sharing your expertise with the chapter.—
Dave Petersen



March meeting minutes

The meeting started with our great hamburger/hotdog/Chili Bar-B-Q party at 6:00.

Meeting called to order at 7:09 PM by President Dave Peterson with V.P. Ben Hallert and Sec./Tres. Randy Stout present. 23 members and guests were in attendance. Paul Buhler was a new guest (and A+P) from outside the area, looking to join our fun group.

Ex-President Bruce Curtis reminded everyone about the regular breakfast that Chapter 31 holds monthly, and the date this month will be 3/10/07. (It is the 2nd Saturday for those who are already planning April)

The Secretary/Treasurer then reminded the group that dues for 2007 are now due. Please send your \$25 checks to 86277 Panorama Rd.,

Springfield, OR 97478 payable to EAA Chapter 31, or just see Randy at the meeting.

The web site is now up and you should have received an email asking you to go to the site for all the latest info. Bob Severns asked everyone interested to sign up for fly-outs in the members forum section of the site.

March minutes (continued)

Dave still wants to see the Web site updated weekly with an event calendar and asked everyone to send all the info for the newsletter to EAA31@msn.com to be posted by our webmaster.

Phil Writer then rose to let the club know that the Ercoupe project has been sold to Richard Curry. It seems that the group who was in the process of purchasing it could not agree on a few details, so they disbanded this particular effort. New projects were then discussed and hopefully another plane will be found and a group with the right chemistry will start the effort again.

V.P. Ben Hallert then passed around a tool box that Van's Aircraft puts out as a project to learn some techniques relevant to building an RV. These kits cost \$26 ea. and with enough interest he is going to have a program where members can build one of them under the watchful eye of an old pro.

Shelly Humble, our wonderful airport manger, then spoke about the upcoming fly-in activities (AKA Airport Days) and the desire to have a fly-market during this event, the status of the skydivers and various other items of interest at Creswell.

There being no other business, the group assembled to watch Ken Schmidt drill out and replace a stud in a case using easy outs and Heli-Coil's. For those who haven't done this before, it is a good technique to save you time. Thanks Ken!

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Stout, Secretary/Treasurer

SportAir Workshops

The following workshops are taking place in Arlington, WA in the upcoming months:

May 5-6

- RV Assembly

June 8-10

- LSA Repairman-Inspection

August 11-12

- Composite Construction
- Sheet Metal Basics
- Electrical Systems and Avionics
- What's Involved in Kitbuilding?

These classes are inexpensive, useful, and sell out fast, so visit <http://www.sportair.com> to find out more.

User fees discussion continuing

Doubt and outright opposition to the FAA's proposal for funding the air traffic control system was expressed on March 21st at the House Aviation Subcommittee hearing on Aviation Consumer Issues. Many of the members who spoke expressed concerns about the effect user fees and sharply increased fuel taxes would have on general aviation.

Rep. James Oberstar, Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, said "I've been through these schemes for 25 years, and you're on the wrong track." He continued that "There is a great deal of skepticism on both sides of the aisle on this financial scheme, and my intention is to give this proposal a decent burial." But the issue isn't dead yet, not by far.

Moments in Aviation History



US Airforce Academy Class of 2008 starts training