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The Flying Wire

Chapter 124
Experimental Aircraft Association

Volume 60 Number 4
April 7, 2021

Virtual Board Meeting - 5:30 pm

Virtual General Meeting – 7:00 pm

www.EAA124.org

www.CafeFoundation.org

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April 3, 2021 Virtual Program

“Guiding Your Experimental Airplane Project - An Evening With a DAR” with Richard "Dilly" Dilbeck, DAR-T

Topics to be Addressed Include:

N-number (Reserved & Issued)

Buying a Kit vs. (taking over) A Project (50/51% Rule) Selling

Your Build (Condition / Maintenance Records) Changing the

Configuration/s (Prop. Powerplant & etc) Adding Stuff

(External)

Test Flight Area (Congested Airway / Densely Populated)

Crossing Borders (SFA) Mexico/Canada

The meeting will start at 7:00, and we expect to start the DAR presentation around 7:15 pm.

EAA Chapter 124 March 3 2021 (Virtual) Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Convened 5:45PM

Board Members in attendance: Marlon Young (President), Ben Barker (Vice President), David Franco (Secretary), John Whitehouse (Treasurer), Larry Rengstorf (Facilities), Bob Gutteridge, Dan Steinhoff, Brien Seely, Dominic Cerniglio, Josh Hochberg, Mike Fenn.

The February 3, 2021 Board Minutes were approved as published.

Zenith Project- Dan Steinhoff picked up the plane and parts on February 27. They have been delivered to temporary storage in the CAFE hangar, sharing space with Ben Barker's plane.
CAFE motorhome- No progress.

Young Eagles- Upcoming schedule is being developed, much will be determined by health guidelines.

CAFE Hangar- Plans for better utilizing the space are not yet formulated.

May In-Person Meeting- Resumption of in-person meetings starting in May is planned. Each attendee is encouraged to bring a meal of their own choosing (Picnic Style). It is to start at 6:15 pm.

Program Assignments- The slots have been allocated for the upcoming presentation schedule. The schedule for 2021 was published in the March Flying Wire, which is posted on the website.

Reduction of Board Meetings: The issue of reducing the number of board meetings, was presented and will be discussed at greater length at the April board meeting.

Treasurer's Report- Very reassuring monthly report that showed our monthly balance to be in the black.

Pay Pal Online Payment Option- The treasurer got the details regarding setting up an online payment option, which members may be able to use for paying dues and the like.

EAA Website Conversion- John Whitehouse and others gave positive reviews to the National EAA templated website. We will soon be converting to their formatted page. Ben Barker has a candidate in mind who would import pictures and information regarding recent developments at Chapter 124. Website conversion motion was approved unanimously.

Dues: A motion was put forward to increase the yearly Chapter dues from \$35 to \$50, with a prompt renewal incentive rate of \$45. The reduced rate will apply if the member pays in January. The motion to increase dues was approved 9-2.

Facilities- No issues to report. The number of tiedown tenants is increasing.

Hangar Space- A member seeking to hangar a plane is contemplating using the long dormant points "Bump System" to gain hangar access.

Newsletter- The newsletter editor position is vacant. Board members are asked to encourage any interested member to take up the job.

Roster- The membership roster has been sent to Mike Tovani who is preparing the booklet for publication.

Meeting Adjourned 6:50 pm

Submitted by Dave Franco,

Secretary

EAA Chapter 124 March 3, 2021 General Meeting Minutes

Virtual Meeting Convened at 7:00 pm

The President, Marlon Young, opened the meeting with the long awaited announcement that in-person meetings will likely resume in May. Attendees who are already vaccinated or willing to assume the consequences are encouraged to bring a picnic style meal of their own choosing.

An announcement was also made regarding the chapter's intention to embrace the National EAA's web site template in lieu of updating our legacy site. The Chapter's current site lacks interactive functionality such as an online payment options for dues and the like.

A public announcement was made regarding the increase in dues fees. Yearly dues are being raised from the present \$35 a year to \$50, in an attempt to keep ahead of foreseeable escalating club expenses. As an incentive for prompt renewal, the dues will be \$45 dollars if paid in January.

Presentation Topic: Joel Leveille & The U2 Dragon Lady

Joel Leveille, an experienced U2 pilot, gave an enthralling talk about the rigorous screening process and the unique challenges of piloting this storied spy plane.

Pilots who dream of flying the Dragon Lady face, according to Joel Leveille, a 20% acceptance rate. Almost no plane can boast of having outlasted the Cold War and taken part in the War on Terror. It's original high altitude performance envelope, which officially maxed out at 60,000 ft. (wink, wink) requires wearing an elaborate pressure suit, which Joel described in great detail. He also conveyed the awe-inspiring feeling of leaving the West Coast of the United States and flying solo through the night and landing in his U2 in England. He described the uniquely challenging landing characteristics of the plane, which famously utilizes a tandem wheel bicycle configuration. His passion for the airplane is made evident, by his present reserve assignment, which involves developing training protocols for future pilots.

Joel's all-encompassing interest in aviation spills over into his private time as well. He took time to extoll the good works of group he is affiliated with, called the Patriots Jet Team Foundation. The foundation has a high school pilot training program, which seeks to create the next generation of aviation enthusiasts and military flyers.

Meeting Adjourned 8:45 PM.

Submitted by Dave Franco, Secretary

A story from John Fritsch:

Smoke in the Clear Lake Bowl

My kid Zoe visited her cousins Chris and Sam in the Pearl District in Portland at the end of August. It was a sweet flight up in my ancient RV-4, and then a challenging flight on the return that made me think of my favorite Rodney Crowell song: Ain't Living Long Like This. Here is why: northbound, we launched early afternoon out of Petaluma with full tanks of about 3.5 hours of cruise fuel on board, a little blue sky straight up, and lots and lots of smoke and low visibility in all quadrants. STS was VFR, just, and there were TFRs on both sides. I put STS and then PDX in Skyview to thread the needle between the two TFRs and picked up Flight Following.

Center frequencies were very quiet. STS passed barely visible through the smoke, and with a slight course change, we climbed up to cruising altitude at about Middletown and settled in. Lots of blue and unlimited visibility above a high undercast of lots of brown and gray smoke all around. Winds were light; the ancient O-320 Lyc was purring like a kitten; the Dynon was inundating me with info; Zoe was nodding off; and the Valley to the east was visibly VFR and an easy out whether into Redding, Weed, or Medford.

Further north, the Willamette Valley was smoke free, and gorgeous. A couple of hours later, we sailed into the stunning Portland environs. Hood to the right, and St Helens to the center as background to the stage and the Columbia sparkling in the afternoon sun.

Hitting the urban area, Approach started us looking for an elusive Embraer that finally heaved into view crossing from right to left. "Cleared for 28R, number 2 after the Embraer, caution wake turbulence," and we made the short left turn onto short final, and then first turn off for Atlantic.

We have visited Atlantic a bunch of times, and the old piston ramp on the west side we know so well ain't no more: damn Covid, the place was absolutely jumping in jets and turbines, and I do not recall seeing a piston.

The piston ramp was closed permanently, in any event. We parked at one of the only open tie down spots at the absolute edge of the property to the east, and 20 feet right in front of, and blocking, a gleaming 3 engine Falcon.

Zoe headed off with her cousins to find some food trucks, socially distanced, of course, and I hooked a ride into town to the Crystal, a legend. I had a quick drink at the Zeus Cafe, and then took a long foot tour into and around Lownsdale Square, the center of the protests in Portland. Sad graffiti on a building across from the federal building: "Mutual aid sucks." Who (in their right mind) condemns the efforts of our public agencies to collaborate on their public safety missions? OK, off my soap box...

Anyway, Zoe was in excellent hands, and as a consequence, had some experiences that I could only dream about as a kid. For me, I got up the next morning, and the STS METAR looked OK for a VFR arrival. So, I fired up and launched into what turned out to be a challenging flight. Part of it was that the day before had been a ho hum flight up: the weather was as advertised, and there were lots of easy outs. On the return flight, it was different. The smoke picked up around Roseburg and the tops climbed to the south.

Tops are one thing, but it was very concerning that south of Shasta, the Valley was now pretty marginal. The obvious easy out for a north-south travel for me is usually the Valley unless there is fog. That option was in doubt heading south approaching Pillsbury: contact with the ground was marginal, the smoke was dense below the inversion, and the Valley was highly questionable. Moreover, Center now reported STS as IFR, and inquired about my intentions. Center also suggested filing for an RNAV to 14.

While I was meditating between options, the smoke opened up a tiny bit below, and I caught a glimpse of Clear Lake around Nice in front of the left wing, and I felt like I was home: nose over, power back, maintain contact, descend at high rate many thousands of feet right now.

Pretty soon, I was a couple of hundred feet about the funky Clear Lake water and holding the coastline on the tip of my right wing as I crept counterclockwise around from Nice to Lakeport and then into Kelseyville and Lampson at 80 knots. The smoke was thick. The visibility was limited. Abeam Kelseyville, I turned southwest from the coastline at maybe 700-800 agl, dialed the Dynon in so I could see the runway on the map, and sailed into the right pattern: turning "Dynon synthetic vision" final and the runway numbers 28 crept out of the smoke and into my visual range at my 11 o'clock.

As I turned off, a REACH helo emerged from the smoke. We both parked, and then the sky was raining ash and the quiet of the dead. Eerie.

So, the encounter with really heavy smoke conditions brought a couple of new things to me though I have flown in and around smoke for years: the first is that I had an expectation as I

descended that like the vast majority of weather encounters except for fog, near the ground there would be an overcast with better visibility below the ceiling. Maybe the ceiling would be low, but it would be better. One mile is usually easy to judge. That was not the case at all: if anything, the smoke was more, not less, dense at lake level than at altitude, and judging distances was difficult. Since I was committed to a runway in a bowl surrounded by hills and smoke, that was a concerning risk. A second point is that I had no way to judge whether the smoke I was moving into was more or less dense than the smoke I was in.

That gave me sweaty palms because I knew I might have to reckon with the possibility of decreasing visibility while low and slow, and also, I had to increase the time spent on the Dynon instead of outside in case a 180 was necessary. A final note is that I leapt from a 1986 turn coordinator to the Dynon earlier this year, and I would not have descended into Lampson on a turn coordinator. In hindsight, I probably would have given up around Weed, and parked in Eugene. Using the family rule, which is never, ever, put your wife or child in avoidable danger, I would certainly have turned around in favor of blue skies elsewhere. But by myself, that damn Dynon is intoxicating and incredibly powerful and reassuring: it always knows which way is up and which way to go and how fast. It inspires maybe too much confidence, and there may not be much wisdom in poking around in heavy smoke in an old plane with one axis trim, no autopilot, and a fancy screen while humming an old Rodney Crowell song.

Stay safe.

The above is a wholly fictional account intended for reading pleasure only, and not advice on flying, piloting, or any other worthwhile pursuit.

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Chapter meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm. FOOD (\$7 sometimes \$10) AND SOCIALIZING (free) from 6:15 to 7:00 pm. EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Please note: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all meetings are being held via Zoom until May, when we hope to resume in person.

Members are invited to submit articles of interest. Let us know if you need to approve editorial changes.

Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 20th of each month. Articles submitted after that date will be included in the newsletter at the discretion of the editor. All articles are copyrighted. To reproduce any article, please contact the editor.

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