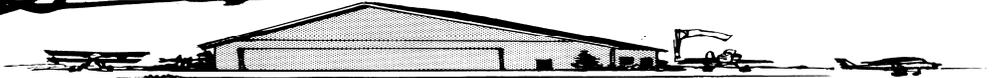


# CHAPTER 55 EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION

JANUARY 2012



Meetings are the 2nd Saturday of each Month

EAA Chapter 55 Hangar - Mason Jewett Airport – 643 Aviation Drive, Mason, MI 48854

Pres: Ken Vandenbelt 589-5051 Vice Pres: Bill Puroskey 214-2729 Treas: Al Spalding 676-3370

Secr: Vickie Vandenbelt 589-5051 Editor: Warren Miller 214-2656 (all Area Code 517) [www.EAA55.org](http://www.EAA55.org)



## Climb and Maintain Flight Level 55

HAPPY NEW YEAR !! Leap year and Election year, ta boot !!

I think our chapter Christmas party was a wonderful success. We had a great turnout. The new location and set up seemed to work out very well and I hope we can plan to do the same for this year. Many thanks to party planner Deanna McAlister and her decorating team of Karen Meirndorf, Margie Clark, Rose Long & Vickie Vandenbelt.

We have our normal events this year - Young Eagles, Dawn Patrol, Mason Aviation Day. Pre-event planning will start up in upcoming weeks. Bodies and ideas are always welcome!

**Board of Directors Meeting  
January 11, 2012, 7:00 pm  
Chapter Membership Meeting  
January 14, 2012  
Breakfast 8-9 Meeting 9:30 am**

Bill Bezdek will be presenting a very interesting program at our January meeting. Celestial navigation is the science of finding your position on the surface of the earth by reference to the stars. It was the only means of navigation when sailors began leaving the familiar coastlines and striking out on the open ocean in search of new lands. Over two thousand years the science slowly advanced from the Phoenicians astrolabe to the modern sextant; from sand glasses to the marine chronometer. And the whole thing has been made obsolete in the blink of an eye in historic terms, by the creation of a new constellation, that of the global positioning satellite system.

Bill has also arranged for Frank Horstmann to do our February program. Mr. Horstmann was a naval aviator just after WWII. He flew the piston powered fighters from carrier decks and transitioned to the early jets, flying them from both land and sea.

And, if you haven't already - please make your dues payment to Al Spalding. Prompt payment saves our Newsletter Editor, Webmaster, and Treasurer a lot of grief!

Share the passion,  
Ken Vandenbelt, President

## Breakfast Teams

<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>
Kyle Bradford	Lynn Brown
Don Burt	Joe Pirch
Lloyd Brown	Dan Schiffer
John Caron	Tom Schroeder
Judy Search	Brian Sheffield
Bob Smith	Bart Smith
	Phil Tartalone



December Breakfast Team: Pat Salow;  
Dave Courcy; Mike & Laura Fuller

## EAA Chapter 55

### Board of Directors Meeting, December 7, 2011

→ Meeting was called to order at 7:01pm. → Directors present: Ken Vandenbelt, Vickie Vandenbelt, Bill Puroskey, Doug Koons, Al Spalding, Dave James & Joe Madziar; and one member, Steve Houghton. Absent: Warren Miller Jim Spry, Ed Search. → Secretary's Report dated 11/9/11; Joe

Madziar made a motion to approve; Dave James second; all approved. →Treasurers Report dated 11/30/11; Doug Koons made a motion to approve; Bill Purosky second; all approved. →Young Eagles; Doug Koon advised new total 196 for year. →Table purchase; Doug to check abt. YE credits. →EAA Ford Tri-Motor; cost prohibitive? sponsorships? →Builders Hanger Lease; addendum for gas payments approved; review for other changes? →Newberry Scholarship; pending applications. →Young Eagle of Year should be at Saturdays meeting; Member of the Year Plaque ready. →Calendar & certificate awards have arrived. →Xmas Party; ready to go. →Doug Koons made a motion to appoint Bill Purosky to fill the Directors seat vacated by Joe Madziar; Joe Madziar second; all approved. →Agreed to poll membership on Saturday for appoint of two additional Directors; Steve Houghton & Vickie Vandenbelt. →Steve Houghton expressed interest in generating more activity; more flying; look at avenues such as concerts, trips etc. →EAA announcing Adult Eagles program; solicit member thoughts/options. →Doug Koons made a motion to adjourn; Vickie Vandenbelt second; meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

## EAA Chapter 55

### Gen'l Membership Meeting, December 10, 2011

→Meeting was called to order at 9:32am. →Following the National Anthem, President Vandenbelt thanked the breakfast team & announced the team for January. →Secretary's report dated 11/12/11; motion to approve; second; all approved. →Treasurers report dated 11/30/11; motion to approve; second; all approved. →YE; Doug Koons provided new total. →Motion was made to appoint Steve Houghton & Vickie Vandenbelt as Directors; second; all approved. →Tom Schroeder announced that Dan Schiffer is on the mend. →Member of the Year; Karen Meirndorf accepted the award. →Young Eagle of the Year; Devon Fuller accepted the award. →Awards for YE pilots & workers announced; DP/MAD and chapter positions announced. →Motion was made & meeting adjourned at 10:05am. No program this month. →Submitted by Vickie Vandenbelt, Acting Secretary



### TIDBITS ~

By Vickie Vandenbelt

NEW MEMBERS: Chapter 55 welcomes new members Leonard "Skip" Russell and Jack Voss.

MEMBERSHIP: 2012 dues must be received by February 15th in order to remain a member in good standing and to continue to be on the chapter mailing list.

GONE WEST: Former member Jim Andrews passed away on January 4th. Funeral services will be held on Friday, January 13th; at 10am.

BREAKFAST TEAMS: Bill Purosky has been the breakfast setup man since before my time. Recently, Joe

Madziar has stepped up to share the responsibility. Many years ago, it was decided to have a "team" each month to cook & clean up. Each member is assigned to work one month during the year and it averages 7-9 members each month. Names are posted in the newsletter. Sharing this responsibility means that the same people are not stuck doing it all the time.

EAA NAME TAGS: Several members have expressed interest. I hope to bring an example of a magnetic tag to the meeting along with ordering information.

EAA EAGLE FLIGHTS: EAA is getting ready to launch the Eagle Flights program to spur adult interest in aviation. It appears Eagle Flights could be done in single flights or in rallies such as we do YE. More info will be forthcoming but here is a link for preliminary info

[http://www.eaa.org/chapters/resources/articles/111129\\_eagleflights.asp](http://www.eaa.org/chapters/resources/articles/111129_eagleflights.asp)

## YOUNG EAGLES

By Phil Tartalone

Nothing to report for January.



Young Eagle of the Year  
presented to Devon Fuller by Doug Koons



### NOTES FROM CAPE JUBY

By Terry L. Lutz  
Chapter 55 Flight Advisor

Glider pilots are a curious lot. They fly without motors and rely on rising air to keep their machines in the air. One of our flight test engineers, Jean-Jacques Bernard, was flying his glider in the Pyrenees Mountains last October, when he found himself downwind of a ridgeline that he needed to cross to get back to the aerodrome at St. Girons. As he headed toward the ridge, he could see hikers near the top, then quickly felt the glider heading earthwards. Apparently, just like airplanes, air that goes up must also go down. Jean-Jacques' glider was caught in a downdraft and hit short of the ridge in a wings-level attitude. Although the glider was broken, he survived with minor back injuries.



Many years ago, I met a pilot named Doug Emmons. Doug had mastered the technique of creating airplane models out of printed cardboard. Even back in 1978, this was a lost art imported from post-WWII Europe. A few years later, he purchased and built one of the first ultra light airplanes, called a Lazair. We discussed the Lazair flight characteristics, and Doug mentioned that he needed to recover the wings, which are covered with a transparent Mylar film.

The Lazair is a high-wing, twin-engine ultra light, with an inverted V tail. Doug said that with light winds, he could climb into a thermal, shut off both engines, and soar. A few years later, I had the chance to visit the airfield in East Bethany, New York and have a look at Doug's airplane. It was well built and appeared to be easy to fly.

The Lazair was designed by Dale Kramer, a Canadian citizen. Kramer formed a company called Ultralight Aircraft Sales, and Lazair production began in 1979. The Lazair Series I airplanes were powered by two 5.5 hp Pioneer chainsaw engines. The Series II was powered by two 9.5 hp Rotax 185 engines. To increase thrust, they simply mounted two 28-inch propellers on the same shaft, in parallel, creating a "biplane" propeller for greater thrust. This biplane propeller provided additional thrust for more robust pilots, or if you wanted to fly on floats.

Several years later, I found myself living in western New York State, and as luck would have it, there was an airfield near our home, and a Lazair was based there. I knew the owner, and it wasn't long before he invited me to fly it. Even though I was flying the Luscombe Silvaire Bullet at the time, I figured that I would need to keep my speed up in the Lazair, lest I stall and head back to earth. If it stalls at 28 mph, then 50 mph should be much safer, I thought. After all, in the fast jet world, speed is life.

The engines were easy to start, right from the pilot seat. Both engines are above the pilot, in the leading edge of the wing. Just grab the pull cord and give it a yank. Be careful releasing the pull cord, as it could get caught in the rotating propeller. Hmmm, so could your hand! Because the inverted V tail had wheels on the bottom on each rudder-  
vater, ground handling required a bit of differential thrust.

I lined up, applied power, and was off the ground in a rather short distance. I kept the pitch attitude low, and the power up. It didn't take much flying time at 50 mph to realize that my mouth would quickly be stretched completely out of shape by the airflow. Since my takeoff was close to sunset, bugs were out in force, and boy, do those things sting your face at 50 mph! The light bulb finally went on, and when I throttled back to 35 mph I found the airplane to be delightful to fly, with no adverse characteristics. And besides, I had two engines! If one quit, I could still make it back to the airfield.

After more than 1200 airplanes were sold, the Lazair went out of production. However, Dale Kramer was back at Oshkosh in 2011 with an electric powered Lazair on floats. There is an excellent story about this airplane in the December issue of Kitplanes magazine. Starting with some



Chinese model airplane electric motors, he devised ways to mount battery

packs in the wings, and existing model airplane controllers to control the power to the engines. The model airplane engines were replaced by the JMI Joby motor, weighing about 6 lbs and producing about 10kw of power. The article does not compare the weight of the engine and batteries compared to the weight of engine and fuel for a piston-engine Lazair. But it does say that Dale used 11 gallons of generator gas to charge the batteries and fly for 8.9 hours.

Dale is a true experimenter. His engine thrust test apparatus consisted of the electric motor on a wooden frame with the thrust pushing downward on a bathroom scale! At AirVenture 2011, Dale flew each morning and evening in the ultra light area, accumulating 4.5 hours of in 10 flights. He thinks this was easily more flying time than any other electric powered airplane at AirVenture. While proving conclusively that electric power could replace the gas powered engines of the original Lazair, Dale believes that if battery life could exceed 300 cycles before falling to 75% of rated capacity, the cost of operation will be significantly lower as well.

Dale Kramer is also an accomplished glider pilot. He represented Canada twice in the World Gliding Championships, won the Canadian National Championship twice, and the U.S. National Championship once. Dale currently holds the U.S. record for a flight of 1000 miles. In April 2007, Dale was attempting to break several gliding records by flying two



out and back legs up and down the west side of the Appalachians. He had studied the weather carefully, and the wind was perfectly set for the record flight. What he couldn't count on was the height of the cloud bases.

The clouds forced him into a situation where he had to fly around, rather than over, a ridgeline along the route. The resulting down draft behind the ridge forced his Rolladen-Schneider LS-8 sailplane down onto a remote, tree-covered mountain hillside in West Virginia. Both wings were sheared off and the cockpit landed upside down. His cell phone had just enough battery life for a call to his wife and to his support team. Despite a severely broken arm and multiple injuries to his left leg, he managed to deploy his parachute and cover most of his body for warmth. He spent

the night in the snow on the mountain, and was rescued the following day. The full story of this harrowing experience can be found at: [www.sailplanes.info/16April2007/k1.html](http://www.sailplanes.info/16April2007/k1.html)

Just writing this story tells me that a lot of good flying can be had for very low cost, whether you are flying an existing ultra light, or experimenting with an electric airplane. I believe that our thinking about flying needs to change a bit, if we are going to get more people in the air. Slow, but efficient flights in good weather conditions may not get us to a Dawn Patrol, but they do get us into the air, and they can be flown affordably.

The December issue of Kitplanes also has a listing of all the kit airplanes currently being offered. If you add up the number of airplanes of each design that are currently flying, the numbers are surprising – more than 6300 for Quicksilver Manufacturing alone. So the airplanes are out there to find and to fly.

On a similar subject, at the usual Friday morning 10 o'clock coffee meeting at Meier (Hey, what time is that 10 o'clock coffee, anyway?), someone made the point that operations at the Mason Airport are at a very low ebb. What can we do about it? It is going to take some creative thinking on our part, because the solution won't come from anywhere else. One place to start might be to host a social event and invite all the airplane owners and hangar owners. Even if we don't find that one great idea that turns things around, we will at least make some new friends and discuss our problems in a positive forum. And we might just be able to help our fellow pilots, in some way, as a result.



## FROM THE FLIGHT SURGEON

By Gregory Pinnell, MD

This time of year we frequently need to “self-treat” symptoms with over the counter (OTC) medications due to colds, flu or even the remains of seasonal allergies. Most of us know that many of these medications can cause drowsiness. The most common “relief” medication is Benadryl which is an antihistamine. It is often forgotten that the effects of this drug can last 4 hours and can take over 8 hours to get half of it out of your system. It is always best to wait till all the symptoms are gone and you have been off the OTC's for at least 24 hours before flying. Fly safe!

## CHAPTER 55 CLASSIFIEDS

Builders Hanger & Storage Hanger 517-589-5051

WANTED: Garmin 396 or 496; Dan Schiffer 517-862-6413

FOR SALE:

Snowblower; MTD; 3HP; 21"; single stage; \$99; Greg Hover 517-676-5126

Assorted woodworking tools; complete list call Steve Houghton 517-333-2196 or [steve.houghton@att.net](mailto:steve.houghton@att.net)

Legal Eagle ultra-light experimental airplane; Volkswagon engine; estate of Jim Cushing; \$10,000 OBO; James Devereaux 989-534-1333

2009 Kitfox; Model 4-1200; Rotax engine; many extras; Jack Toman 517-882-8331

KIS TR-1, Subaru Legacy engine; GPS nav/com; many extras; George Moore 517-536-1034

DTV analog or digital antenna; \$20.00  
George Moore 517-536-1034

Yesteryear Aviation; new surplus hardware; 517-676-4416

Contact Warren or Vickie to place your ad here!



EAA Members group at the Xmas Party



Marilyn Monroe returns to the Xmas Party to sing Happy BDay to the Prez



Member of the Year presented to Karen Meirndorf by Ernie Lutz

## FROM KYLE CURTISS

My name is Kyle Curtiss and I am in the flight science program at Western Michigan University. From time to time you'll see me at Young Eagles working registration, and helping out with MAD. As a Newberry Aviation Scholarship recipient the last two years, I wanted to update the EAA55 membership on my education over 2011. This spring was a difficult start of the year. The weather was often below WMU's minimums, had airmets for icing, holidays, illness, or interfered with my class schedule. At the time, I was working on my instrument rating and took almost five months to complete with all the delays. There were long periods of no flying, one period was six weeks. Finally, on May 2, 2011, I completed the rating. It seemed to take forever to get through the instrument rating and I immediately looked forward to starting my commercial multi-engine rating flying Piper Seminoles.

WMU has both glass and steam gauge multi-engine aircraft in their fleet. I never knew what equipment I would be flying each lesson. The idea is to teach students modern and the previous generation equipment, but from my flying with Dad (Kirk Curtiss) over the years, it was a fairly natural switch. I actually prefer the steam dials for precision flying. The needles are smoother, sort of like why digital speedometers in cars fell out of favor. However, you can't beat the information on a glass panel on a cross country trip.

It was a beautiful day in late May for my first flight in a multi engine aircraft. Since my previous experiences with my father have always been in a single engine aircraft, I decided to take Dad up with me on my very first flight. It was actually his first ride in a MEA too, but he had to ride in the rear and watch. I was finally learning something my Dad didn't know much about. I was having a good time learning about managing two engines when my instructor, Chris Perkins, decided it was time to demonstrate how to perform some basic maneuvers for the FAA check ride. We had only been flying for 45 minutes when I was instructed to climb to 5,500 feet. Once we arrived we began to perform what is called a Vmc demo. This is where the pilot demonstrates the ability to maintain direction control while

going to maximum rudder and then recovering. The maneuver is performed by pitching up 10 degrees and holding your heading as long as you can until the stall warning signs occur then recovering with only one engine available. "Available" means the other engine is normally at idle effectively producing no useable thrust. Soon after we completed this maneuver, Chris decided it was time to demonstrate how to feather and secure an engine in flight. Since I was new to multi-engine training it shocked me when it stopped turning and I became a little concerned. There is something un-nerving about shutting down a perfectly running engine in flight on purpose. While learning at WMU, it never occurred to me that somewhere along the way we would completely "fail" an engine, and when I say completely fail - I mean it stopped turning and was just sitting there in the feathered position. The next lesson was demonstrating the effects of losing an engine and the spiral dive that starts unless the pilot reacts. I must say it was an eye opener to see how fast the aircraft went out of control and losing altitude incredibly fast. We then went on to balance out the forces and start learning how to fly with one engine feathered. We just simply banked the airplane around to show it could fly with one engine inoperative. As soon as Chris finished his demonstration, he proceeded with the air start, which went flawlessly. This made me happy to see the propellers rotating again and making that sweet sound of balanced prop harmonics. This was the end of my first lesson in the multi-engine airplane to which my father and I were both happy to be safely on the ground after that shocking experience.

The most disappointing part of becoming a pilot under 141 regulations is the speed at which moving from one rating to another is accomplished. The high cost of flying is attempted to be balanced against the skills being built while learning. This ends up manifesting itself with pilots with almost no real IFR flying, no flying where decisions need to be made about weather in route, route changes in flight, changes to the plan, and no experience flying into distant airports. We quickly develop a false sense of security and "we know everything" attitude from continually flying in the same airspace. These skills are developed with long cross country flying, and in 141 learning only the FAA required minimums are planned. My MEI doesn't allow his students to perform their long cross country trip without at least attempting to break the sanitized flying we normally perform. Our required long cross country multi-engine trip would include all of the following: potential for ice, instrument conditions, Canadian air controllers, flight into a weather front, 80 knot cross winds at altitude, rain at the landing, no auto pilot allowed, no on board weather (WMU doesn't provide on board weather due to subscription costs), and all during a night flight. Chris wanted me to go for broke to build some real experience and build confidence; it all seemed a daunting task compare to the easy training flights up to now. The destination was Niagara Falls, NY. Again, my Dad came along for the flight. At the last minute the plans had to be modified due to weather concerns at one of the destinations, but we were still able to proceed. Chris wanted to give a real perspective to me about flying in a way the 141 curriculum doesn't typically provide. It was awesome. The winds were so strong a couple thousand feet

up that controller kept giving course corrections, which I executed, and he kept asking if I made the corrections to which he would add another 20 degrees to the left since I was getting more and more off the course he wanted. Fortunately, the winds, and the course corrections calmed down as we descended. It was amazing to pop out of the clouds riding the ILS approach and have the airport be right in front of you. I don't think I'll ever forget that first pop out. It was my first experience actually using an ILS without vision limiting devices. Unfortunately, it was pouring rain, and when we departed we couldn't see the falls even though we were just a few miles away. Chris did give in on the way back and allowed the auto pilot, and I was really thankful. The weather also cleared as we returned to BTL, we landed with one of my best landings ever. You just can't beat the feeling of pride after 6 hours of flying when the wheels start turning and you didn't feel a thump.

I completed all of the necessary lessons and started prepping for the check ride toward mid-November. Chris was one of the better instructors at WMU I had experienced with over 10 check rides behind him in the short time he had been an instructor at WMU. He really grilled me over and over and built confidence that I knew all there was to know. Of course the examiner seemed to ask all the things I didn't know or even heard of. I completed the commercial multi-engine check ride on November 29, 2011 on my first attempt. A couple of weeks before I took the check ride Chris informed me he was leaving WMU to start his new job flying for an airline in the Delta family. I was his last student at WMU taking a check ride.

My next goal is to take a few weeks break from flying for finals and Christmas before starting the single engine commercial rating in January. About two weeks of flying and another easier check ride will be all that's necessary for the rating. I'm already enrolled in the CFI class for the spring semester of 2012. It is my goal to have completed the instructor course by the start of summer. When I complete the course I plan on starting a job at WMU instructing while I continue my education toward CFII, and MEI rating in the fall of 2012.

I wish to express my appreciation for the scholarship. The career I have chosen has an enormous initial cost and the funding provided by EAA55 and the Newberry Aviation Scholarship has made an impact and definitely been appreciated. As an aviation student I have only time for three things – school, work, and flying. So I really appreciate the scholarship assistance and want the membership to know how it was having an effect in my life.

### **POCKET CALENDAR:**

Jan 21&22 = Great Lakes Aviation Conf  
Feb 18 = Mettetal Chili Flyin; 11-3  
Mar 27-Apr 1 = Sun-N-Fun  
June 9 = EAA55 Young Eagles  
June 10 = EAA55 Dawn Patrol  
July 14 = EAA55 Young Eagles  
July 23-29 = AirVenture  
Aug 4-5 =Thunder Over Michigan  
Aug 11 = EAA55 Young Eagles  
Aug 18 = Mason Aviation Day