



THE GRAPEVINE



EAA CHAPTER 663 Livermore, California

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There is a very fine line between "hobby" and "mental illness."

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MEETING AND PROGRAM

Our September meeting will take place at 7:30 P.M. on the 2nd of September in the Terminal Building at the Livermore Airport. Our program for the evening will be a killer slide show presented by Barry Weber of pictures he shot at Air-Venture 2004. Even those who were there will be amazed by all the planes that they missed

MINUTES: GENERAL MEETING EAA CHAPTER 663, 9/2/04, 7:30 PM, LVK TERMINAL BUILDING

The meeting started on the ramp in front of the terminal. Jim McCormack of Jabiru Pacific had the Jabiru 400 on display, a relatively small but very capable airplane with room for 4 full size people. With 4 on board the fuel load would be very limited. It is not a Cessna 182, but it does sound like one with its 6 cylinder Jabiru engine. The group moved inside to hear Jim answer questions about his airplane and other Jabiru products, other 2 and 4 seat airplanes and 4, 6, and 8 cylinder engines. It

moved outside again to hear the Jabiru 400 depart.

8:30 pm the rest of the meeting begins. Two guests were introduced. The minutes for the August meetings were approved as printed in *The Grapevine*. Treasurer Sharon Constant reported \$2231.69 in chapter funds; her report was approved.

Business: The Airport Open House was discussed. Brad Olson has volunteered to coordinate the static display area. Those showing their planes are to get them there early or the night before. The chapter will have a booth/sunshade for a center of our public relations effort and to sign up Young Eagles for the coming year.

The last barbeque of the year will be October 2, at 4 pm in and around Bob Buckthal's and Bob Farum's hangars at the northeast corner of the airport.

A committee was formed to evaluate the chapter trailer. The task is to recommend possible upgrades to the existing trailer or building a replacement. So far Ralph Cloud, Barry Weber, and Bruce Cruikshank are on the committee, others are welcome.

The January dinner was discussed. A location is the main question to be answered. Locations in the tri-valley area were offered, Larry Fish was going to check locations in Danville and Alamo.

Bob Cowan set the next Young Eagle Rally for Sept. 18. Bob made an appeal for volunteer pilots, and for someone to take over as the coordinator.

Ralph announced the next board meeting will be Sept. 16th at his place.

8:57 pm Greg Triplett moved to close the meeting.

Meeting adjourned for pie.

**MINUTES: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING, EAA CHAPTER 663,
9/16/04 AT RALPH'S PLACE**

Members with the initials RC, DJ, BC, LF, BJ, BC and SC were present.

Business: Items discussed included the Airport Open House (9/25/04), the chapter barbeque (10/2/04), the chapter trailer, and the January dinner (1/??/05).

Ralph will have a sunshade set up as a focal point for members to promote our activities to members of the public and to sign up Young Eagles. Bill Jepson expressed reservations about the effort and expense involved in building a new trailer. Larry Fish gave a run down of his search for a location for the January dinner. Front runner is the Alamo Womens Club. Ralph had checked on places in Livermore. Most halls charge \$300 to \$600 for an evening. Example: the Livermore gun club was about \$350 if we were sponsored by a member of the gun club, \$600 without.

Treasurer Sharon gave a report of \$2183.62 in chapter funds. The major ongoing expense is the newsletter. Ideas for promoting the on-line version were offered. Ideas for raising money were kicked about. Sharon now has a sewing machine capable of embroidery, and offered to make personalized ball caps/hats to raise funds.

Bob Cowan is burned out coordinating the chapter young eagle program and really would like someone to take it over.

Bill Jepson was in need for program subjects for future meetings. He was hoping Barry Weber would be available for October with his great Oshkosh slide show.

Meeting adjourned about 9:00 pm

Respectfully submitted, Bruce Cruikshank Secretary

**LIVERMORE AIRPORT MASTERPLAN
UPDATE**

As most of you know I sit on the Livermore Airport Advisory Commission and the Air-

port Master Plan Update Review Committee (AMPURC). The AMPURC is a 21 member committee established by the Livermore City Council. The makeup of the committee includes representatives from Livermore, Dublin and Pleasanton. The AMPURC is charged with reviewing the master plan update and making a recommendation to the Livermore City Council by December 2004. Closing the airport is not an option. However, if you have attended any of the three previous meetings you would have observed that the public in attendance is strongly against the airport.

Let me cover some background. The master plan update (this is an update of the 1975 master plan) outlines the "blueprint" for managing the airport for the next 20 years. The update was developed by first doing an inventory of the current state of the airport and its assets (runways, taxiways, structures and land), projecting the load on the airport resources in 20 years, then recommending the necessary improvements to meet the projected needs. This also included a business plan for the airport, as the airport must be managed as an enterprise fund, this means that the airport must generate the revenue to operate.

Now the issues, or should I say, the top issue ... noise. Noise generated by jets. The master plan update projects 370,000 operations by 2020 with 18,500 of those being jets. This is a projection for planning purposes, however, it has become the main issue the public is most outspoken about.

During the first three meetings, the public comment has been overwhelmingly against the airport. It is important that those that appreciate the airport speak out. Please come to the next meeting, Wednesday, October 13th. The meetings are held at the Doubletree Club Hotel, 720 Las Flores Road, Livermore (the old Holiday Inn).

If you have any questions or want to discuss this issue in more detail, give me a call.

Ralph Cloud
449-1048

THIS SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2ND IS OUR END OF SUMMER CHAPTER BBQ.

Our chapter BBQs are always a great event. Come, sit, relax, talk with old friends, meet new friends. Join the meriment, 4pm, Saturday, October 2nd. at Bob & Bob's, (Hangars 113 & 114) at the northeast corner of the airport. Bring a side dish to share and your own entre' to grill (the coals will be hot by 4:30). We will have beverages, plates, plastic flatware. Bring some chairs, it always helps.

Ralph Cloud

ACCIDENT OCCURRED WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 01, 2004 IN FOSSIL, OR

Aircraft: Helio A/C LTD H800, reg. # N4033G
Injuries: 1 Serious.

This is preliminary information, subject to change, and may contain errors. Any errors in this report will be corrected when the final report has been completed.

On September 1, 2004, approximately 1235 Pacific daylight time, a Helio Aircraft LTD H800, single-engine airplane, N4033G, was destroyed after impacting terrain following takeoff/initial climb, approximately 14 nautical miles southwest of Fossil, Oregon. The airplane was registered to Schmidt Aviation Inc., of Boring, Oregon, and operated by a private individual. The certificated private pilot, sole occupant of the airplane, sustained serious injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the personal flight, which was conducted in accordance with 14 CFR Part 91, and a flight plan was not filed. The flight was originating at the time of the accident.

In a telephone interview with the NTSB investigator-in-charge (IIC) , the pilot reported that just after taking off and during the initial

climb at an altitude of between 75 feet to 100 feet above ground level, he noticed he had no ability to turn [bank] the airplane with either aileron. The pilot stated that he immediately decided to "put the airplane down" by pulling the power all the way off and landing straight ahead. The pilot reported the airplane impacted a field with its left wing tip, left main landing gear, and in a tail low position. There was no post crash fire.

A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airworthiness inspector, who traveled to the accident site, reported the aft fuselage/tail section had been severed aft of the rear cabin bulkhead, coming to rest vertically against the right underside area of the forward fuselage. The forward fuselage, comprising the cabin and cockpit areas, came to rest in a vertical position resting on the forward cockpit area and both leading edges of the wings. The leading edges of both wings were wrinkled and crushed aft. The inspector also reported that the left and right wing gust locks were located on the ground approximately 10 and 15 feet outboard of their respective wingtips.

FUELING FIRES

Provided from the Cozy N/L by Tim LoDolce,
flight advisor/tech. counselor, Truckee, CA

We have discussed this subject before, but it is so important that it is worth reviewing over and over again. For there to be a fire, three elements must be present: 1) fuel, 2) oxygen, and 3) a source of ignition. When you are fueling your airplane, fuel and oxygen will always be present. If you don't take the necessary precautions, a source of ignition might also be present.

In high-school physics, most people see a demonstration of a Van de Graff electrostatic generator. It uses a moving, insulated belt to generate potentials of millions of volts and sparks which jump across huge gaps. The stream of fuel into your tank is the same as the Van de Graff moving insulated belt. The fuel hose nozzle is connected to ground, so it can move an unlimited number of electrons into your tank. The fuel is non-conductive and the tank of fiberglass airplanes is non-conductive, so these electrons collect on the surface of the fuel with nowhere to go. The potential builds up, and when it becomes great enough, a spark will jump from the fuel in the tank back to the hose nozzle. That will be the last of your air-

plane, and maybe you as well.

There is a simple and effective solution. The ground cable that all fuel trucks have is really worthless, but I don't tell the driver that. I just tell him (or her) to hook it on the exhaust pipes. This cable grounds the engine, but not the fuel in the tank (my private joke). What I have is a braided cable connected to my gas cap, which is long enough to dangle into the fuel even when the cap is removed and laying on the top of the strake, and of course it also lays on the tank nozzle when the cap is removed. With a short electrical wire with alligator clamps on both ends, which I carry in the side pocket of the front seat, I connect the cable dangling into the tank and laying across the tank nozzle with the fuel hose nozzle. This is called "bonding". It allows the electrons collecting on the surface of the fuel to flow back to the hose nozzle and to ground without generating a spark. The result is that the fuel in the tank and the hose nozzle are at the same electrical potential, so there is no way a spark could be generated. This is probably even safer than fueling a spam can with metal tanks.

Please do not be careless when fueling your airplane, even if you fuel it from cans. Just a little precaution can prevent a huge disaster!

POLITICS

"The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by menacing it with an endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary."

-H. L. Mencken

WEB PAGEs OF NOTE

Here's a source of more data than you'll ever need; the hard part is deciding what you need and what you don't need!

<http://www.cafefoundation.org/research.htm>

VELOCITY ACCIDENT UPDATE

by James Jorgensen
Varieze N388DT

These are the facts as I see them, about my father's accident in his Velocity XLRG, N190J on

08/07/04 near Belvidere, Kansas. I am sharing this with the group to avoid unnecessary speculation, and because I feel there is educational value in accidents. There had better be:

He received a weather briefing prior to departing Dodge City around 10:00 a.m. Local ceilings at the time of departure were 900 ft. with a visibility of 5 miles in mist. Ceilings 60 miles out along his intended route were 3400 ft. Tops were not reported in his briefing, but they were later estimated at 6-9000 ft. He was spotted on radar squawking 1200, in a level climb through 4000', then initiating a climbing turn which transitioned to a descending turn as he reached 6000 ft. Radar coverage in the area is spotty below 4000', so the final moments of his descent are unclear.

Witnesses indicated that the aircraft emerged from the overcast in a spiral with the engine 'surging' (the right wing departed before the aircraft became visible, so the 'surging' was probably due to doppler effect from spinning). After a few turns, there was a puff of 'white smoke' and/or an explosion, and the left wing departed the aircraft.

The wreckage indicates a failure of the centersection spar in bending/torsion roughly 1 ft. inboard from the ends (the outboard portions of the centersection spar were found still bolted to the wings, and the wings were both intact with control surfaces present and functioning). Duane Swing inspected the wings and expressed some concern about the appearance of the region connecting the torsional layups of the strake to the centersection spar. Regardless of whether this particular layup was perfect, it appears that the failure was due to a significant overload. The fire/explosion/puff of white smoke was likely due to fuel being dumped out of the right strake when the right wing came off, spraying up and across the engine (the cowling came off with the right wing and showed no indication of burning) and left wing as the remaining aircraft was spinning. Eventually the fuel found an ignition source on the engine and was set off, enveloping the left wing in flame and superficially scorching it, though it was never "on fire". It departed the aircraft shortly after ignition.

A roughly 1 foot right outboard section of the canted departed the aircraft at some point, but I am

not currently sure if it happened upon impact with the ground, or in the air. In retrospect I should have inspected it more closely, but didn't. While the fuselage was completely burned, enough fiberglass remained to indicate that the inboard portion of the canard remained attached.

I am striving to obtain more circumstantial weather data, radar data of the flight, a recording of the weather briefing he received that morning, and any radio transmissions he may have made in flight (unlikely). The NTSB will be putting out their report in 6-12 months.

My preliminary/tentative conclusions: VFR into IMC leading to spatial disorientation and maneuvering stressing the airframe beyond limits.

Possible alternative scenarios: Wind shear or severe turbulence? Incapacitation due to ...? Oxygen tank leak/explosion (it was never found)? To my knowledge his remains were too burned and mangled to allow for a useful autopsy.

A few words about Dad:

He was not instrument rated, but seemed cavalier about minimums and VFR on top. He had enough IFR procedural knowledge to get by and he had flown hard IFR plenty of times with a friend (in a different aircraft), but not recently (as far as I know). In a conversation with my mother the night before, he told her he had flown at 17,000' on oxygen and encountered significant turbulence, to the point of bumping his head several times. He had apparently found 'a hole' over Dodge City allowing him to descend and land. I used to yell at him when he called to announce some (clearly illegal, but more importantly, idiotic) 'feat' he had gotten away with, but the response was always "I know, I know" or "it worked out fine".

He was also VERY tense and high-strung, prone to severe claustrophobia when stuck in a dark space (running wires in my sister's attic) or attempting SCUBA for the first time. I met with him the week before the accident. He had considered flying commercially from Gold Beach, OR to Melbourne, FLA. I never knew what his decision was until I heard the news.

James Jorgensen

In an later e-mail to a member of the Canard Aviators group, James wrote:

Fred, I don't want to single you out, but this seems to not be registering with some people so let me spell it out, because it didn't register with my dad either, and he's DEAD either directly or indirectly because of it.

I got my facts about his flight directly from the NTSB; pilots present at his point of departure; NOAA; officers responding to the scene; Duane Swing (President of Velocity); from personally looking at the wreckage with bones still in it; my mother; my 36 years' worth of acquaintance with the victim.

I understand, he *could* have been hit by a meteorite, been abducted by aliens, had a bird strike, had an equipment failure, had a heart attack. But ask yourself the question: What is a VFR-rated pilot doing, deliberately taking off in 900 foot ceilings and climbing into solid overcast conditions without knowing how thick the layer is? Look up "Maneuvering Speed". Look up spatial disorientation. Understand that ANY aircraft will come apart if subjected to excessive loads.

I suspect that with all the neat navigational gizmos out there, there is a risk of treating the IFR rating as redundant, because, heck, it's just a bureaucratic requirement, right?... another way for "government" to look down our pants and make a buck. Well, get that piece of lore out of your head and read through the practical test standards and all the other material associated with the rating and consider that the information is based on knowledge derived from generations of dead pilots. It's a Darwinian process, not a bureaucratic one.

I don't consider myself an authority on much of anything, but I have enough experience to know that VFR on top by choice or bad planning (i.e. avoidable VFR on top) is reckless... heck, even criminal. It means that you have placed yourself, possibly your passengers and people on the ground, in a position where you're depending on luck, not skill, to land safely. As a student pilot I believe (it was 12 years ago) I was shown a movie called '3 minutes to live', about VFR into IMC. It really made an impression on me. I also experienced vertigo once as a student pilot on a VFR

day by simply looking at the charts too long and having the plane bank 30 degrees without sensing it. The sense of instant panic resulting from the horizon not being where my body thought it was, was an invaluable lesson.

I have tremendous respect for people who consistently fly IFR and maintain the rating. It requires skill, practice, discipline, perfect equipment and being in top shape. To kid yourself that an autopilot coupled to a GPS is enough to "wing it" is delusional. One normally minor equipment glitch can quickly lead to distraction and disaster in IMC, whereas in VFR conditions it would be a mere annoyance.

The 'what if' scenario really has only one answer: DON'T!!!! Plan around it. Renting a car short of your destination is not a sign of failure. Turning back is not a sign of failure. Dying because you couldn't stand the inconvenience of not completing a flight is really pathetic. While I have your attention, take a minute to think about the balance sheet of outcomes: a phone call to say you'll be hours... days... a week late vs. people who depend on you suffering to some degree for the rest of their lives.

I'll stop my part of the discussion here. The NTSB has already investigated: Their determination is VFR into IMC, though the investigator hasn't typed it up yet... the workload is high, he said.



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