



# THE GRAPEVINE



EAA CHAPTER 663 Livermore, California

Vol. XXIV, No. 3, March, 2004

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

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## MEETING AND PROGRAM

Our March meeting will take place at 7:30 P.M. on the 6th of March in the Terminal Building at the Livermore Airport. The program will be a discussion of the Airport Master Plan presented by airport manager, Leander Hourii.

### MINUTES: GENERAL MEETING, EAA CHAPTER 663, 2/5/04, 7:35 PM, LVK TERMINAL BUILDING

Ralph Cloud called the meeting to order.

One guest introduced himself.

Ralph presented Cash Copeland (RV-6), Don Farrand (RV-8), and Pete Bodie (RV-6A) with first flight awards in 2003.

Minutes for the January meeting were approved as printed in "The Grapevine".

The treasurer's report was approved.

**Business:** Ralph reported on the success of the annual dinner. 85 persons were present and enjoyed friends, good food, and talking about airplanes ranging in speeds from 50 to 2000 knots.

**New technical counselors and flight advisors:** There was a discussion of the experience requirements for these positions. Greg Triplett expressed interest in becoming a flight advisor. Bob Sinclair is a possible technical counselor.

The subject of having someone coordinate chapter fly out activities was batted about.

**Young Eagles:** Bob Cowan requested pilots for the upcoming Young Eagles rallies on April 10 and a special one on April 24 for a group of international students.

**Tools:** Bob Farnam reported on the donation of a bead maker (flat sheet type) to the chapter tool collection.

**Dues:** Ralph reminded members to pay their dues for 2004.

**Board Meeting:** Ralph announced the next board meeting for Thursday 2/19/04 at his place.

**Break and then Program:** Bill Jepson introduced JR Rutkosky owner of Precision Static Testing. JR bought Gyro Jeff's California Gyro. JR led a lively program outlining the requirements for testing static systems and encoding transponders. With the help of Ron and Carolina Labby, and Danny Parker all aspects these systems were covered, from plumbing to antennas. Thanks JR, Ron, Danny and Carolina.

Meeting adjourned for pie.

## MINUTES: BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 2/19/04, 7:30 PM, RALPH'S

There were thirteen present (a recent record) with the initials RC, BC, DJ, BW, EH, LF, JM, BF, BC, SC, BJ, RH, and GT.

Ralph lamented that no one has applied for flight advisor or technical advisor. Bob Sinclair was mentioned for position of a composite technical advisor. Flight Advisor Barry Weber expressed interest in a technical advisor position.

The aerodynamic lessons prior to the meetings continue to show increased interest.

**Tools:** Bob Farnam reported no new requests or ideas for new chapter tools. An official "want list" was suggested. Barry Weber suggested a tubing beading tool, which was received with a lot of heads nodding up and down; no action was taken. Use of the scales was discussed. It was agreed that use of the scales be limited to chapter members. If a non member wants to use the scales, he or she pays \$30 to join the chapter. Bob reported a couple new members joining for this reason. It is chapter policy to no longer allow a member to check out the scales to weigh a "friends" aircraft.

**Fly outs:** On the subject of organized chapter fly outs, Bob Cowan and Greg Triplett agreed to set up two this year.

**Treasurer** Sharon reported a recent hemorrhage in the chapter treasury. The annual dinner cost the chapter \$800 to \$900.

It was decided in the future to try and set the price for attending much more closely to the cost of the dinner. After much discussion, Sharon reported a total of about \$2500 in the chapter treasury. This is after paying \$850 for the display cabinet for the terminal building, which has arrived! \$2,481.92 has been collected so far for 2004 dues, about a quarter of those list in the data base have yet to pay their current dues. Sharon strongly suggested we have some fund raising activities both outside and within the chapter; one being embroidering "N" numbers on shirts and light jackets by members with access to embroidering sewing machines.

**Barbecues:** Ralph set May 16, June 12, July 3 and August 14 as dates for barbecues this year. On the subject of money, these have cost the chapter

\$55 to \$60 each in the past.

The Airport Open House this year will be September 25.

The EAA B-17 will only be coming to Hayward on its spring tour this year.

Bill Jepson will act as chapter liaison for the Golden State Fly In at Marysville in June.

The program for March 4th will be the Airport Master Plan presented by airport manager Leander Hourie. Bill Jepson needs program ideas. Meeting adjourned for pie.

Respectfully submitted, Bruce Cruikshank,  
Secretary

### GROUP DISCOUNT FOR TRANSPONDER TESTING

**Precision Static Testing** is offering EAA members (and their friends) a group discount for transponder testing on March 27, 2004. We will be working hangar to hangar at the Livermore Airport from 9 am until noon and need to put together a schedule.

Group discount price, good for the 27<sup>th</sup> of March, is **\$75.00 each**. (The normal price for transponder checks is \$95.00.) Please have your log books with you so we can sign off the aircraft at the time of service. Payment can be in the form of cash or check.

**If you would like to take part in this event, please call (925-449-5904) or send an email to us at (HYPERLINK "mailto:precisionstatic@aol.com" [precisionstatic@aol.com](mailto:precisionstatic@aol.com)) to let us know.** We need to get an approximate number and type of aircraft, as well as the time slots you would like so we can cut down on the wait time for everyone. We will try to have a sign up sheet at the March EAA meeting.

Please call us at if you have any questions. We hope to have a similar event every few months if there is a demand.

**THE TOP 10 CAUSES OF PISTON  
AIRCRAFT ENGINE EMERGENCIES**  
(taken from the most recent FAA archives)

10. Major Internal Failure (caused by metal fatigue).
9. Lubrication Leaks (loose oil filler caps).
8. Induction System blockage (nests).
7. Ignition problems (fouled plugs).
6. Miscellaneous Maintenance problems (missing bolts and nuts).
5. Cylinder Valve failure (improper leaning)
4. Fuel System problems (biggest problem was switching to **off** position).
3. Carburetor Icing (not keeping an eye on OAT and Dew point).
2. Fuel Contamination (water or JetA)  
And the #1 cause is....
1. **FUEL STARVATION/EXHAUSTION**

Notice that the top 4 items that cause problems are all FUEL related. One would think that if we concentrate on proper fuel management in all its forms (Top 4), we the pilot community, should be able to eliminate the biggest threats to our safety while flying.

**FOR SALE:** RV-4 Kit. Wings are complete with fuel tanks in and sealed. Flaps are finished. Fuselage is out of the jig, with floorboards in. Much of the fuselage aluminum is clecoed on. Labor represents about two years of building. Kit has been built keeping high standards in mind. Tail complete. Contact Prez Ralph for further details. He will direct you to where you may inspect the kit. Asking price will be best offer over \$9,000. Submit offers to Ralph Eaves no later than Monday, February 23.

## THE GROUND LOOP FROM HELL

By Randy Lervold (an RV builder from Oregon)

Many of you (RV builders) have seen the notice of an "incident" on Saturday 1/31 in Vancouver, WA on the FAA web site involving N558RL (an RV tail dragger of some sort. Ye ED) And many of you have sent messages of query and/or condolence to me. I am truly touched, I genuinely appreciate the concern, thanks so much. Here's the notice in case you're interested...

Now, what happened? This is a story you won't believe. As most of you know I had put the plane up for sale. I had immediate interest and had buyers wanting to send me deposits without seeing the plane in person. I refused the deposits but made arrangements for the first party who

contacted me to come up this past weekend from Florida and asked the other guys to call back after Saturday. He flew up on Friday evening. Saturday we spent the day flying around, or should I say scud running, to local airports in the nasty NW weather. He turned out to be really good guy, absolutely loved the plane, and had decided to buy it. We were heading back to Pearson to sit down with the purchase contract my attorney had drawn up and exchange the check (\$100k).

I monitored the ASOS for Pearson as we proceeded inbound which indicated a 10 knot wind 90 degrees to the runway. Upon rolling out on final I could tell the wind was stronger than that and was gusting. I made an approach at 85 mph, +5 mph from my normal two-up speed and proceeded in. I was fighting the gusts all the way down and with the extra speed just wasn't comfortable with the way it was settling, or not settling, down on the runway so I gassed it and went around. On the next approach I went back down to 80 mph, my normal two-up speed, hoping to avoid the prolonged float, and made a solid approach. I held variable right stick and left rudder down through the flare and got it on the ground solidly and dead straight -- it was done flying. Still holding full right stick and a bit of left rudder, we were rolling out straight down the runway -- thought I had nailed it. At approximately 30 mph ground speed (later corroborated by my backseater, a 2,000 hour jet-rated pilot and sailboat racer) a gust hit from the right and the tail started moving left. Full left rudder just wouldn't correct, we were going too slowly, and by the time I thought about jabbing the throttle for some additional rudder authority we were almost 90 degrees and sliding sideways. The pavement was wet and we were sliding -- I was thinking to myself "sh\*\*", this will damage my wheelpants and I'm gonna have to replace 'em before I can sell it". Then the left (lead) wheel started hopping, dug into the pavement, pogoed the plane up a bit and collapsed down on the left wing just as we moved off the pavement onto the grass. As I watched the wing go down I could see it wrinkle and thought "ok, that wing won't be flying any more". I was aware of exactly what was happening every nanosecond and could feel everything. Still, I just couldn't believe it. It was so slow and benign feeling that I couldn't believe the gear collapsed. We were jostled around less than light turbulence while flying. After coming to a stop I just started shutting the ship down

normally in checklist sequence. There was no tension or urgency at all. I smelled no fuel but my backseater said "Hey, we better get outa here. I pulled the canopy back and let him exit while I finished my shut down and closed the fuel valve -- no fuel smell though. I exited normally and said to him "Now EXACTLY what just happened?".

Well, you know what happened, but I wanted his analysis of the situation to immediately learn what I had done wrong. He agreed that I had flown a beautiful approach, flare, and landing, but we simply got hit with a large gust at precisely the wrong time. Could some combination of rudder, brake, and throttle have saved it if I was a better pilot? I truly don't know.

Here is the FAA weather metars listed in the above referenced report... WEATHER: VUOA505 2153Z 17010G17KT 10SM -RA OVC030 7/3 A2993. I landed runway 08, so the "17010G17KT" had the wind direction at exactly 90 degrees with the wind at 10 gusting to 17. Hmm, could a 17 knot gust do that? Felt like more than that to me and my pax both.

The left wing had significant wrinkling in it while it was laying on it, presumably from dropping down it after the gear folded under. After we propped it up some of it went away but there's no way I'm flying that wing again. The wing tip and aileron are crunched, the left landing gear completely ripped clean by ripping the close tolerance mounting bolts in tension, quite a sight. Nothing FWF touched the ground. We managed to get the plane onto a crude trailer and back into my hangar without damaging it further and prop the left side up on wing jacks (glad I had those!).

Just as we're getting it into the hangar my cell phone starts ringing and I make the mistake of answering it... it's the FAA wanting to know what happened. Great. So I proceeded to give them all the info. They asked me to put all this in a statement and fax it to them, "Monday will be fine". At this point we had it back home and stabilized in the hangar and I just wanted to get away from the whole thing and think about it. The prospective buyer, Peter, and my wife and I went out to dinner than night but I just felt awful and wanted to crawl up in fetal position in the corner --glasses of wine didn't help. Sunday wasn't much better but I forced myself to do the FAA statement anyway. Today I had to work and

am feeling a bit better and have already spoken with both the insurance agent and adjuster. I really don't know what my options are at this point but will spend the next week or so with inspections and adjusters getting it sorted out. I'll try to post something once I know what the final scenario is. Oh, no, he didn't buy the plane. ;-)

I need to inspect it further to accurately assess the damage both for myself and for the insurance company. I'll probably have someone from Van's do this and then attempt to settle up with the insurance company. I do have full coverage insurance with \$80k hull coverage.

## **SUPERSONIC FLIGHT - AIRCRAFT OPTIONAL**

From Forbes, Courtesy of Bob DeVries, Ch 170

### **JOE KITTINGER'S 100,000 FT. JUMP IN 1960**

Joe Kittinger is not a household aviation name like Neil Armstrong or Chuck Yeager. But what he did for the U.S. space program is comparable. On Aug. 16, 1960, as research for the then-fledgling U.S. space program, Air Force Captain Joseph Kittinger rode a helium balloon to the edge of space, 102,800 feet above the earth, a feat in itself. Then, wearing just a thin pressure suit and breathing supplemental oxygen, he leaned over the cramped confines of his gondola and jumped--into the 110-degree-below-zero, near vacuum of space. Within seconds his body accelerated to 714 mph in the thin air, breaking the sound barrier. After free falling for more than four and a half minutes, slowed finally by friction from the heavier air below, he felt his parachute open at 14,000 feet, and he coasted gently down to the New Mexico desert floor.

Kittinger's feat showed scientists that astronauts could survive the harshness of space with just a pressure suit and that man could eject from aircraft at extreme altitudes and survive. Upon Kittinger's return to base, a congratulatory telegram was waiting from the Mercury Seven astronauts--including Alan Shepard and John Glenn.

More than four decades later Kittinger's two world records--the highest parachute jump, and the only man to break the sound barrier without a craft and live--still stand.

Forbes decided to visit the retired colonel and

Aviation Hall of Famer, now 75 at his home in Altamonte Springs, Florida, to recall his historic jump.

**FORBES GLOBAL:** *Take us back to New Mexico and Aug. 16, 1960.*

**Joe Kittinger:** We got up at 2 a.m. to start filling the helium balloon. At sea level, it was 35 to 40 feet wide and 200 feet high; at altitude, due to the low air pressure, it expanded to 25 stories in width, and still was 20 stories high! At 4 a.m., I began breathing pure oxygen for two hours. That's how long it takes to remove all the nitrogen from your blood so you don't get the bends going so high so fast. Then it was a lengthy dress procedure, layering warm clothing under my pressure suit. They kept me in air-conditioning until it was time to launch because we were in the desert and I wasn't supposed to sweat. If I did, my clothes would freeze on the way up.

*How was your ascent?*

It took an hour and a half to get to altitude. It was cold. At 40,000 feet, the glove on my right hand hadn't inflated. I knew that if I radioed my doctor, he would abort the flight. If that happened, I knew I might never get another chance because

there were lots of people who didn't want this test to happen. I took a calculated risk that I might lose use of my right hand. It quickly swelled up, and I did lose use for the duration of the flight. But the rest of the pressure suit worked. When I reached 102,800 feet, maximum altitude, I wasn't quite over the target. So I drifted for 11 minutes. The winds were out of the East.

*What's it look like from so high up?*

You can see about 400 miles in every direction. The most fascinating thing is that it's just black overhead—the transition from normal blue to black is very stark. You can't see stars because there's a lot of glare from the sun, so your pupils are too small. I was struck with the beauty of it. But I was also struck by how hostile it is: more than 100 degrees below zero, no air. If my protection suit failed, I would be dead in a few seconds. Blood actually boils above 62,000 feet. I went through my 46-step checklist, disconnected from the balloon's power supply and lost all communication with the ground. I was totally under power from the kit on my back. When everything was done, I stood up, turned around, to the door, took one final look out and said a silent prayer: "Lord, take care of me now." Then just jumped over the side. I

## EAA CHAPTER 663 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ NEW ( ) RENEWAL ( ) DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
FAX \_\_\_\_\_ WORKFAX \_\_\_\_\_ EAA# \_\_\_\_\_ RATINGS \_\_\_\_\_  
PROJECT \_\_\_\_\_ FLYING? \_\_\_\_\_ HOURS \_\_\_\_\_ SPOUSE \_\_\_\_\_  
SKILLS, PROGRAMS, I CAN GIVE, ETC. \_\_\_\_\_  
NAME TAG YES ( ) NO ( ) NAME TAG INFO \_\_\_\_\_ HANGAR No. \_\_\_\_\_

Please give or send this completed form with a \$30 check (No cash, please) to:

Sharon Constant,  
3446 Jordan Road,  
Oakland, CA 9460

**OR**, you could go to the chapter web site and pay through PayPal. If you do, please update your personal data while you're there; some of you don't have a phone listed, etc., etc.

*What were you thinking as you took that step?*

It's the beginning of a test. I had gone through simulations many times-more than 100. I rolled over and looked up, and there was the balloon just roaring into space. I realized that the balloon wasn't roaring into space; I was going down at a fantastic rate! At about 90,000 feet, I reached 714 mph . The altimeter on my wrist was unwinding very rapidly. But there was no sense of speed. Where you determine speed is visual --if you see something go flashing by. But nothing flashes by 20 miles up--there are no signposts there, and you are way above any clouds.

When the chute opened, the rest of the jump was

anticlimactic because everything had worked perfectly. I landed 12 or 13 minutes later, and there was my crew waiting.

We were elated

*What about attempts to break your record?*

We did it for aircrews and astronauts--for the learning, not to set a record. They will be going up as skydivers. Somebody will beat it someday. Records are made to be busted. And I'll be elated. But I'll also be concerned that they're properly trained. If they're not, they're taking a heck of a risk.



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