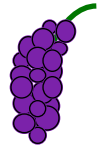


THE GRAPEVINE



EAA CHAPTER 663 Livermore, California

Vol. XXVI, No. 9, September, 2006

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

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	BOB FARNAM	449-1513
VICE PRES.	BRAD OLSON	866-9289
TREASURER	BILL BUNCE	510-581-0214
SECRETARY	SCOTT ALAIR	416-0889
PROGRAM CO-ORD	BRAD OLSON	866-9289
TECH COUNSELOR	GORDON JONES	447-1549
TECH COUNSELOR	BOB SINCLAIR	935-7465
NEWS LETTER	JOHN MEYER	455-1631
FLIGHT ADVISOR	BARRY WEBER	454-0627
FLIGHT ADVISOR	BOB FARNAM	449-1513
YOUNG EAGLES	ERIC HELMS	373-0137
LIBRARIAN	ALAN THAYER	582-7274
WEB EDITOR	RALPH CLOUD	449-1048

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BRUCE CRUIKSHANK	510-886-6897
RALPH CLOUD	449-1048
HARRY CROSBY	485-9359
ERIC HELMS	373-0137
BILL JEPSON	408-929-1123
GEOFF RUTLEDGE	650-462-1126

THE SEPTEMBER MEETING

The September, 2006, meeting of EAA Chapter 663 will take place at nominally 6:30 P.M. on the 7th of September, 2006, in the Terminal Building at the Livermore Airport.

PROGRAM: Anything but RV's, that is!

Our July meeting was a success, with 15 RVs in attendance. For September, we will bring out everyone else. This is an opportunity to display your (non-RV) aircraft and share information about it with your fellow chapter members.

On Thursday, September 7, plan to bring your plane over in front of the Livermore terminal at 6 pm. At 6:30, we will walk as a group to each member's plane and have them describe it. I learned a bit about RVs in July and believe we all can learn a little more about what is going on in the chapter during this meeting.

If you are flying in, we will get to you first so that you can get home before dark.

E-mail me if you are planning to display a plane.

Brad Olson
VP, EAA 663

MINUTES: GENERAL MEETING
EAA CHAPTER 663, 08/03/06, 7:30 PM
TERMINAL BUILDING LVK.

Chapter vice president Brad Olson called the meeting to order.

We had no guests, but better yet we had three new members: Marc Goroff, Kurt Haller and Wilson Hoffman.

Treasurer's report: Bill Bunce reported the chapter has \$4,538.12 in funds.

Ralph Cloud announced the LVK open house will be on Saturday September 16th. If you would like to man the chapter booth, please contact Ralph. Ralph also reported the Livermore city council approved to go ahead and get proposals to build new hangers on the south side and a full service FBO on the north side of LVK.

Saturday August 26th there will be a **Young Eagles** event. please contact Eric Helms if you would like to participate.

Several chapter members who had just returned from Airventure spoke about what was new and interesting at Oshkosh this year.

Break at 8:30 pm

Alan Thayer showed a video from a Young Eagles event in September of 2005. The video follows two brothers getting their first

ride in a light aircraft from Barry Weber in Cessna 195.

Adjourned for pie at 9:15 pm.

**BOARD MEETING: AUGUST 17TH, 2006, 7:30,
BOB FARNAM'S PLACE.**

Present: Bob Farnam, Brad Olsen, Ralph Cloud, Bill Bunce, Scott Alair, Dick Jennings, Bruce Cruikshank, John Meyer and Geoff Rutledge.

The meeting began with a demonstration of the **chapters new LCD** projector. Geoff Rutledge played a video he shot from the Abbottsford air show the previous weekend showing formation fly by's of a pair of Quickies.

Bill Bunce reported the chapter has \$3,170.02 in funds.

Tools: Bob Farnam has volunteered to build a wheel a balancer for the chapter.

Next chapter meeting: Thursday September 7th, next board meeting Thursday September 21st.

Adjourned for pie at 9:00.

The Reno air races are September 13th-17th, if you go please stop in at the Sport Class hanger and say hello.

Life's short, Fly fast
Scott Alair.

VIEW FROM THE COCKPIT

by Carl LaRue, Lt. Col., USAF, Ret

I've been remembering a surreal experience lately that will never happen to me again and is unlikely to have happened to anyone else exactly the same; too many stars had to line up to make it happen even once. It will be challenging to describe; feelings and impressions always are, but I shall try.

In the late 1960's I was temporarily stationed at **McCoy AFB in Orlando, FL** flying U-2 reconnaissance missions over Cuba. During one period of several weeks the area east of Orlando was plagued with peat fires, slowly burning above and

below ground, almost impossible to put out and producing unbelievable amounts of thick black smoke. The pervasive smoke would temporarily cause visibility problems on the area's highways, depending on wind conditions, but the **convective** conditions in warm Florida meant that the air was almost always rising, and the prevailing winds seemed to disperse the smoke into the upper atmosphere. From the air it appeared as a miles-thick haze covering over a thousand square miles thru which one could only see the ground, if at all, by looking straight down, thereby minimizing the amount of haze blocking one's vision.

One day I was scheduled for an early morning launch about 30 minutes or so before sunrise. Overnight an inversion had set in over Central Florida preventing air from rising and the wind had become nonexistent. Zip. Nada. Picture a dense fog in moist, still conditions that lasts for hours and you're close; this "fog" was enhanced with the smoke byproducts of the peat fire and it quite literally cut forward visibility to a few feet. We had to place a walking guide in front of the truck to get to the flight line because the street edges were obscured to the driver. Headlights became invisible at 25 feet. We sucked air through makeshift filters of handkerchiefs and **t-shirts**. Coughing and wheezing, eyes running, our small group reached the safety of the Physiological Support Division facility where I was dressed in a pressure suit for the upcoming flight and thankfully began breathing sweet, pure 100% oxygen. No thought was given to aborting.

Taxiing the U-2 in those conditions was impossible, so the aircraft was towed into position with me in it and aligned with the **centerline** of the wide military runway where I was to make an instrument **takeoff**. Pulling the pins of the **pogo** wheels from under my outer wings so they would release and fall off during the takeoff, the maintenance men who normally would show me the pins were invisible to me so my backup pilot had to confirm via radio that they were indeed out and I was ready to roll. In inky darkness, my powerful landing light was useless and the runway edge lights invisible, I applied full power, maintained runway heading and was off in the **predawn** stillness a few seconds later.

Did I say it was still? You bet it was! No other airplanes broke the silence as I turned to my as-

signed heading and momentarily busied myself with cockpit duties. I may have been the only airplane in the sky over Florida at that time, almost 40 years ago. Eerily still, the distant drone of my engine barely audible, no sensation of movement, no air currents, true sensory deprivation. No horizon, no sky, no ground. At 10,000 feet or so I became aware of an imperceptible lightening of the sky above, and then I saw a dull red orb, about the same width as the end of my wing, balancing perfectly on my right wing tip. Right? I was heading south! Verifying my heading I glanced to the left and the hairs stood up on my pressure-helmeted neck! There was an identical red orb balanced at precisely the same position on the left wing tip!

It had been an unreal morning, with first-time experiences galore, perhaps preparing me to reject the moment as being real, because that's what happened. Rapidly turning my head, I could see no difference in the orbs. With no sensation of movement, no change in the background drone and an impossible two visitors sitting on my wing tips, I imagined myself in an alternate 2-sun universe, soon to be revealed. For long moments I was overcome with a strange dread, wondering at my fate as no explanation for that never-before-seen phenomenon seemed possible.

My increasing altitude solved the mystery. As the haze lessened the left orb brightened to become recognizable as the sun. The right one dimmed and became the full moon, exiting on one side of the earth as the sun was entering from the other, both below the ground horizon at this time of day but just above my visible horizon. The perfect juxtaposition on the wing tips was pure chance, depending on the exact heading, the time of the year, the time of the month, the massive peat fires, the strong inversion and mission requirements dictating that exact takeoff time. That they were the same intensity and color, I later reasoned, was due to there being more haze to the east, adding just enough extra filter to perfect the illusion of two suns.

The event was seared into memory, as permanent as "burning a disk" is to today's computer user.

Switching to the Center controller, I was cleared VFR on top above flight level 600 (60,000 feet), went radio-silent and flew another uneventful

mission. Too macho in those days to discuss feelings or emotions, the experience went untold for many years, finding print for the first time with this writing.

MOVIE REVIEW, UAL FLIGHT 93

A very interesting letter from John, a (retired) Delta Air pilot.

Susie and I just got back from seeing "UAL Flight 93", it was absolutely gripping, and as a former airline pilot who was flying a trip that morning on a Boeing 767 from Cincinnati to Orlando it was almost too horrific to watch... it was very disturbing! For you pilot types, the attention to detail, the cockpit, the preflight, the crew, pilots and flight attendants boarding the aircraft and making small talk was oh, so real and routine... just another day in the office! Likewise the views from central flow control, NY and Boston ARTCC and the NORAD command center were very realistic.

Should anyone have any doubts about our response, or lack of that morning you need to view this movie. Watching all the various controllers and their supervisors trying to get their arms around the problem and to come to grips and connect the dots is so very real. The movie appears to almost happen in real time and you can really sense the problem that the commanders had in thinking outside the box and realizing that we were really at war. Fighters are scrambled, late, and in the wrong direction, as threats are suppose to come from over the water to the east not from over land to the west; the planes are not armed, can they ram, and who has the authority to give that command... the command is given but not relayed to the pilots. The lack of communications, or rather the disbelief and lack of coordination is stunning but easy to understand. Even the pilots of UAL Flt 93 are given a data link message that the Towers have been hit and to beware of cockpit intruders... they brush it off in disbelief... as I'm sure any pilot would have prior to that date.

The time line given at the end of the movie and the confusion over what planes were involved, and which flights were being hijacked is very revealing... we just couldn't get it together quickly enough. As pilots and crew members we had never been trained to deal with suicidal hijackers who were prepared to die, it was simply incon-

ceivable at the time. A key point, though not belabored, was when the supervisor of the FAA Central Flow Control ordered that all aircraft in US airspace land immediately, (there were over 4200 in the air), that no planes from overseas would be allowed into the country and would be turned back, and that there were to be no over flights... he realized that we were at war but didn't know with whom... it was a very bold and brave move and he was thinking way outside the box... I believe that it was also his first day on the job as the boss!

What was probably as disturbing as watching an airline crew, that could have been me or any of my friends, seeing their world and their life taken away, was the hijackers preparing to die, washing themselves and praying to their god as if they were doing his will. They looked like ordinary young men, and to think that they could sit next to all these people on that plane that they were going to kill, who had nothing against them or done nothing to them, was beyond words. I guess if nothing else it gives you insight into the minds of suicide bombers, which to our Western way of thought is beyond comprehension. This movie will make you angry, very angry .

My experience on 9/11. We were just ready to close the door for our Delta 767 flight from CVG to MCO when the gate agent came on board and asked if we had heard anything about a small plane hitting the World Trade Center, we had not, so she said goodbye and closed the door. Shortly thereafter we were airborne climbing out on a beautifully clear crisp fall morning heading to Florida with not a cloud in the sky or a care in the world. I heard a biz jet ask for a reroute since he could not get to New York and I thought that was strange. Then another biz jet said "well I guess we won't be going there either" and asked for a clearance to an alternate. At that point I asked center what was going on. There was a pause and then the controller came back in a very excited voice and said "they have hit both of the Trade Center Towers, they have hit the Pentagon, they have hit the Capitol and the White House"... well you can imagine it got really lively on the frequency. I turned to my copilot and said "I don't know what has happened, but I do know that things will never be the same", and I think I got that right! Within seconds the controller had composed himself and said all flights on this frequency standby,

and it was dead quiet. He then said all flights are to land immediately and went down the list of the planes under his control..."American 235 turn right heading 230 you're landing at Pittsburgh, Continental 456 turn left heading 180 for Cincinnati, Delta 235 (that's me) turn right to 250 and descend to 8000, you're landing at Knoxville, airport your 2 o'clock 40 miles.... etc" It was the best, fastest and most efficient handling I have ever had from ATC... they had everyone on the ground all over the country in minimum time.

After all the initial confusion, their professionalism, and that of all the flight crews was exemplary! We spent two days in Knoxville and then ferried an empty 757 back to Atlanta and I believe were one of the first flights to land back at our main hub. Our arrival at ATL was one of the most moving experiences of my flying career. The airspace was totally empty, there was no talk on the radio, and we were the only plane in the sky over ATL, the busiest airport in the U. S., but we did have, unknown to us until informed by the controller, an F-16 right on our tail, but we never saw him. When we taxied in the normally frantic ramp area was dead quiet, all the ground equipment, tugs, baggage carts, tugs, fuelers etc. were lined up in military precision and the ground crews were standing at attention and saluted... wow, I'll never forget that. They needed a sign that things were getting back to normal... that we were moving and flying again.

Reflections. As you may know I was on a United Flight several weeks ago from Chicago to Sacramento that had a passenger who tried to open the front cabin door, allegedly claimed to have a bomb, and took a swing at the flight attendant. Well, yours truly was sound asleep in the last row of coach and missed all the action, but suffice it to say that before he got very far he was rapidly subdued by the first class section and we diverted to Denver. Unlike Flight 93 he couldn't have gotten into the cockpit as the cockpit door is now armored and no passenger is going to sit still and let anyone interfere with the flight. I always felt that with the improved cockpit door that I would be totally safe, and that all my passengers in the cabin would act as Sky Marshals... I was and they did... they remembered 9/11, lets hope that we never forget!

I would also like to mention that all the crew

members on my United flight as well as all the ground rescue folks in Denver and the United station personnel did an absolutely marvelous job

in handling this incident. It made me proud to have once been a part of this profession.

John

NOT A GOOD DAY

Some days things just don't seem to be go your way. First, on a peaceful flight, you see an other airplane up close and personal! And, having gotten out of that predicament, your parachute tears when it opens. Well, a slightly torn 'chute isn't the end of the world, is it?

Well, that all depends on where it drops you. Perhaps in rocky mountains, like, say, in Afghanistan, perhaps in a tropical lagoon some where in Africa. Could that be so bad?



Well, yes it could!



EAA CHAPTER 663
11700 Tesla Road
Livermore, CA 94550
JMeyerEZ@ewnet.net
eaa663.org