



# THE GRAPEVINE



EAA CHAPTER 663 Livermore, California

Vol. XXVI, No. 11, November, 2007

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

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## MEETING AND PROGRAM

**Our November meeting** will take place at 7:30 P.M. on the 1st of November in the Terminal Building at the Livermore Airport. Prior to the program, our business meeting will be dedicated primarily to the biennial Election of Officers. We currently have a meager slate of candidates and this is a perfect chance for members to volunteer to run for any of the elective offices. You might think that being an officer would be an overly onerous task, but that isn't really the case and *you* might be just the person that we need to make ours a more effective chapter. *You* can make the difference!

Our program will be presented by our very own Ray Mc Crea, Photographer Extrordinaire, and features a DVD Video of his back seat ride in "Cover Girl", "filming" a flight from an entirely different viewpoint... aft! Bring the Dramamine!

## MINUTES: GENERAL MEETING

EAA CHAPTER 663, 10-04-07, 7:30 PM  
LVK TERMINAL BUILDING.

**Guests:** Trevor Slater, Dave & Trina Anderson and Koji Hayama.

**Treasurer's Report:** Barry Weber was MIA, last know location: Australia.

**New Business:** Nominations for new chapter officers and board of directors were postponed until the November meeting.

**Announcements:** The next board meeting will be on October 18th, the next chapter meeting will be on November 1st.

**The last chapter BBQ** for 2007 will be on October 13th at 3:00 pm.

**Members Forum:** Don Smith displayed a new style chapter badge with a photo of your project on it. If you would like a new badge E-mail Don with your photo to ([DonaldAldenSmith@yahoo.com](mailto:DonaldAldenSmith@yahoo.com)).

**Ralph Cloud** gave an update on the new FBO to be built at LVK.

**Bob Farnam** brought a letter from Bill Bunce's wife thanking the chapter for helping to sell Bill's Long-EZ. It was decided to use the \$100.00 she enclosed with the letter to have a memorial plaque made in memory of Bill and to display it in the chapter display case in the LVK terminal.

**Program:** I spoke about flying in the 2007 AirVenture Cup race with my co-pilot Jerre Gerholdt and also our tour of the Air Force museum in Dayton Ohio. Thanks to Jerre, there were photos to actually make the talk interesting.

Adjourned for pie at 9:30

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING,  
EAA CHAPTER 663, 10-18-07, 7:30 PM,  
FARNAM'S HOME.**

**Treasurer's report:** The treasurer is still "down under"

**Ralph Cloud and Don Smith** brought a laminator and made a sample of the new chapter badges.

**Brad Olson** said he is making final arrangements for the Robert Livermore Hall for our January chapter dinner. Brad is also going to contact the caterer for the dinner.

**The board** had a discussion on finding a **guest speaker** for the chapter dinner. Got any ideas?

**The board discussed nominations** for the election of chapter officers to be held at the November general meeting on November 1st.

Adjourned for pie at 9:00.

Life's short, Fly fast. Scott Alair

### **THE BATTLE OF PALMDALE**

On the morning of 16 August 1956, Navy personnel at Point Mugu prepared an F6F-5K for its final mission. The aircraft had been painted overall high-visibility red. Red and yellow camera pods were mounted on the wing tips. Radio remote control systems were checked, and the Hellcat took off at 11:34 a.m., climbing out over the Pacific Ocean. As ground controllers attempted to maneuver the drone toward the target area, it became apparent that it was not responding to radio commands. They had a runaway.

Ahead of the unguided drone lay thousands of square miles of ocean into which it could crash. Instead, the old Hellcat made a graceful climbing turn to the southeast, toward the city of Los Angeles. With the threat of a runaway aircraft approaching a major metropolitan area, the Navy called for help.

Five miles north of NAS Point Mugu, two F-89D Scorpion twin-jet interceptors of the 437th Fighter Interceptor Squadron were scrambled from Oxnard Air Force Base. The crews were ordered to shoot down the rogue drone before it could cause

any harm. Armed with wing tip-mounted rocket pods and no cannon, the Scorpion was typical of the Cold War approach to countering the "Red Menace." Each pod contained 52 Mighty Mouse 2.75-inch rockets. Salvo-launched, the Mighty Mouse did not have to have precision guidance. Large numbers of rockets would be fired into approaching Soviet bomber formations to overwhelm them with sheer numbers. Today, they would be used against a different kind of red menace.

At Oxnard AFB, 1Lt. Hans Einstein and his radar observer, 1Lt. C. D. Murray, leapt into their sleek F-89D. Simultaneously, 1Lt. Richard Hurliman and 1Lt. Walter Hale climbed into a second aircraft. The interceptors roared south after their target. The hunt was on.

Einstein and Hurliman caught up with the Hellcat at 30,000 feet, northeast of Los Angeles. It turned southwest, crossing over the city, then headed northwest. As the Hellcat circled lazily over Santa Paula, the interceptor crews waited impatiently. As soon as it passed over an unpopulated area, they would fire their rockets.

The interceptor crews discussed their options. There were two methods of attack using the fire control system, from a wings level attitude or while in a turn. Since the drone was almost continuously turning, they selected the second mode of attack. In repeated attempts, the rockets failed to fire during these maneuvers. This was later traced to a design fault.

The drone turned northeast, passing Fillmore and Frazier Park. It appeared to be heading toward the sparsely populated western end of the Antelope Valley. Suddenly, it turned southeast toward Los Angeles again. Time seemed to be running out. Einstein and Hurliman decided to abandon the automatic modes, and fire manually. Although the aircraft had been delivered with gun sights, they had been removed a month earlier. After all, why would a pilot need a gun sight to fire unguided rockets with an automatic fire control system?

The interceptors made their first attack run as the Hellcat crossed the mountains near Castaic. Murray and Hale set their intervalometers to "ripple fire" the rockets in three salvos. The first crew

lined up their target and fired, missing their target completely. The second interceptor unleashed a salvo that passed just below the drone. Rockets blazed through the sky and then plunged earthward to spark brush fires seven miles north of Castaic. They decimated 150 acres above the old Ridge Route near Bouquet Canyon.

A second salvo from the two jets also missed the drone, raining rockets near the town of Newhall. One bounced across the ground, leaving a string of fires in its wake between the Oak of the Golden Dream Park and the Placerita Canyon oilfield. The fires ignited several oil sumps and burned 100 acres of brush. For a while the blazes raged out of control, threatening the nearby Bermite Powder Company explosives plant. The rockets also ignited a fire in the vicinity of Soledad Canyon, west of Mt. Gleason, burning over 350 acres of heavy brush.

Meanwhile, the errant drone meandered north toward Palmdale. The Scorpion crews readjusted their intervalometers and each fired a final salvo, expending their remaining rockets. Again, the obsolete, unpiloted, unguided, unarmed, propeller-driven drone evaded the state-of-the-art jet interceptors. In all, the jet crews fired 208 rockets without scoring a single hit.

The afternoon calm was shattered as Mighty Mouse rockets fell on downtown Palmdale. Edna Carlson was at home with her six-year-old son William when a chunk of shrapnel burst through her front window, bounced off the ceiling, pierced a wall, and finally came to rest in a pantry cupboard. Another fragment passed through J. R. Hingle's garage and home, nearly hitting Mrs. Lilly Willingham as she sat on the couch. A Leona Valley teenager, Larry Kempton, was driving west on Palmdale Boulevard with his mother in the passenger seat when a rocket exploded on the street in front of him. Fragments blew out his left front tire, and put numerous holes in the radiator, hood, windshield, and even the firewall. Miraculously, no one was injured by any of the falling rockets. Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams later recovered 13 duds in the vicinity of Palmdale. It took 500 fir fighters two days to bring the brush fires under control.

Oblivious to the destruction in its wake, the drone passed over the town. Its engine sputtered and

died as the fuel supply dwindled. The red Hellcat descended in a loose spiral toward an unpopulated patch of desert eight miles east of Palmdale Airport. Just before impact, the drone sliced through a set of three Southern California Edison power lines along an unpaved section of Avenue P. The camera pod on the airplane's right wing tip dug into the sand and the Hellcat cartwheeled and disintegrated. There was no fire.

### **STINKING BADGES! (OR, MAKIN' AND BAKIN' BADGES!)**

Brace yourself! We are about to shake up one of the oldest traditions of EAA Chapter 663! As proud Experimenters, we are Experimenting with a new badge to replace (or supplement) the engraved plastic name badges. The new badges are printed on photographic paper using a high-resolution color printer. You may submit a photo of your plane, project or yourself, to print on the badge. We also want to print the model and tail number of your airplane under the photo, so please make sure to provide this information as well.

The chapter logo, your name, your home town (or Livermore, CA, if you prefer) are printed under the photo. We will be set up to make badges at the monthly meeting, and have scanning capability! Yes, "we have the technology!" So e-mail a photo to Donald Smith (Membership committee) at:

DonaldAldenSmith@yahoo.com  
Alt: Donald@taxsmith.biz

Or bring a photo to the next monthly meeting at the LVK (Livermore airport) terminal, and we will "make and bake (lamine)" your badge on the spot! Chapter members who do not have badges have first priority, and all members who want the new style badge are welcome to request one.

### **THERE ARE CHAPTERS AND THEN-- THERE ARE CHAPTERS**

The following is an exchange between two members of the Canard-Avitors Yahoo group.

Neil Clayton wrote:  
I dumped the EAA couple of years ago in favor of AOPA. I went to a few local meetings of the EAA

and REALLY TRIED to fit in. They were of no help whatsoever in my project and I truly got nothing out of it.

And I have no interest in flying kids in my bird because of the liability, which seems to be their entire preoccupation these days.

No wonder members are running for the door!  
My 2 cents!, Neil

Tim LoDolche wrote in response:

I am a long time EAA member and very happy with the organization. I am a charter member of my chapter having formed it 14 years ago and I've served in every position from breakfast cook to my current status as President.

You state that you "dumped" the EAA in favor of AOPA. Those words just show that you were dissatisfied with a chapter that you did not fit in with but don't put us all into that same trash can.

Here in Truckee we have a choice of three EAA chapters. One out at Reno Stead field (home of the Reno Air Races) and another very old chapter located in Carson City, NV. Yet half our membership of a total of 140(+ or +) at any given time, are from the Reno/Carson City/Minden areas and a good hours drive to our chapter hangar.

Why do so many choose to join our chapter and come up here from those outlying areas? Because we are an active chapter. We hold a Fly/Drive-In pancake breakfast once every month and yes we fly kids on that date in the Young Eagles program too. Your statement that you don't fly kids because of the "liability" is silly. Any EAA member, and you don't have to be a member of a chapter, can fly kids under the Young Eagles program under the EAA insurance umbrella and your covered for up to \$5 million! I'm sure that is more insurance than you have on anything.

We also have a builders workshop area within the chapter hangar renting out bay and table space. Did that happen on it's own? No way man, we had to restore an old storage shack using volunteer help and contributions from the community in the form of sheet rock, lumber, heating, electric, etc. and the community gave freely and generously. Why? Because we fly and teach kids!

Our airport was under siege a couple years ago but a few disgruntled gripers who didn't like all the noise from those "good ol' boys with expensive toys". A stupid airport board member at a formal meeting told one of those gripers "the airport was here before any of you and if you don't like the noise move to somewhere else"... that was surely a dumb statement and caused the formation of a anti-airport coalition that has taken over the board by a 3-2 majority and now we are paying for it in many ways.

The one bright spot that has been eroding the ugly side of the previous board and the outright hatred of our airport is our EAA chapter. We are the ambassadors to the community and the airport. We hold open houses and presentations and WE FLY THEIR KIDS! Not just for the goodwill which is obviously created by doing so but because WE TRULY LOVE AVIATION and we want to pass our passion on to the next generation.

Like Dale Martin stated, you get out of something what you put in. If you didn't like that one EAA chapter go seek out another. Hopefully you'll find one like ours. We actively reach out but we are different. We have pilots that fly in for our breakfasts and they are amazed at what we have created here. Some have taken our model back to their chapter and made theirs better by doing so.

I've flown all over this country and visited quite a few EAA chapters both large and small and have never felt like an outcast. Our EZ group (Canard-Aviators) is mostly all made up of EAA members. The resources the EAA offers to builders is unheard of in any other organization that I know of. What does AOPA offer to a home aircraft builder? I can give you one big one and that is representation in D.C., but so does EAA.

In summary, the EAA is more than just for home builders. It's for anyone who loves aviation and aviation is made up in a multitude of complex and different areas. You just need to find your particular niche and go the extra step and pitch in where you can.

As for "members running for the door"... not happening! If it hadn't been for the EAA and what it stands for I am very sure I would not have built my airplane and I would have given up flying years ago. I also would not have gotten to meet

so many of the people on this forum and whom I now call my friends.

My 2 cents... well, maybe a nickel....:)

Tim LoDolce

### THE WAY FOR US TO GO!

Although our EAA Chapter is not a Lions Club or an other "service club", we do provide services both to the community and, particularly, to our

members. We have two Technical Advisors and two Flight Advisors who have a ton of experience. The Technical Advisors will gladly inspect the progress of all aspects of the construction phase and can offer you the benefit of their years of building experience. They have learned, often the hard way, how homebuilts should be built and then the flight advisors are available to assist you in planning for your first flights through the whole test phase. Don't build or fly without consulting these guys, the life you save could be your own!

### HOW CUTE CAN YOUR AIRPLANE BE?

This picture was taken at the Canard Group's end of summer Fly-In at Rough River, KY, by Bruce Layne, of Lexington, KY. Those wanting to see some of the variety found in canard aircraft these days can go to: <<http://www.roughriver.org/2007>> Bruce says "This Long EZ is always my wife's favorite, and leads to a conversation that starts with, "Couldn't you put some cute..." and ends with me saying "No".





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