

Brazos Area Recreational Flyers **Bragging and Gossip** EAA Chapter 983 Newsletter October 2006

PO Box 5191 Granbury, TX. 76049
Visit us at: www.eaa983.org

Chapter 983 meets every second Saturday at 10:00 am in The Houseman Hangar. N.E. corner of the runway

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“Retirement should be based on the tread, not the mileage”

You have probably gotten the recent e-mails from the folks at Sky-Tec looking for help due to their rapidly increasing sales of aircraft starters. Hiring self proclaimed “Geezers” (*retiree’s with a little tread left on them*) has been a great deal for both Sky-Tec, who needs an educated, adaptable and trainable staff as well as for the person who wants part time work with VERY flexible hours. Shop personnel include a former John Deere exec, mechanical engineer, airline pilot, auto dealer, Air Force pilot, software engineer and a current Embry Riddle Senior.



Almost ten years ago Chapter members Les Staples and Gene Chiappe were faced with a post-retirement decision themselves; get out of the house or face physical injury from their spouses. To relieve the domestic pressure, Les found a small starter business run by two older fellows who sold two models of aircraft starters and produced small numbers of them each year. Now, nine years later, they have 7 models, are a household name in the experimental community, provide the starters for EVERY new Lycoming powered certified A/C built and sell more aircraft starters than anyone in the world. All this from the less than



imposing (see front door above) facility at the Granbury airport. During the month of August, Sky-Tec shipped an astounding 900 starters. Hence the need for a Geezer increase. Les admits to not knowing whether the steadily rising sales have peaked or they’re going to continue to increase but whichever the case, the current staff is working hard to handle it.

When you walk through the previously *insulted* front door, the first person you meet is Katherine, the office manager and real brains of the outfit. Despite being surrounded by boxes, computers, orders and the like, she greets you with a hearty smile and proceeds to tell you that Les, Gene and Rich (Genes son and shop factotum) aren’t in their offices but are running around somewhere. Please go look and if you find them, she needs them too. As you enter the shop, chances are you’ll find everyone on break in the round table room where the table is often loaded with food, snacks, drinks and conversation. The shop itself is clean and bright with dozens of starters on benches in various stages of assembly. Through another door is the Repair Station where worn and mistreated starters return for some TLC. Repair is usually the beginning point for the newbie Geezer where he learns the “ins and outs” of starters (joke).

A number of the “G” men have been at Sky-Tec for years, which means it must be a special place to work. So, if you’re in the neighborhood, stop in for a smile and if you have some free time, let them put you to work.



We had a great time last month at Jimmy Matlock's ranch watching some fine RC aircraft flying (including a helicopter), and even had a couple of raw amateurs (like myself) have a try at the controls. Chip had his trainer out there for folks to try their hands at flying with the dual controller. The flying went fine, but what can you do when someone taxis his RC into you on the runway? Chip says it will only take a couple of hours to put it back together.

Since we didn't have a regular meeting in September, and the Air Rally will be held on 21 Oct, **we will have a short business meeting on October 14th** to discuss upcoming programs, and let Damon tell us what to expect for the Air Rally. Refreshments will be served. See you there.



The Safety Note

From 1964 until the end of 2004 there were 84 deaths resulting from plane crashes involving carbon monoxide poisoning. The notoriously problematic heat muff arrangement in most piston powered aircraft appeared to be the cause of the majority of those accidents. The difficulty in proper inspection of the heating system is evident when you look at some of the internal construction. There are so many welds, joints and hinges attached to a continuously moving, shaking and twisting engine that it's a wonder the things last 10 hours. The accident reports have instances of CO2 levels that were probably relatively low but being an accumulative poison, being exposed for a long period was more insidious and just as deadly.

The focus of this article is to remind us of the dangers as well as provide sources for carbon monoxide warnings. We're all familiar with the cards with chemical spots that change color in the presence of CO2 (about \$8). The drawback is that changing them every 30 days is recommended. Next up the price list is the home style, round, battery powered "flying saucer" it's cumbersome but still affordable (\$50). Next are the personal detectors which will run on a 9v battery for a year and are the size of a cell phone (\$55). They have a warning light but the alert tone may be too quiet to hear. You can keep going right on up the \$ scale to the installed units which give you an aural alert through the audio panel with readouts of the actual CO2 levels present.

Whatever your style and pocketbook allow, it's worth considering having something to let you know when that "silent killer" is aboard.

Chapter 983 Fall Air Rally

October 21st 10:00 am

Preflight Pilot meeting at Plane Park (temps permitting, Housemans hangar otherwise)

You should already have received a notice about the Rally via e-mail and you will get more info in the upcoming days. Basically it is a family type flying affair for everyone from the student pilot to the astronaut. Fly by yourself or bring a "navigator" to watch for traffic and help with the nav portion. The challenge will be to see how close to an estimated time enroute your actual flight time will be. Flying the route will be very easy.

The event is designed to be fun, not hard and you'll end up finishing in one of two groups: The "Perfect Flyer" group or the "Merely Fabulous Flyer" group. Individual results will not be revealed. So come on out and play and have lunch with your friends and neighbors.

If you have any questions send them my way: Damon 817 573-3444 or famber@charter.net

More info on page 3



Speed Thrills

At left, former Chapter president Don Saint briefing an informal speed event on September 23rd and although marginal weather kept a number of participants from getting to Pecan, it was still a load of fun and hopefully Don will continue to do more of these.

It was a timed event with a course of three laps around the perimeter of Pecan Plantation covering a total of 38.7 miles. Timing began at brake release and ended over the runway after the third lap. Here are the results: Don Saint, Glasair 219.75 mph, Sam Butler RV7 205.49, Damon Berry RV6 201.33, Debbie and Bill Scanlon RV7 194.04, Jason Hutchinson Mazda RV6 175.25, and Bill Eslick Mazda RV6 169.49.

Fall Air Rally Info

Here is what to expect at the pilot meeting prior to takeoff.

The route below is **AN EXAMPLE ONLY**, not one of the routes used.

We'll have a large display of two routes. It will show (for example) a course from Pecan to the town of Cresson to Parker Airport (KWEA) to the town of Lipan to the Gen Rose VOR and back to Pecan.

You will choose either the short or long course and receive a printed sheet that will have the Heading and Distance (in n.m.'s) from each point to the next. If you use Track on your GPS then the wind will have no effect on your course. All that remains, is to adjust the time (for wind) that you should be over the town/lake/dam/hwy intersection. Other points (airports, VOR's, etc.) will be in your data bases.

These sheets will also have the questions about what you see at each turn point to verify that you were actually there. (e.g. "Three of them are white, what are they? Ans. Storage tanks) In addition there may also be a question or two about some enroute points along each route.

After you look things over, you'll provide us with an estimated time from takeoff to landing back at Pecan. We'll keep the times for you.

You'll then fly the course, figure out the answers to the printed questions and land within the generous touchdown zone.

If you successfully accomplish each item and your time estimate is fairly close, then you'll be listed in the "Perfect Flyer" group. If not, then you'll be in the "Merely Fabulous Flyer" group with the rest of us. Individual scores won't be published.

Afterward there will be a late lunch at one of the burger joints nearby.

It'll be great fun so mark it on your calendar now. RSVP if you can.

p.s. there are two helpful clues in this article for the actual event.

The short course will be completely within the DFW Terminal Area Chart.



Send me a caption for this picture and I'll publish the best ones next month

"The only person you should ever compete with is yourself. You can't hope for a fairer match. -Todd Ruthman

Blasts from the Past

Here are some "Notams" from our newsletters in years gone by: Bill and Deb Stepling are in the process of purchasing Jerry and Donna Thompson's home on the Pecan Plantation Airstrip. *Congratulations are in order for Chapter members Karen Sparks and Debbie Dewey. Karen recently earned her instrument rating and Debbie made her initial solo.* Bill Rozell and Jim Brazil have jointly purchased a Bakeng Duce. Their Duce is being hangared in Marty Sideners hangar at Pecan. *On December 19th Dave Moore moved his airplane to the Pecan airstrip and hung the engine. It was a grand EAA effort with the assistance of: Ray Stewart, Dennis Trusty, Karla and Kevin Ross, Don Saint, Charlie Rap and as always, Charles Williams.*



Sacramento Sky Ranch Inc.

Andy Shane sent me a website the other day and said: "Check it out, there's lot of neat stuff".

It's www.sacskyranch.com and in addition to its parts sales, on the home page is a heading called "Knowledge Base". They claim "Everything we know about aircraft and engines" is contained in there.

FAQ's about almost anything fore or aft of the firewall, tips on hose construction and installation, tire and brake info, oil, fabric, battery, instrument repair and the most comprehensive list of engine troubleshooting questions I've ever seen.

If you want to time your Bendix mag or try to figure out why your EGT is running low on one cylinder, the instructions are there WITH PICTURES.

It's one heck of a good resource.

Jason's Mazda Update

Shortly after his first flight the Mazda required a complete teardown owing to burned seals between the case segments as well as the triangular shaped rotors seals (think compression rings but not anything like them). The picture on the right shows the five segments of the case separated for the o'haul. At press time Jason is flying regularly and has changed a number of heat projecting elements of the engine installation and has most "hot spots" under control. His performance in the upcoming Don Saint Speed Event should give him an idea of how much power it's developing and how it compares to Bill Eslick's Mazda RV6 installation.



METARs Made Simple *by Lee Clements*

Every now and then I find or am steered to a really cool and useful aviation related web site that I just really like. Have you used the link from the Chapter homepage to the Decoded METARs website lately (www.rvproject.com/wx/)?

Decoded METARs is a project run by RV builder Dan Checkoway out in California. The site takes an origin or a user defined route and collects and displays the requested METAR and other pertinent pre-flight data. I called up the web site the other day and noticed several upgrades and cool features have been added. The feature I like most is the route tool that allows a user to identify an origin and a destination, enter a TAS, course width, and a couple of other parameters.

The user hits the "Brief Me" button and a wealth of information is returned almost immediately (even on my archaic, excruciatingly slow dial-up connection) and certainly quicker than you can dial 1-800-WXBRIEF. A short synopsis of the trip shows the great circle distance, initial true course, ETE, departure time and arrival time. From there, a list of TFRs is presented. Next, and I think the most useful feature, METAR conditions "decoded" in plain English. A quick look at the color coded list tells the user the observed conditions along the route are VFR, MVFR, LIFR, or IFR. Besides the category, the following conditions are noted at each reporting station: visibility, observed weather, sky cover, wind, temperature, dew point, altimeter, humidity, density altitude, and remarks. Next on the briefing is a section of forecasts (TAFs) along the route, next is winds aloft, then the National Weather Service Forecast at the point of origin and destination in three hour increments, and NOTAMs.

You really have to use the site to appreciate all of the features. One thing I like to do on occasion is make up a trip and see if the reported conditions are within my personal limits. For example, a trip from FWS to OSH departing right now as I write this tells me I'll find VFR conditions along the way (smile), but the TAFs forecast thunderstorms and lowering ceilings around central Oklahoma and southeast Iowa (frown). Looks like winds aloft are most favorable between 7500' and 9500' with 6-9 knot tailwinds diminishing within a couple hundred miles of OSH. There's an airshow TFR around Milwaukee. In this case, NOTAMs seem to be mainly about towers with lights out of service and a couple of ILS' out of service. So there's a quick look at current conditions and what one might expect. Maybe one day I'll actually make that trip!

Another feature that fascinates me in the METAR section has to do with the reported winds. Hover your mouse over the winds for a particular station and a popup will tell you the head/tail crosswind component for all of the runways at that

station. E6B what? Now one can quickly identify local runways that will offer useful crosswind takeoff and landing practice or tell you what runways exceed aircraft (or pilot) capabilities. Cool.

By the way, the site supports AOL and Yahoo IM (instant message) so you can actually send a message to a weather service from your PC or PDA and get back METAR and TAF responses. I haven't tried this, but it sounds cool. If you don't know anything about IM, ask any teenager.

Anyway, check out this site for the first time or revisit it and try out the new features. It should not be necessary to say this, but this does not substitute the need to contact Flight Service for a real pre-flight briefing. Check those TFRs! Finally, I don't personally know the creator/provider of this free service. Dan Checkoway explains that his project is a spare time labor of love endeavor that takes a lot of resources to run. So he does offer the opportunity for users to voluntarily contribute through PayPal. Let your conscience be your guide here. The rest of Dan's site is worth a perusal at www.rvproject.com.

Notices to Airmen

- **Claudia and Martin Sutter** have been in Switzerland for a month attending Martin's brother-in-laws funeral
- All you RV fans and friends; Remember October 13th, 14th and 15th is the Land of Enchantment Fly-in in New Mexico. Check the RV website www.vansairforce.net for particulars
- Thanks to Claudia Sutter for the following info: That clever wheel jack (see August newsletter) is designed by **Don Crum** from Eagles Nest. He is the light haired guy who is always in the Avery booth. He has finally retired from being a Dallas Police helicopter pilot and is working on his second RV. His phone # is 972 775-6789
- Congrats to **Linda and Bill Eslick, Barb and Steve Wilson and Carol and Charlie Adams** who are newly minted Grandparents.
- Observation from my vacation: Drivers in every state in the Union except Texas know that if you're not passing, to GET THE *&#!*! OUT OF THE LEFT LANE!!! Thanks, I feel better now.
- There's that sound again!? **Howard Sigler** has brought an Aventura amphibian to the neighborhood. The big brother to **Andy Shane's** single place Aventura, this one has two seats and a much more reliable Rotax 912.
- Andy also may bring another Amphib in as well. Pending inspection, he has bought a 2001 SeaRey.
- Recent repairs to the "Waterski Development" next to the Nassau Bay Airport have apparently been successful. It's full of water again, there have been recent rains and the Nassau Bay runway remains dry!!! Too bad it took \$100,000 in losses and lawyer fees (born by Nassau Bay Airparkers) to make them repair what was a shoddy job in the first place!
- Remember to frequent our advertisers businesses whenever possible **AND** to thank them for their support.
- From the TxDOT Wingtips magazine: "Each Saturday there is an informal fly-in called the "Red Barn Run" at the Sulphur Springs Airport (KSLR). Pilots flock to the airport early in the morning and take the short walk across the highway to the Red Barn Café. There they find great breakfast tacos, hamburgers and chicken fried steak. Prices are reasonable and the atmosphere is friendly with a mixture of pilots, local farmers and other colorful characters."
- 2006-2007 Pilots guide to Public Use Aviation Facilities in Texas with layouts and facility info. Send \$6 to: TxDOT, Aviation Division, Austin, Tx 78763.

Project Update:

Bill Stepling: RV10. Bill is cutting out the instrument panel to allow for three Grand Rapids screens along with a stack of Garmin Radios.

Tom & Bonnie Lewis: RV7A. The airframe is mostly finished and they are wiring the panel and "smoke testing" their work. Martin offered to help, considering his recent smoke experience.

Bill Orcutt and Jim Erskine: RV7A. Early stages. Working on the fuselage of the quick build kit. Decisions have been made about the panel and engine; three screen Grand Rapids and the IO-390 is out (heat concerns) and the IO-360 in.

Gary Bricker: RV7A. Gary is cussing the gods of baffling. He thought fitting the cowling was frustrating!

Damon Berry: Clip Wing T-Craft. I just finished the wings and will be storing them. The next project will be building up an 0-200 from parts given to me by my Dad.

Sid Tucker: DHC-1. STILL covering the wings! Dang, there's a lot of wing on this thing!

Barb and Steve Wilson: Swift. The center section is done as are most hydraulics. Currently designing and buying for the instrument panel.

Jimmy Matlock: RV4 w/0-360. Man Jimmy! When you gonna fly that thing? It's gotta be faaaaaaast!

CLASSIFIEDS

Sky-Tec is looking to hire one experienced machinist/machining manager type. (Geezers preferred) Job would require familiarity/experience with CNC machining and machining quality management. Full or part-time. Benefits are limited to: 1. A job you can fly to (if you are so inclined) 2. Panoramic view of airport operations at GDJ (both of them each day) and 3. complimentary daily entertainment (the place is an odd combination of a zoo and a circus, only the animals aren't as cute but tend not to smell quite as bad) Contact Rich Chiappe soon. He's hurting to hire the right person quickly. 817 573-2250.

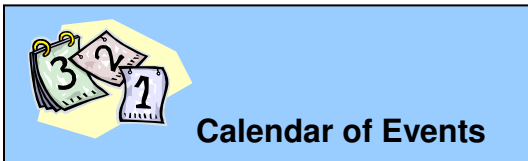
Pilot Avionics PA400-3BL. 4place, portable intercom. \$75 (New \$175). Damon Berry famber@charter.net 817 573-3444

48" Work bench sheet metal brake \$85. Almost new Craftsman Shop Vac, the big one w/all the attachments \$85. Contact Damon at famber@charter.net or 817 573-3444

Exxon Elite Aircraft Oil. I am now a distributor. It sells for \$48.00 per 12 quart case. It has the best ratings for both wear protection and corrosion prevention. I am donating the profits from sales to the Dennis N. Polen educational foundation. Contact Dick Keyt 817-279-7590 flykeyts@charter.net

1944 PT-19. 1070TT, 325 SMOH, Electrical system, starter, Garmin GNC 300, GPS/COM. Mode C, Canopy for all weather flying, Ceconite 101 in 1991, All logbooks and support equipment. Flies like a Cub! \$69K Tom 817 579-1850

RV6A Full IFR, 240TT, 30 TTSN on 180HP Ly-Con engine, under warrantee until 12/06. Garmin stack, 430, audio panel, Txp, S-Tec 20 autopilot. \$86K Tom 817 579-1850



October 7-8	CAF Airshow '06	Midland, Tx (KMAF)
13-15	Land of Enchantment	RV Fly-In, Santa Theresa N.M. (5T6)
14	Chapter Meeting	Housemans Hangar, (0TX1)
21	FALL AIR RALLY	Pecan Plantation (0TX1)
21	NewBraunfels Airshow	New Braunfels, Tx (BAZ)
20-22	Safety & Fly/Splash In	Cedar Mills, Tx
November 4	S. P.Car Show & FlyIn	Halfway Airfield, Crawford Tx.

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