



EAA Chapter 21 NEWSLETTER

Volume 9, Issue 1

www.eaa21.org

January 2007

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Member Profile: In His Own Words

EAA 21 Member Larry Robert Helming, Chapter President Elect 2007

Hello to everyone reading this. I want to start out by saying I am a relative newcomer to flying airplanes. Yes, up until 8 years ago I had never flown in a single engine plane. So, here are a few words to introduce myself so you will know better how I came to be a pilot, builder/owner of SunSeeker, an experimental RV-7.

Eight years ago I would not have thought or planned to be the owner of any airplane, much less president elect of the 21st Chapter of EAA. Let me start by going back to my days in old Central High School in downtown Evansville. One of the classes I took in HS was Aeronautics. It was only offered that one year as I recall because there were several of us guys that had an interest. My interest had begun by reading the Superman comic strip in the newspaper each day. I remember imagining I was flying with one arm straight out and one knee bent in the posture that Superman took in the comics. I would imagine how flying through and around the clouds would look. How powerful it made me feel. After HS, I joined the USMCR. I served 6 months active duty followed by another 5 ½ years reserve duty. I got a job at Old National Bank as a computer programmer and for the first 5 years spent each year's two week vacation at summer camp with the Marines. As a Marine I was envious of those who could travel over the earth as high speeds where I, known as a ground pounder, would take a day to go 20 miles while nearly dying from exhaustion.

I liked playing golf and that was quite expensive I thought on the small but consistent salary I made at the bank. The banking business changed a lot and the older I got the harder it was for me to be happy with change. So after 35 years of banking, I retired. One of the retirement gifts I received was the introductory flight from Steve and his wife Twany Eberhart at Tri-State Aero. That flight was in the single engine Cessna 152 Aerobat (zero seven alpha). I remember being invited to take the controls and fly the plane once we were up and stabilized. It brought back that thought/dream I had as a kid thinking I was flying as Superman. It must have been a weak moment in my life having no job to keep me busy for 40+ hours each week when I said "sure" when asked if I wanted to buy the required books to start flight training for becoming a pilot when the intro flight was over. Over the next 9 months I took classes and studied my books and became a pilot approved by Jeff Culligan, CFI at Tri-State.

After I earned my certificate, I rented the 152s and 172s planes at Tri-State several times over the next year and half; but I was beginning to feel uncomfortable flying less than once a month. Also, I did not like getting into the airplane at times and finding that someone who rented just before me had changed the radio switches or what not from the standard position. I was beginning to think I should have my own plane.

My friend, Steve Eberhart was involved with the KR airplane group and I went to several annual KR fly ins with him. I learned one thing and that was in order to build a KR and not become a statistic the builder and pilot had to be pretty darn good. And being a banker with only a few screw drivers and wrenches in my possession was not a good match. On one fly in at Lake Barkley, KY there was an RV that was there just by chance. I thought that this looked like a nice plane and that led me to consider it for a project.

Mike Zeller and I were in the USMCR 40 or so years ago and I ran across him at an EAA 21 meeting. At once, Mike remembered me more than I did him but it began coming back the more we talked. Mike was building an RV8. I tried to learn some things on Thursdays along with Jim Hall and Don Taylor. I was just there as an observer to learn. They would not allow me to use the rivet



(Continued on page 2)

gun or the bucking bar. But I learned what they were and that pop or blind rivets were to be avoided when possible. After about 4 months of Thursdays I was growing in interest in the RV airplane. It had great plans with details that even I could follow with my high school classes in mechanical drawing,

Vans aircraft company announced the newest of its planes about this time, the RV7 and RV7A. The "A" means it has a nose wheel to help keep the prop above ground and give better vision while taxiing. Some advisors near me thought the RV8, with it's tandem seating, was the plane for me. It was a tough choice but I decided the RV7, with it's side by side seating was for me and my wife. She had not flown in a small plane but I was pretty sure she would like it if I could build her confidence in my piloting abilities.

I ordered the Tail Kit from Vans. This kit requires little money (compared to the other kits) and it arrives by UPS in about 3 days. I needed some place to build this plane and wished for a shop the size of Vince Frazier's or Mike Zeller's. I decided to build a 22 X 16 pool house behind my home. It would be just big enough prior to moving to the airport for final assembly. I bought tools, work tables, lights and more tools. The pool house was unheated, and cooled only by the outside air. But, it was away from interruptions and the phone. I usually worked 5-6 hours per day and half that time was spent with my eyes reading the plans, builder's manual, and RV-List by Matronics.com. When it was time to order the fuselage kit after completing the tail and wings, it was time for big decisions. Do I want to have a nose wheel or a tailwheel? I thought on this for quite a few months before I decided that I wanted the tail wheel even though I had not ever flown one. The other big decision was whether to have a tip up canopy or a slider canopy. I ordered the slider canopy and tailwheel options. I was given a confirmation and expected ship date by Vans. But before that occurred, John Crabtree gave me a ride in his RV6 which is a tip up canopy. I liked the tightness and view of the tip up and changed my order the next day at Vans. No problem.

I ordered a new TMX O360 engine from Teledyne Mattituck. They agreed to let me watch their person assemble the engine. My wife liked the idea of a trip to Long Island, NY. It was time well spent.

I painted the plane in pieces, the engine was mounted at my home, and moved with the help of many EAA 21 members to Henderson Airport KEHR in December of '04. There I would attach the wings,

complete the wiring, get it inspected by FAA DAR and have the first flights.

I did tailwheel flight training with Dave Lowe of Sacramento, KY. Dave is a really nice guy with his up hill down hill turf runway. His Cessna 140 has a very touchy rudder and is a great plane for doing tailwheel training in. It is always wanting to go some place other than straight when on the ground. RV transition flight training was done with EAA Flight Advisor John Crabtree in his RV6

which is very similar to the RV7. I was beginning to give serious thought to the first flight.

Mike Zeller had kept a close eye on my project and one day volunteered to do the first flight if I wanted to have someone with much more RV experience do that. I considered it for a long time and decided that it was something that would improve the chances of success. Mike did the first flight in early 2005 and during the landing he had two problems. One the engine would only slow to 900 rpms and on the go around, the fuse blew that raised the landing flaps. So Mike flew the pattern again with flaps down all the way around and

milking the throttle to just get it on the 1 mile long runway.

Parts of many of EAA 21 members are flying with SunSeeker (my RV7) and me each time we take to the air. EAA 21 has been good to me and know it is time for me to try and return the favor.

Aside from flying, my wife Karen and I like to take a couple of trips each year. In the past it has been primarily by commercial plane and cruise ship and touring bus. This year we plan to fly the SunSeeker to Montana to visit an old banking friend with property there and to Booth Bay, Maine for the July/Aug Lobster Fest. I have been told it is not too far a trip to fly to Florida and Karen likes the Sun. We just might so that too. We just might try Sun-n-Fun this year.

I camped a couple of years ago in Camp Scholler at Oshkosh next to a couple. The gentlemen has been airplane judge for about 15 years there and a technical advisor and his wife has always been president of their local EAA chapter in Michigan. They were just as fine people as any on this earth and I think their enthusiasm led me to pursue being more active in the chapter. I am looking forward to being EAA 21 president these next two years.

Submitted by Larry Helming



Larry and Karen Helming

Minutes of EAA Chapter 21 meeting of members December 13, 2006, held at Kipplees Pizza.

This meeting was attended by 25 members and 6 guests. At this meeting many members renewed their membership for the year of 2007. EAA21 chapter member Bill Walling shared a list of aircraft documents he has acquired over the years. Thank you Bill.

Keith Schlageter talked a bit about the happenings of the last year and recognized and handed out service award pins to all those holding office status. The chapter did a very good job with flying children through the EAA Young Eagles program. Greg McMichaels did a fine job the last 4 years being the YE coordinator. The rest of the meeting was spent enjoying each others company.

The members were left to adjourn themselves when their limit of pizza and drinks had been reached.

Larry Helming, secretary and president elect.

Instructor's Corner

by John Rudolph

As I was cruising at FL230 on the way to Florida today, I heard several single engine aircraft start to get into some adverse icing conditions, requiring priority handling. Thank God that I never heard an ELT, but you could certainly hear it in the pilot's voices - they were puckering up pretty good.

We've had a very mild winter thus far. Today, the overcast layer in Evansville extends all the way to southern Tennessee. Moderate to severe rime icing conditions were reported from 4 to 8 thousand, right where most of you are typically flying at. If you follow these simple rules, icing conditions will never catch you with your pants down, so to speak.

Rule #1: Always have an out. Whether it be able to climb, or be able to descend (preferably while being able to maintain at least the minimum IFR altitude for your route of flight.) On IFR Low-Altitude Charts, each Victor Airway is marked with an MRA (Minimum Reception Altitude) or an MCA (Minimum Crossing Altitude). If Icing is forecast for the altitudes that coincide with those altitudes, you may want to consider waiting it out, which brings me to my next rule... Rule # 2: If you don't have an out for your flight, don't go.

And for you VFR only pilots, remember that this time of year is not good for "I-F-R" (I FOLLOW ROADS) flying either, as the colder higher air can mix with warmer lower air (caused by the ground being heated from the mild temperatures we've had thus far), creating less than even class G VFR (1 SM, clear of clouds).

So, call flight service (800-WX-BRIEF) or get online at aviationweather.gov to check for PIREPS, and forecasts along your

route of flight. Also, ask ATC for pilot reports along your route. A habit I got into when flying piston airplanes is to ask Evansville Clearance on the white phone at Tri-State, as I was getting my clearance, if there was a top report for the area. If there wasn't one, they'd usually solicit someone to get it. Sometimes they'd have it immediately, other times, they'd let me know as I was taxiing out.

Also, remember for you guys that may not have hangar doors, or if your aircraft is outside overnight, that frost can be a big problem. The reduced laminar flow of air over the top of your wing can seriously affect your ability to create lift, increasing your stall speed, and perhaps even preventing liftoff. So, be sure to check the upper surfaces of your aircraft thoroughly for frost as a part of your preflight. I found that automotive washer fluid (the blue stuff for \$1/gallon) worked great on the wings when applied with a garden sprayer to melt the frost in the morning when I used to instruct out of Skylane. Didn't seem to hurt the paint, either. The best option is, of course, just to wait for the frost to melt in the sun.

I'd love to have an "Instructor's Corner" in the newsletter if you are interested. Email me any of your questions regarding anything regarding flying. If I don't know the answer, I'll find it out and report back. Also, I may fly King Airs for a job, but there's nothing I love more than giving instruction! Give me a shout! I can give instruction on anything from taildraggers to King Airs. BFRs are my specialty, but I'll do anything for a flying fix!

John Rudolph
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Chapter 21 Monthly Balance Sheet		
Dec. 2006		
Nov. 25, 2006	Beginning Balance	\$2,191.71
	Receipts	
	Interest	\$.45
	Dues	\$330.00
	Dinner	\$310.00
	Disbursements	
	Dec. Newspaper print	-\$51.15
	Dec. Office Rent	-\$10.00
	Kipplee's	-\$439.00
Dec. 26, 2006	Ending Balance	\$2,332.01
Bud Starnes Fund for Young Eagles	Current balance is:	\$0.00
Phillip Dawes, 2006 Treasurer		

EAA Chapter 21

Send Your Dues Payment To:

Bill Gowin — Treasurer
204 Harper Ave.
Evansville, IN 47714

Address Service Requested



Pete Wiggin — Newsletter Editor
eaa21neditor@hotmail.com

If your address label doesn't say 2007, your \$15.00 EAA Chapter 21 dues are OVERDUE

Upcoming Chapter 21 Events

January Chapter Meeting — Member Appreciation Night

Wednesday January 10 — Skylane Airport — 7:00 PM

Come and meet the new Chapter Officers

Chapter 21 will provide free soft drinks, coffee, and Krispy Kreme donuts
for all Members and Guests attending

Bring a guest