



# EAA Chapter 21 NEWSLETTER

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*With all the rain-soaked skies and standing water on the runways, our flying activities slow to a halt as we dream of fair weather. Some Chapter 21 members are planning a flying and scuba diving vacation in early June to the Bahamas. Here is an article Greg McMichael sent my way. Pete*

## Flying Over Water

### Tips for Landlubber Pilots

By Rick Gardner

I live in Cancun, Mexico, and many pilots are surprised when they hear that I often fly the three-hour over-water trip to Florida in my Cessna 206, and sometimes beyond to my home country of the Bahamas. However, with proper planning, such flights can be conducted safely. To begin with, aircraft engines are reliable, so ditchings are rare. When ditchings do occur, statistics indicate survival rates of 88% or more. Nonetheless, it is essential to have one's own over-water survival plan in preparation for your trip, and to brief your crew and passengers on that plan before departure.

### Conducting the Flight

Before an over-water flight, you should perform an extra-thorough pre-flight inspection. Fill the oil to the maximum level and carry at least enough fuel to fly to your alternate and still have a minimum one-hour fuel reserve. Also, check the oil and fuel caps and look for signs of fuel, oil, or exhaust leakage.

Make sure that you have adequate navigation equipment and charts. There are often no points of reference over water, so a GPS with a moving map is a useful aid for situational awareness. In an emergency, it also allows you to provide your precise coordinates to ATC and other aircraft. For maximum safety, take along a spare GPS with fresh batteries, leave a personal flight plan with friends or relatives back home, and travel with other aircraft if possible.

Plan routes that keep you close to land, even if

they are longer. Select higher altitudes to maximize your communications range, gliding distance, and time to go through checklists, communicate, and brief passengers in case of an emergency. Traveling early in the day will maximize daylight hours available.

If VFR, request flight following so that you are in contact with ATC and they know who and where you are. When you spot a ship, take note of the position or create a temporary waypoint in your GPS so that you can return to that spot in an emergency. If you ditch near a ship or boat, land in front of them so they see you, but not directly in their path where you could cause a collision if they can't stop.

### Survival Equipment

Carry life jackets and a life raft. I use a dual-cell constant-wear vest that has pockets for critical safety equipment. Constant-wear vests eliminate the need to find, open, and put on your life jacket while in the middle of an emergency. If you don't have a constant-wear vest, you can store critical safety equipment in a survival pouch that attaches to your body. Remember not to inflate your vest until you are outside the aircraft. I also carry a dual-cell life raft that is large enough to carry me and my passengers and has a cover to protect us from the elements. Many Florida FBOs rent jackets and life rafts.

Carry a 406 Mhz Personal Locator beacon



*(Continued on page 2)*



(PLB), which transmits a signal directly to COSPAS/SARSAT satellites along with your unique identification information. They reduce the size of the search area and the time to locate you compared to traditional ELTs. I always carry mine in a pocket of my life vest so that I can activate it in the air in case of an emergency.

Other survival equipment I carry in my life vest includes: signal mirror, signal flares, whistle, thermal blanket (the silver coating makes for a large area of reflective material), large, industrial-grade garbage bag (it provides some heat insulation if you lose your life raft and must get into the water), red plastic streamer that rolls out on the water to enhance visibility, and a waterproof signal light (some search-and-rescue aircraft use night vision goggles).

I also carry an emergency equipment bag with: water, food rations, first aid kit, waterproof matches, sea sickness tablets, sunscreen, mosquito repellent, compass, rope, fishing line and hooks, duct tape, thermal blankets, multi-use knife, marine handheld VHF radio for transmitting on the marine emergency channel 16, and an aviation handheld VHF radio.

### Emergency Procedures

If the worst happens, remember to “Aviate, Navigate, and Communicate.” Establish best glide airspeed and review emergency checklists. Set a course for the closest land mass or ship (remember to take wind speed and direction into account). If you programmed a vessel location into your GPS, then use it to navigate back to that spot. Activate your ELT and PLB and squawk 7700. If not in contact with ATC, transmit a Mayday on 121.5 MHz and give your call sign, position, aircraft type, total number of persons on board, and intentions. Brief your passengers.

Secure or jettison any loose objects that can cause injury during the sudden deceleration of a ditching. Open exit doors and wedge something in the doorframe to keep them open, as the impact forces on the fuselage in a ditching can jam the closed doors and prevent them from opening. Since some airplanes have operational limita-

tion, review your POH and plan an appropriate course of action before flight. For example, opening the front cargo door on a U206 or 206H model Cessna will likely disable the flap system, so I would set the flaps first in some cases. However, flap extension on a 206 will also block the front cargo door, so I would consider leaving the flaps up if I were carrying passengers. Using flaps in low-wing, retractable-gear aircraft when ditching can cause the aircraft to pitch forward into a nose low attitude after the flaps impact with the water. At 1000 ft. AGL, secure your PLB and have passengers get into the brace position.

You should try to ditch parallel to, and preferably on top of, a swell; however, wave action and wind direction may dictate otherwise. You should always avoid landing directly into the face of a swell, as water can act like a brick wall when impacted at high speed.

Multi-engine aircraft are not immune from emergencies that may require ditching, so a good over-water plan makes sense for them, as well. There are a number of print and online resources for procedures, statistics, product reviews, safety training, and discussions on over-water flying. Some that I most often use are: Aeronautical Information Manual ([www.faa.gov/atpubs/aim](http://www.faa.gov/atpubs/aim)), AOPA ([www.aopa.org](http://www.aopa.org)), Aviation Survival Technologies ([www.astoverwater.com](http://www.astoverwater.com)), and Prepared Pilot ([www.preparedpilot.com](http://www.preparedpilot.com)).

You should consult with aviation safety professionals and your aircraft POH when developing your own over-water survival plan. Having such a plan will widen your horizons by placing exciting destinations like the Caribbean within reach.

*Born in the Bahamas, Rick Gardner has spent most of his life under, on, or over the water. Rick and his wife Pia operate Caribbean Sky Tours, [www.caribbeanskytours.com](http://www.caribbeanskytours.com).*

*From the January/February 2007 issue of Pilot Getaways Magazine*

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## Message from EAA Chapter 21 President

Greetings EAA 21 members and aviation friends of the tri-state. This month marks the beginning of the spring season and a time to start flying again!! If you did not renew your EAA 21 membership for 2008 already, you need to do it now... Send your payment to Treasurer Bill Gowin, payable to EAA Chapter 21. Remember, it is a requirement that all EAA 21 chapter members also be current national EAA members.

The March meeting on Wednesday the 12th will include a drawing for the last generous free flight, being given by Bill Spurling and John Bizal, for two of our chapter members, a ride in their classic Stearman airplanes during the coming year. Your board members have declared the January and March, (since February was a weather related cancellation), meetings to be the months for drawing one door prize at each meeting among those members present for the free Stearman rides. All winners must be current members in good standing. While you are marking your calendar for the March 12th meeting, do not hesitate to reserve the second Wednes-

day of each month throughout the year for the EAA monthly meeting night.

Last month's meeting, conducted by Keith Schlageter in my absence; Dr. Larry Judy was our keynote speaker with a topic of “Getting your FAA medical when there is a problem.” This was timely issue because even though we might not have a problem right now, as we age a problem WILL develop sometime later. Even though I missed the presentation by being away at a physical therapy improvement endeavour in Maui, Hawaii with my wife Karen, I have heard by way of the internet that it was an outstanding presentation. Thank you Dr. Judy!

As I indicated two months ago, I would try to investigate the airports on Maui. Well... I found a couple and that is all. The one flying into Kapalua on Maui was the nearest. The trade winds are always into the runway and the turbos that land there are able to stop in less than 1/4 mile. I watched the flights coming into



**Drawing to be held at March Chapter meeting for free ride in THIS airplane!**

the airport from about a mile away for a few days and wondered where they were going until I drove up the side of the small mountain to find out. OK?? So..... This is my report.

Webmaster, Steve Eberhart has delivered fully on his promises to upgrade the EAA21.org website. And Newsletter Editor Pete Wiggin has responded in an outstanding manner by attaching the recent newsletters into the website. Outstanding!!!! Check it out.....

I am looking forward to seeing everyone making it to Skylane for the meeting on Wednesday the 12th. Actually... I am hoping no one shows up and I am the only one that has a 100% chance of winning the free flight in a classic Stearman.

Remember, Guests are always welcomed.

Larry Helming

## Managing Angle of Attack

*This article was forwarded to me about a year ago by Earl Schroeder. Pete*

The typical method of practicing and demonstrating straight-and-level stalls and recoveries is to slow the aircraft down in the takeoff or departure configuration until it reaches the minimum controllable airspeed (MCA) depicted on the airspeed indicator, inducing the stall, and recovering. (See the February 10, 2006, Training

Tips article "Pre-solo Stalls.") This is a safe way to demonstrate the effects of exceeding the critical angle of attack. But letting the discussion end there carries the risk of fixing in a student's mind the inaccurate

notion that exceeding that angle of attack can be prevented simply by flying above minimum controllable airspeed (MCA). That's not so.

Suppose you are on your final approach glide with flaps down, throttle at idle, and maintaining an indicated airspeed of 65 knots, well above MCA for your airplane. Another aircraft suddenly appears below and in front of you. Your first reaction is to haul back sharply on the yoke to avoid collision. Without decelerating to MCA, the aircraft wing exceeds its critical angle of attack and

stalls—unexpectedly and at low altitude. Because this is a so-called accelerated stall, the added lift induces a load on the airframe. To understand maneuvering speed's importance to stall avoidance, see Rod Machado's "A New Look at Maneuvering Speed" in the March 1999 AOPA Flight Training.

A glance at your pilot's operating handbook reminds you that stall speeds increase with bank angle. Practicing a level-flight steep turn, or increasing bank to complete a turn in the pattern, you are

surprised to hear stall-warning activation at what seems to be a healthy airspeed. Remember that you are flying a maneuver with a high-load factor, meaning that the aircraft wing is producing horizontally

inclined lift to turn the aircraft plus the necessary vertical component of lift to regulate altitude. It is flying closer to its critical angle of attack than in unaccelerated level flight.

Managing angle of attack at any airspeed, attitude, or power setting is the key, as the opening words above remind us.

*I guess this means we all need to get Angle of Attack indicators for our aircraft!*

**CRITICAL ANGLE OF ATTACK**  
 Pilots learn that a stall can occur "at any airspeed, in any attitude, with any power setting," as explained in [Chapter 4](#) of the FAA's *Airplane Flying Handbook*. How well do you understand this concept?

Chapter 21 Monthly Treasurer's Report February-08		
February 1, 2008	Beginning Balance	\$2,387.98
	Receipts	
	Interest	\$0.11
	Total	.11
	Disbursements	
	Newsletter Printing	\$16.00
	Total	\$16.00
February 29, 2008	Ending Balance	\$2,372.09
	Check 1243 outstanding	\$16.00
	Balance ONB 2-29-08	\$2,388.09
Submitted by:	Bill Gowin, Treasurer	

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## Upcoming Chapter 21 Events

### **EAA21 Chapter Meeting: Wednesday March 12, 7:00 PM, Skylane Airport**

At our March Chapter meeting, we will have a drawing to determine who will receive a free ride in the Stearman biplane by Bill Spurling or John Bizal.

April 8-13, 2008 Sun 'n Fun Fly-in Lakeland Linder Regional Airport (LAL) Lakeland FL [www.Sun-N-Fun.org](http://www.Sun-N-Fun.org)

July 28-August 3, 2008 EAA AirVenture Oshkosh Wittman Regional Airport Oshkosh, WI [www.AirVenture.org](http://www.AirVenture.org)

