

**Chapter 1344****P.O. Box 582****McPherson, Kansas 67460**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Chapter Meeting**

Annual BBQ  
Hill's Hangar

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## Summer Is Here!

As I sit and type this, it is evident outside that summer has arrived. It has been near 100° for the past couple of days and more of the same is forecasted for at least the next week. A possible shower Thursday afternoon/evening and into Friday morning is also forecasted. Hopefully, it will miss us and the weather will remain good for our annual barbeque at Dwight & Ruth's hangar on Thursday evening the 19th. Stearman rides are planned, weather permitting.

Well, I have egg on my face and owe all y'all an apology. I totally misunderstood Tracy S. at RANS and there was no fly-in last month. Mike L. flew the Tailwind over there and found everything locked up so flew on over to Lucas for breakfast. Even though there was no fly-in, he had a good breakfast and a fun flight. Apparently, Tom S. was the only other person that wanted to go. So, please accept my apology for getting things so messed up.

Speaking of Mike L. and the Tailwind, it's going to stay home while Mike and his wife drive up to Baraboo, WI for the Tailwind fly-in and then on over to Oshkosh for AirVenture. He'd like to fly but hasn't got the 40 hours flown off yet.

Tom S. says he is at a standstill at the moment on his Pietenpol. It seems

he has the same problem as so many of us in the lack of cash flow.

Russ M. is making progress on his Sonex. He has the engine built and just needs the battery to run it. He says he has ALL the parts and pieces needed to complete the entire plane, so it's just a matter of time. With the heat, his garage is incredibly hot so he's limited on the time he can work each day.

Russ also says that Paul T. has had open heart surgery and is not doing well. In addition to the surgery, his diabetes has flared up again and is complicating things.

Jerry D. had another nibble on his RV-8 that turned out to be just another tire-kicker, so it IS still for sale.

Warren H. has purchased a partially built RV-6 that he'll be working on now. Congratulations & good luck Warren.

## Area Events

1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month – Ponca City Airport Pancake Breakfast (PNC)

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of every month – Beaumont Hotel (SN07) All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of every month – Lufkin, TX (LFK) Fajita Fly-in 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Angelina County Airport

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month – Alva Regional (AVK) Alva, OK

4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month – Augusta Municipal (3AU)

4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month – EAA Chapter 455 Fly-in Breakfast at Enid Woodring Regional (WDG) from 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

July 23 - 29 – EAA AirVenture Oshkosh Wittman Regional Airport (OSH) Oshkosh, WI Contact: 920.426.4800 [www.airventure.org](http://www.airventure.org)

August 4 – 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Cowtown Fly-in breakfast Ellsworth Municipal Airport (9K7) Ellsworth, KS Contact: Dale Weinhold 785.472.4309 [dpweinhold@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dpweinhold@sbcglobal.net) Pancakes free to pilots and passengers.

August 5 – Queen City, MO (15MO) 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Applegate Airport Fly-in 660.766.2644 [ccpha@nemr.net](mailto:ccpha@nemr.net)

August 24 - 26 – Wichita Flight Festival James Jabara Airport (AAO) Wichita, KS Contact: 316.267.2817 [www.wichitafestivals.com](http://www.wichitafestivals.com)

*Overheard between a Cessna 310 driver and Chicago Center.*

**Chicago Center:** Cessna One Two Three Five Bravo, I'll bring you in a little high so I don't lose radar contact while vectoring you to the ILS. Do you think you'll have any problem losing the necessary altitude to make the approach?

**Cessna 1235B:** No problem Center, this baby comes down like a Bonanza full of doctors!

*Overheard at DFW*

**Dallas/Fort Worth Clearance Delivery:** Nine Eight Two Sierra Yankee stand by to copy clearance.

**N982SY:** Nine Eight Two Sierra Yankee ready to copy.

**Clearance Delivery:** Nine Eight Two Sierra Yankee is cleared direct Rockport, after departure fly runway heading at or below 2,000 expect 10,000 in 10 minutes, contact Dallas Fort Worth Departure 125.2, squawk 2351.

**N9800Y:** Nine Eight Two Sierra Yankee fly runway -- hey, if you guys don't hold still and be quiet, your mother and I will be flying to the Bahamas without you for spring break next week and you'll be in Dallas with the babysitter. Am I clear?

**Clearance Delivery:** Oh no. Can I please go too, daddy?

**N9880Y:** Sure, come on. Guess I forgot to turn loose of the transmit button. Sorry.

## *Confessions of An Airplane Nut*

### **Part 7 – Starting to Take Shape**

Speaking from my many years of immense experience, a project can be moving along very well but without a lot of obvious completion. Then, all of a sudden, some of the separate parts start to come together into a common whole which makes you sit back and say; “maybe I’ll get this thing done after all.”

The Pietenpol has been a project like that for the last couple of years. Lots of small parts have come out of the shop but without creating anything big that just jumps up and shouts “airplane” at you. A good example of that is the pile of wing ribs that took me almost a year to complete. Each rib is a complex puzzle of cap strips, cross members, and gusset plates; all joined together with a modicum of glue and some tiny brass nails. Since each rib must be identical with all the other ribs, I made one master rib jig which all the parts had to pass through. That’s why it took so long as I could only build one rib at a time. When I got them all done what did I have – a pile of ribs. They look very nice I must say but they still don’t look like a wing. I’ve got the spars lying tightly bundled against warping in another building but they don’t scream “wing” either. Until I join all those pieces together with the appropriate leading and trailing edges I won’t have that emotional jolt that I am so looking forward to.

Knowing all this ahead of time, combined with the knowledge that my little shop building was going to get suddenly smaller when the parts started getting bigger, I had to make a choice. Do I build the wings now and have to find a way to store them in a rather fragile state or do I build the fuselage? Hmmmm. . . . Well, the wings would look very nice and they’ve got some interesting challenges like building the ailerons in the wing and then cutting them out. On the other hand, they are BIG – where will I keep them? The fuselage, on the other hand, is also BIG but when I get it done I will have something that I can sit in and make airplane noises. I have heard that to be very satisfying and a great motivator towards getting the project done. Besides, I already have all the wood needed, I just need a bigger work table and that will also come in handy with the wings. OK then, fuselage it is.

Quick trip to the lumber yard and the 8’ x 36” work table became 16’ x 36” in size and about 36” tall so it would not kill my back to work. Do you recall that I mentioned my shop is only 12’ x 20’ in size? Well, there are 12” shelves along one wall and a 24” work bench built into one end so the available floor space shrinks to 11’ x 18’. Take out floor space for the table saw, tool boxes, heaters, air compressor, etc. AND a 16’ x 36” work table and it starts to become just a bit crowded. Actually, there is a path along each side of the work table and a 24” gap between the end of the table and the work bench which gets used A LOT since the space underneath the table is filled with materials I will need later. Besides, the name Gramps

did something to my back that makes it harder to crawl under things than I remember from before. (Gramps sounds a lot like “cramps” doesn’t it?)

Be that as it may, the saw dust and wood chips started to fly in earnest and, before you knew it, I had two identical, but mirror image, fuselage sides all glued up and ready to go. By the way, aircraft grade mahogany plywood is expensive but that is understandable. The problem is that you can’t just get it anywhere and that means you also have to pay to have it shipped. Turns out that anything over 6’ in length costs extra to ship so, of course, the sheets I needed had to be over 6’ in length with no splicing allowed. Oh well, nobody said that this would be easy. I have always liked working with wood; it is just very satisfying somehow. Aircraft grade wood is just one step up again – very satisfying but PLEASE don’t mess it up and have to buy more!

The two fuselage sides were then made to stand upside down on the table inside a framework of braces designed to hold all the pieces in the right places. Building, leveling, and squaring that framework took about as long as it took to get the sides attached. The sides are joined with various sizes of spruce sticks per the plans. Each stick is cut to shape to hold the sides up against the framework previously described. What you end up with is basically a four-sided bridge truss which is immensely strong for something that is made mostly out of air. Also included are a couple of pieces of white ash which cross the floor at the points where the lift struts will someday attach. In weight and stiffness the white ash feels like iron compared to spruce. A lot of this wood was purchased from the Wiebe family who run the airport and airplane restoration facility at Halstead, KS. If you haven’t visited them yet, you should.

The fuselage is finished out with 1/8” mahogany plywood on each side from the firewall back to just aft of the pilot’s seat (that’s where the 6’+ expensive wood goes.) The floor is the same but of 1/4” birch plywood. Aft the pilot’s position the framework is exposed with only 1/8” ply gusset plates blocking the view. Looks very cool, er “bad” er “Phat,” or whatever the present terminology has degenerated to. Now I just have to complete the framework for the two seats and the main fuselage is complete. On top of the fuselage structure will be a turtledeck from behind the pilot’s station to the front of the empennage and various formers which will define the rounded shape of the forward fuselage.

I had in mind to have my grandson, Jaedon, be the first official resident of the pilot’s seat so when the basic framework of the seat was complete I laid a handy board across it and went to find “the kid.” He was all ready to go out to the shop the instant he got to the house so we headed out the back door. We only got to the edge of the patio when we heard his sister, Emma, yelling “me,” (she’s only two) so we went back for her too. When we got to the shop Emma got busy finding trash on the floor to put in her mouth and Jaedon went straight to “his” trash bucket to get a piece of wood (about 9” long and 2” wide.) I picked him up and set him on the work table beside the fuselage. He took his wood back to the tail and laid it across sideways so I would have the “back wing” done.

Then I asked Jaedon if he wanted to sit in the plane. “No!” Needless to say, this was not the response I was expecting (or wanting.) “Why don’t you want to sit in the plane, Jaedon?” “Gramps, not enough glue.” MAN, I hope he doesn’t know what he is talking about!

‘Til next time. Tom Stinemetze - The Airplane Nut

