



CORBEN COURIER

Published for the members of the Experimental Aircraft Association, Chapter 93, Madison, Wisconsin
APRIL 2008

The Chapter 93 monthly meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, April 17, 2008, at our Chapter clubroom, Blackhawk Field, Cottage Grove, WI. **Devin Turner**, the young man we sponsored at the 2007 EAA Air Academy, will tell us of his experiences there. Devin soloed three days after his 16th birthday, and aspires to be an aeronautical engineer. He also does aviation art and has won state and national awards for his work.



WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE BUILDING

A visit to Dave Van Lanen's shop would bring a smile to any builder's heart. His two-car garage has been converted into a workshop that has fire-proof insulation in the ceiling, sheetrock and pegboard on two walls, a drill press, saws, furnace and compressor on the back wall and a small but functional workbench on the last empty wall.

In the middle of the shop is a work table that is as flat as a pool table and more than twice as long. Dave built this table as his first task toward building his dream plane so he put a good deal of thought and effort into the design and construction. Along the sides of the table are labeled bins for rivets, clecos, screws, nails and other small parts as well as all the tools needed to assemble a metal airplane.

Like most builders, Dave had to struggle with the decision of building or buying. He reviewed the Aero-Crafter Catalog with more than 900 designs to choose from. To help narrow his focus, he wrote a mission statement that determined he needed a cross-country type of plane that had good payload, reasonable cost and was Sport Pilot compliant. This pointed directly to the Zenith Zodiac 601XL.

Dave ordered the Zenith Slow-build kit and attended a Zenith workshop to build the rudder as a good way to learn and get started. He and his two sons completed the rudder and brought the rest of the metal needed for the 601 XL back to Madison. After building the worktable and inventorying the kit, they made places to store all the parts and material.

The stabilizer was the next part completed, which is now stored up near the ceiling. As he continues the project, Dave says his biggest problem continues to be some less-than-perfect pre-made parts. He has a hard time maintaining edge distance when the pre-drilled holes do not line up perfectly. And he is a perfectionist, so when he tries to fit a flange part and gets too close to an edge, he remakes the part so the rivet placement is dead-on.

The wing layout is next. After drilling, de-burring, applying clecos, primer and paint, and inspection, he will close it up, apply rivets and move on to the electrical side of things where he plans to learn a new set of skills.

Dave is not in a hurry; he wants to do things right. Based on the pieces hanging from the ceiling, he is off to a very good start.

Jerry Matzelle

TALES FROM AN SR-71 BLACKBIRD PILOT

In April 1986, following an attack on American soldiers in a Berlin disco, President Reagan ordered the bombing of Muammar Qaddafi's terrorist camps in Libya. My duty was to fly over Libya and take photos recording the damage our F-111s had inflicted. Qaddafi had established a "line of Death," a territorial marking across the Gulf of Sidra, swearing to shoot down any intruder that crossed the boundary. On the morning of April 15, I rocketed past the line at 2,125 mph.

I was piloting the SR-71 spy plane, the world's fastest jet, accompanied by Maj. Walter Watson, the aircraft's reconnaissance systems officer (RSO). We had crossed into Libya and were approaching our final turn over the bleak desert landscape when Walter informed me that he was receiving missile launch signals. I quickly increased our speed, calculating the time it would take for the weapons, most likely SA-2 and SA-4 surface-to-air missiles capable of Mach 5, to reach our altitude. I estimated that we could beat the rocket-powered missiles to the turn and stayed our course, betting our lives on the plane's performance.

After several agonizingly long seconds, we made the turn and blasted toward the Mediterranean. "You might want to pull it back," Walter suggested. It was then that I noticed I still had the throttles full forward. The plane was flying a mile every 1.6 seconds, well above our Mach 3.2 limit. It was the fastest we would ever fly. I pulled the throttles to idle just south of Sicily, but we still overran the refueling tanker awaiting us over Gibraltar.

Scores of significant aircraft have been produced in the 100 years of flight following the achievements of the Wright brothers, which we celebrate in December. Aircraft such as the Boeing 707, the F-86 Sabre Jet, and the P-51 Mustang are among the important machines that have flown our skies. But the SR-71, also known as the Blackbird, stands alone as a significant contributor to Cold War victory and as the fastest plane ever and only 93 Air Force pilots ever steered the "sled," as we called our aircraft.

As inconceivable as it may sound, I once discarded the plane. Literally. My first encounter with the SR-71 came when I was 10 years old in the form of molded black plastic in a Revell kit. Cementing together the long fuselage parts proved tricky, and my finished product looked less than menacing. Glue oozing from the seams discolored the black plastic. It seemed ungainly alongside the fighter planes in my collection, and I threw it away.

Twenty-nine years later, I stood awe-struck in a Beale Air Force Base hangar, staring at the very real SR-71 before me. I had applied to fly the world's fastest jet and was receiving my first walk-around of our nation's most prestigious aircraft. In my previous 13 years as an Air Force fighter pilot, I had never seen an aircraft with such presence. At 107 feet long, it appeared big, but far from ungainly.

Ironically, the plane was dripping, much like the misshapen model I had assembled in my youth. Fuel was seeping through the joints, raining down on the hangar floor. At Mach 3, the plane would expand several inches because of the severe temperature, which could heat the leading edge of the wing to 1,100 degrees. To prevent cracking, expansion joints had been built into the plane. Sealant resembling rubber glue covered the seams, but when the plane was subsonic, fuel would leak through the joints.

The SR-71 was the brainchild of Kelly Johnson, the famed Lockheed designer who created the P-38, the F-104 Starfighter, and the U-2.

After the Soviets shot down Gary Powers' U-2 in 1960, Johnson began to develop an aircraft that would fly three miles higher and five times faster than the spy plane and still be capable of photographing your license plate. However, flying at 2,000 mph would create intense heat on the aircraft's skin. Lockheed engineers used a titanium alloy to construct more than 90 percent of the SR-71, creating special tools and manufacturing procedures to hand-build each of the 40 planes. Special heat-resistant fuel, oil, and hydraulic fluids that would function at 85,000 feet and higher also had to be developed.

In 1962, the first Blackbird successfully flew, and in 1966, the same year I graduated from high school, the Air Force began flying operational SR-71 missions. I came to the program in 1983 with a sterling record and a recommendation from my commander, completing the weeklong interview and meeting Walter, my partner for the next four years. He would ride four feet behind me, working all the cameras, radios, and electronic jamming equipment. I joked that if we were ever captured, he was the spy and I was just the driver. He told me to keep the pointy end forward.

We trained for a year, flying out of Beale AFB in California, Kadena Airbase in Okinawa, and RAF Mildenhall in England. On a typical training mission, we would take off near Sacramento, refuel over Nevada, accelerate into Montana, obtain high Mach over Colorado, turn right over new Mexico, speed across the Los Angeles Basin, run up the West Coast, turn right at Seattle, then return to Beale. Total flight time: 2 hours and 40 minutes.



AIRCRAFT IDENTIFICATION

This month's aircraft was the very first Very Light Jet to fly back in 1995. It's claimed to be safer and more economical than driving a car and gets you to your destination seven times faster. What's its name? Last month's was the homebuilt Stolp Starlet.

Submitted by Jim Rothamer



HANGAR ROOF

The leaks should be completely fixed. A gentleman from Wick Builders came out on Friday, April 4th and determined that leaks had been occurring around six or eight screws that were improperly placed in a seam. They had been allowing water to leak around them and onto the ceiling below.

Young Eagles Rally at Blackhawk Field

Saturday, May 17, 2008 is our first Young Eagles event of the year and we need your help. An EAA Chapter is only as good as its member volunteers..... And the only way to be sure that you are personally getting the most value from your club is for you to be a volunteer. I hope you can help us make this event a success.

What do we need for a successful event???	How can you help???
A Co-Chair for our 2008 Young Eagles program.	Contact Bill Rewey at 608-833-5839 and tell him you would like to Co-Chair the program this year. Bill says, " <u>No experience required</u> ."
Volunteers to work the event.	Volunteer for one of the many jobs: pilot, loading, briefing, registration, photographer, etc. <u>Only the pilot needs experience.</u>
A big turnout of young people.	*Place posters in public places where parents and kids will see them. (see enclosure) *Contact youth groups and speak to them about Young Eagles or ask their leaders to tell the kids about the event. <u>No experience required</u>

VOLUNTEERING COMES WITH A GUARANTEE—At the end of the day you will feel better about yourself and Chapter 93.....And the smile on the face of a kid exiting an aircraft will surely make your day.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chapter 93 Membership Meeting, March 20,2008

We had a guest in attendance at the March meeting by the name of Matt Bains. Welcome, Matt. A lighting issue was also brought up due to the lack of/or outside lighting not working.

If you know of a good candidate for the 2008 Air Academy, submit the person's name to **Patty Plantz or Rob Tweed**.

This year's Poker Run has 14 events listed in the schedule. If you are working on a plane project and have pictures that you would be willing to share on our website, send them to **Don Ripp** with a brief description for each picture.

Bill Rewey talked to the Chapter members about being "on the beam or off the beam" navigation.

Not all dues have been received, so if you haven't paid yet, please pay **Jerry Matzelle** as soon as possible. Thank you.

Board Meeting, April 3,2008

The first Young Eagle event will be held on May 17, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. We also need some kids to go flying, so start getting the word out. Chapter 93 will also co-sponsor a Young Eagle event with Rio Creek Aviation Foundation at Rio Creek Airport on June 21,2008.

Dave Jeardeau will buy some replacement outside lighting. Weed spraying of the runway will be on May 31st or June 1st, if bad weather occurs on the 31st. June 28-29 will be the dates of Chapter 93's work weekend at EAA Oshkosh. A "port-a-potty" motion was made and approved to spend up to \$500 for a handicap portable toilet unit.

One last note, does anyone know how to remove the rust from the rivets on the half-scale model of the plane that is sitting in the back room? *Earl Martin*

THANK YOU

Joe Cody generously donated \$100 in addition to his membership dues. Thank you, Mr. Cody!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The first Poker Run fly-in is at Racine, May 10 and 11 (a two-day event, so two chances to make that one).

One BIG event fast approaching is the May 17th Young Eagles event at Blackhawk (STY). The Chapter needs your help to make this a success in the following ways: 1) Get the word out to church groups, youth groups, schools, family and friends that this program is FREE to youth ages 8-17. And parents may learn a thing or two in the process. Interested parties should contact **Bill Rewey** at 833-5839 to register large groups, etc. (If we do not get them this time around, they could attend the next event at the Brat & Bean Feed.) 2) The need for aircraft and pilots is required. 3) A couple of display aircraft and folks on hand to talk about them to the youth and adults. 4) People to handle the registration. 5) People to handle the ground school. 6) People to provide ground control. 7) Hand-held radio(s). 8) Members to talk up EAA and the Chapter. 9) Young Eagle sandwich board to be used to announce the event in Cottage Grove at the main intersection. 10) Events like this are the best way to spread the EAA aviation word.

At last month's meeting was a Mr. **Matt Bains** who is new to the area and Chapter shopping. He introduced himself and mentioned he is a Captain with Air Wisconsin and highlighted some of the aircraft projects he has had a hand in over the years, expressing an interest in some new projects also.

Plan on attending the meeting on the 17th not only to see the mystery door prize awarded, but have a chance at winning this month's prize and catch up on some stories from those in attendance at Sun-N-Fun 2008 as well as learning something of interest from our guest speaker.

Don Ripp

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EAA Chapter 93 publishes *Corben Courier* once a month for and about its members who are interested in all phases of aviation. Articles to be submitted must reach the editor by the first Saturday of the month. Meeting night is the third Thursday of the month unless otherwise stated. Members may advertise items free of charge. Business card size ads are \$5 per month or \$50 per year. Disclaimer: The *Corben Courier* newsletter serves as a clearinghouse of ideas and suggestions for homebuilt aircraft and owner operated aircraft. No responsibility or liability is assumed, expressed, or implied for the suitability, accuracy, or approval of any information contained in this newsletter. Any parties using suggestions or ideas expressed herein do so at their own risk without recourse against anyone.