



THE
SNAKE
RIVER

"RIVETING NEWS"



Who We Are:

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Chapter Website: http://www.eaa407.org	

JUNE EAA CHAPTER 407 MEETING

June 21st - Meet at the "RED BARON" at 6 PM in Idaho Falls. This is at the NE corner of the airport (other side of runway) and is accessed by driving down Foote Drive. Dave Ballard will talk to us about the new Utah Helicopter School and will show us around his facility.

Utah Helicopter is primarily a helicopter flight training school. Our students range from beginner to experienced fixed-wing working towards their add-on. Age ranges from 19 to mid 50's. We also do photo flights, surveying, and other commercial work in the area. The aviation industry as a whole is growing, particularly helicopters. Helicopters have many benefits that are creating growth in the industry such as maneuverability, capability, size, and they don't need a runway to land. Obviously you aren't going to fly a helicopter across the country but they provide a great service to several different industries. Utah Helicopter is proud to be a part of a great aviation community in Southeastern Idaho and look forward to continuing professional flight training for years to come.

Thanks, Dave Ballard, Director of Operations
Utah Helicopter, 2381 Foote Dr.
Idaho Falls, ID. 83402, Cell: (208) 716-7173
dave@utahhelicopter.com



Where We Meet:

We rotate between the ISU hanger at Pocatello Airport and Aeromark at Idaho Falls Airport on the 3rd Saturday of the month at 6pm (except during the summer).

Fellow EAA members, anyone in need of certified aircraft appraisal, including helicopter, experimental, or DAR services please direct them to my website AircraftAppraiser-DAR.com Always free advice (good advice extra). Thanks Tom

Tom Gierhart
Aircraft Appraiser / DAR / IA

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:

I experienced a very sad day last month as I watched several of you lift off into our Idaho blue sky. You were headed for Gooding and the Young Eagles Rally. Unfortunately, I had to work at the dental office that day and could not go. I had to work hard to smile and cheerfully send you off when my heart was aching to go.

Again, it was a great success. We had 12 pilots, at least 6 ground crew and flew 52 Young Eagles. Thats great! Del Ray Miles made the comment..."This was a life changing experience". I agree! My heart was touched and I shed tears both times that I went. This is one of the greatest things I have ever been involved in.

Thanks to all of you who helped make this a success, and to all of you who have helped at our other rallies.

We have another rally next week in Rexburg. I humbly ask you to again sacrifice your time and money to make this one a success also. We have never had a rally in Rexburg because previous efforts have fallen through. It is on June 28th at 9:00 AM. We distributed a lot of flyers at the air show, so we should have a big crowd that day. We will need you to help if you can. It would be sad if we have to turn anyone away. Please come help make this a success.

One last note: there are many people who work hard to make this chapter so great. I know how busy all of you are. My sincere THANKS goes out to all of you! Natalie

EAA Chpt 407 Young Eagles Rally

WHERE: REXBURG AIRPORT
WHEN: SATURDAY, JUNE 28TH
TIME: 9:00 AM

Come help us out and give these kids a ride
they will never forget!!!



History: The EAA Young Eagles program was launched in 1992 to give interested young people, ages 8 - 17, an opportunity to go flying in a general aviation airplane. These flights are offered free of charge and are made possible through the generosity of EAA member pilot volunteers. These pilots are all licensed by FAA.

Since 1992, more than 1.3 million Young Eagles have enjoyed a flight through the program. Young Eagles have been registered in more than 90 different countries and have been flown by more than 41,000 volunteer pilots.

EAA Chapter 407 Minutes for May 17, 2008:

We had another great meeting at the ISU hanger at the Pocatello airport . Natalie Bergevin conducted the meeting, we had 22 in attendance. Natalie talked about the public information meeting that the INL held on the U.A.V or radio control planes that they fly at the INL and she also talked about having a survival pack with you when you fly should you have a accident or a forced landing. The guest speakers for the evening were Gary and Sandy Bills from the Sky rider Flying Club.

The first thing that Natalie covered was the information meeting on the UAV's that are flown at the INL. One of the concerns of pilots is that the INL is going to work on getting the ten thousand foot ceiling over the site reinstated. It was lifted after Hazel O'Leary decided the INL didn't need a ten thousand foot ceiling. When the UAV's fly, they are restricted to a service ceiling of twelve hundred feet AGL and they have to have a spotter for the UAV so as to avoid any aircraft in the area. To fly one of the UAV's, the pilot

has to have gone through private pilot ground school and to have passed the test. Just a note about the ten thousand foot ceiling, it will take an act of Congress to reinstate it, and the INL will have to have a cause to have it reinstated. That doesn't mean that we can become complacent about our rights, you never know what laws our legislators will pass.

As a closing note on the above, if one wants to know more on the UAV at the INL the person to contact is Don Michaelson.

The next item that Natalie covered was having a survival pack with you when you fly. She covered the basics plus passed around a food bar that she makes for the out doors and for survival kits. This subject will continue with more information in the coming months.

The guest speakers were Gary and Sandy Bills. Gary talked about the Sky rider Flying Club and the early years of the club. Their first plane was a Cherokee 140 which rented for \$9.00 an hour! They have a total of 16 members at this time. The cost to join is \$550.00 and if you resign from the club, you will receive a \$250.00 reimbursement from your cost to join. At this time, they have two airplanes: a Cherokee 6 and an Archer. The Cherokee rents for \$109.00 and the Archer for \$72.00 plus sales tax. Both aircraft are in a hangar. If you are interested in joining, you can contact the Bills, or contact our own Jim Wolper who is a member. The bring a buck contest was won by Bill Smith who answered

questions about Charles Lindburg: what year did he cross the Atlantic ocean (1927), how many hours did it take (33.5 hours) and how much fuel did he use (450 gallons). The attendance drawing was won by Tom Strong - he won a circuit tester. And the final note is that the Young Eagles for Gooding was moved from the 7th to the 20th of the month.

-Brad Fell

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale: 30 amp ammeter, Westach, installed but never used - \$50. 12" spinner (uncut) w/ 5/8" mounting holes - \$100. Air-wolf spin-on adapter for remote firewall mounting for a Lycoming or Continental engine, including AN-8 size nipples & O-rings for 1/2" oil lines, separate firewall mount required which can be purchased from an auto supply store - \$250. Turn & Bank indicator (Schwien), runs quietly - \$75. PS Engineering 4-channel panel mount intercom, no harness - \$50. Lycoming vacuum pump drive, appears to be P/N LW-10305 - \$100. Call 208-317-4101.

For Sale: Plane: Piper Pacer PA-20/16, Year 1950, \$27,000. Extensive modifications made to make it an exceptional flyer. Control yokes have been replaced with sticks. Tail-wheel aircraft. Four seater. Located in Blackfoot. Call Ellis @ 208-785-6331.

For Lease: Rigby Airport Hangar Space \$100 Access Fee & 10 cents per Sq Foot of hangar size. Call Larry Boam for more information at 754-4352 or 521-0679.

For Sale: ACS Fuel primer with adequate Cu tubing, Spruce 05-19920 - \$45.00. "Usher" type Cab heat box [2in tubing], Spruce p 295 2005/2006 cat.-\$75.00. 2 inch tubing to sheet metal Al flange - \$3.50. Exhaust cabin heat "valve" for \$25.00. A-820 type throttle friction-lock cable, 1/2 thread, 6 ft, 0.075 solid wire - \$25.00. 2 ea. Mixture/etc, 48 inch, 3/8 threads, 0.06 dia solid wire - \$15.00 each. Potter/Broomfield Breakers: W58 type, 4ea 1amp; 3ea 3amp; 5ea 10amp - \$3.00each. W23 type, 2ea 10amp; 1ea 15amp - \$7.50each. All items are new and never been used. Call 523-8132 or 520-6671.

For Sale: Plane: Interstate S1A Cadet, Year 1941, \$22,000. Recently reconditioned 2-place tandem seater. Tail-wheel aircraft. Located in Blackfoot. Once owned by actor Andy Devine. This meets all qualifications for a Light Sport Aircraft and can be flown by Sport Pilot Certificate holders. Call Ellis @ 208-785-6331. Anxious to sell.



LET'S GO FLYING!

3RD ANNUAL SANDPOINT FLY-IN in Sandpoint, Idaho. This will be on July 5th, from 7AM-12 Noon. Breakfast served by EAA Chapter 1441. Contact Jan Lee at 208-255-9954.

The 5th ANNUAL 4th OF JULY FLIGHT FESTIVAL - Thursday-Friday, July 3-4 starting at 8:00 AM. @ Townsend, Montana. Lots of food, homebuilts, vintage aircraft. Close to town, good camping. Contact: Neil Salmi: 406-266-5400.

2008 AIR MAGIC VALLEY AIR SHOW in Twin Falls, Idaho. This will be July 26th-27th. It will feature the US Navy Blue Angels. Contact the events director for info at 208-420-8719.

WINGS 'N' WHEELS AIRSHOW & FLY-IN - Friday-Saturday, August 16-17. Powell Muni Airport in Wyoming. Car show too. Early Bird Breakfast, Friday night street dance, Phone: 307-754-3494 - 800-325-4278

GATHERING OF AVIATORS - June 7-8 at

2nd ANNUAL CAMPOUT/FLY-IN @ WEST YELLOWSTONE AIRPORT - August 8-9, Potluck on Friday night, breakfast on Saturday, Tent or RV camp. Sponsored by our own EAA Chapter 407. Contact Natalie at 208-684-3411.

WINGS OVER BAKER AIR SHOW/FLY-IN in Baker City, Oregon. It will be July 25th-26th. Call the event director for details at 541-523-4539.

GATHERING OF AVIATORS - June 7-8 at Seely Lake, Montana (north of Butte). BBQ, Homebuilts, Powered Parachutes, Ultralights, Vintage Aircraft. Grass Strip. Fly, drive or walk to us for a good time. Hangar available for bad weather. Contact Neil Salmi at 406-266-5400.

OSHKOSH - July 28-August 3rd. What can we say, ..they have it all. A week of eating, flying, museums, workshops, videos, etc.....

ARLINGTON FLY IN & AIRSHOW - July 9-13 in Arlington, Washington. Army Reserve Band concert Saturday. Parade on Sunday. SPECTACULAR FIRE WORKS AIRSHOW on FRIDAY. Music starts 7 PM & Airshow at Dusk.



Member Mike Stevens giving Dale Cresap a ride in Mike's RV7A while on a visit up to Alpine this past month. Check out that smile!!

Dale & Tom Went To Ogden

Tom Strong invites me to join him on a flight to an EAA event in Ogden and I jump at the chance. The weather is perfect and Tom lets me do nearly all the flying. We chat on the radio with Larry Hobbs, Larry Boam, and Mark Edwards who left before us. Their radio signals improve as we gain on them, but they still land ahead of us. Tom refers to me as a hitchhiker that he picked up, but I jump in to assert my status as first officer.

Traffic is really busy at Ogden. The radio calls are thick and fast and the tower at one point announces 'fast movers' overhead from Hill AFB. There is enough of a break by the time we arrive to get our radio calls in, and Tom takes over the controls to land. We wander around and meet the gang from our chapter. We are well represented with Larry Hobbs, Larry Boam, Mark Edwards, Kevin Forbush, George Mundt, Tom Strong, Jim Baker and me. We have breakfast in a restaurant and then wander the ramp. I see a Dragonfly, a slick little canard. I have heard that these are fast, so I ask a guy nearby who seems knowledgeable. He says it depends on whether you are buying or selling. There is a Cessna 150. On closer examination I see it has no prop, still closer I see it has no engine. Then I wonder how is the tail not on the ground? Still closer I see the engine compartment is full of bricks.

A B-17 is giving Young Eagle rides, but we don't qualify so after talking to people on the ramp we head home. The airport traffic is even more intense now than at our arrival. Even ground control is busy, and tell us to hurry so they can group us with other planes to cross runways. Finally it is our turn to go, and immediately off the ground tower tells us to turn right. We are very low as we fly over town, and tower gives us two more urgent turns and leaves us headed west. Then they ignore us. Tom calls for permission to turn to our course, but we get no answer. Since we are out of Ogden airspace I give him permission to resume his own navigation. He gives me the controls and I fly direct to Alpine for gas. Approaching Alpine we hear Mike Stevens on the radio. He is doing a test flight with his RV-7. We land and I overfill the gas tanks, then Mike lands and we chat with him while we watch a bald eagle being harassed by a crow. We talk about rolls and loops, with Mike giving verbal descriptions and hand motions. Tom has never been through a roll, so I suggest that instead of talking about it they do it, so Mike says hop in, and off they go. Mike's plane has a 200 hp Subaru engine, very quiet. He flies with the throttle wide open, and controls power with rpm. Tom is still smiling when they come back and I have never looped, so now it is my turn. Mike climbs to 9000, then we practice inverted unusual attitude recovery. This begins like a loop, but involves an accelerated stall over the top, resulting in falling inverted into a half turn spin. Mike recovers, and only he and I

know whether this was deliberate and intentional or inadvertent, and we aren't saying. We proceed to do 2 conventional loops, starting at 150 knots. The horizon disappears as the G-forces load up. Mike pulls over the top as the horizon reappears upside down, and pulls straight down through a vertical dive to pull out level. This is an 'over the top' experience in both a literal and figurative sense. The feeling is a rush of total exhilaration, and I howl in manly tribute. All this pulling is more than just a figure of speech. The G-meter reads 4.3 G. Mike finishes with 2 rolls, one each way, and suggests we head back. I've had enough and this seems like a good idea. I'm a little woozy and disoriented the rest of the day. Time to go. Tom has me take off in spite of the sloppy takeoff I did at Rigby, and I make another one. I'm not sure what I'm doing wrong, but Tom lets me proceed to Rigby. I'm amazed at his new XM capable GPS. It shows us touching the edge of a tiny rain cloud just as drops appear on the canopy. Tom takes over for the approach into Rigby, where we find Larry Boam on a 4 wheeler spraying weeds right on the edge of the runway. Tom isn't comfortable landing this close to someone, so he makes a low pass to get Larry's attention. This does not appear to be successful, but by the time we go around the pattern and make a 360, the runway is clear. Tom lands and our great adventure is over. We burned about 7 gph at 128 knots on this trip. -Dale Cresap

The Sport Light LOCAL LSA UPDATE



Stan Bearup of "Just Kitplanes" at the American Falls airport currently has two 415-C Ercoupes (one WITH the rudder pedal conversion) and is getting a third in the very near future. His current plans, if he can get the insurance coverage, is to keep the Ercoupe with the rudder pedal conversion and metalized wings in American Falls as a rental and a trainer. His partner, Brian Haynes, is obtaining his CFI and desires to train both Private and Sport Pilots.


They are anticipating a \$60/hr rental fee (wet) for the Ercoupe. One requirement for rental, whether it be for training or not, is that the renter have Non-owner Rental Insurance. The insurance coverage would have to be for a minimum of \$30,000 Liability Limit for Damage to Non-owned Aircraft to cover the cost of replacing the Ercoupe in the event of an accident that results in a total loss of the aircraft. He will not require a minimum Bodily Injury and Property Damage Liability amount. This insurance can be obtained for a Sport Pilot from AOPA, EAA, and Avemco. I have mine through AOPA. Stan is projecting an availability date for rental of the Ercoupe sometime in the middle of July. He has just completed

re-doing the interior and will be installing radios, transponder and an ELT. I will keep you posted as to any other items of interest concerning the Ercoupe and it's availability to us.

In a bit of "darker" news, the Tecnam Sierra LSA that has been available for rent in Ogden through Cornerstone Aviation is being moved to the Salt Lake City International Airport per the request of the owner. Cornerstone Aviation is currently looking for someone with an LSA that is interested in a lease-back arrangement so they can have an LSA in their training fleet for training Sport Pilots. They are also looking for buyers for new Tecnam Sierra (low-wing) and Tecnam Bravo (high-wing) planes to lease back to Cornerstone Aviation for their training fleet. If anyone is interested in either of these options, I can give you additional information on Cornerstone Aviation and the aircraft in question.

Well, that's it for this month. Have fun and keep flying!

-Jim Baker



DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER
SUBMITTALS FOR JULY PUBLICA-
TION IS JULY 6TH.
PLEASE SUBMIT
ALL ARTICLES AND
PICTURES NO LATER
THAN JULY 6TH.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

"A SUBSTITUTE FOR AV GAS" ??

This is an interesting item, worth watching! ".....This may solve our ethanol problem. Cleaning Up Avgas: Company Designs Less-Expensive Alternative Product Conceived As Renewable Replacement for 100LL. A new general aviation fuel claiming to be less expensive, fuel-efficient and environmentally friendlier than any on the market was unveiled this week by Swift Enterprises of West Lafayette, IN.

Data on Swift Enterprises' 100 percent renewable general aviation fuel was presented April 28 at an annual meeting of an international committee that oversees aviation fuel standards. Unlike current biomass fuels, the product named SwiftFuel, is comprised of synthetic hydrocarbons derived from biomass. Co-founder John Rusek said it can provide an effective range (distance between refueling) greater than petroleum while its projected cost is half the current petroleum manufacturing cost. The fuel created by Swift Enterprises' propulsion and energy researchers meets or exceeds the standards for aviation fuel as verified by nationally recognized laboratories, said Rusek, a professor in Purdue University's School of Astronautics and Aeronautics Engineering.

Swift Enterprises, founded seven years ago at Purdue Research Park, is led by Rusek and his wife, Mary, who have been involved in the field of energy more than two decades. The meeting was held by the Coordinating Research Council of ASTM International in Alexandria, Va. ASTM International is one of the largest voluntary standards development organizations in the world. "Our fuel should not be confused with first-generation bio-fuels like E-85, which don't compete well right now with petroleum," Rusek said. "For general aviation aircraft, range is paramount. Not only can our fuel seamlessly replace the aviation industry's standard petroleum fuel, it can outperform it." The general aviation industry each year uses nearly 570 million gallons of 100LL aviation fuel, which contains lead, is becoming increasingly expensive and is non-renewable. In contrast, testing has shown SwiftFuel is 15 to 20 percent more fuel efficient, has no sulfur emissions, requires no stabilizers; has a 30-degree lower freezing point, introduces no new carbon emissions, and is lead-free, John Rusek said. In addition, he said, the components of this fuel can be formulated into a replacement for jet/turbine fuels.

The aviation industry has been the only form of transportation to use leaded fuel (tetraethyl lead) since an Environmental

Protection Agency ban went into effect 30 years ago. However, that lead-free exemption will cease in less than two years. "The general aviation industry, both domestic and foreign, is demanding a solution to this dilemma," said Mary Rusek, Swift Enterprises' president. "Our new, patented technology can provide the 1.8 million gallons per day required by the industry in the US by utilizing only 5 percent of this country's existing bio-fuel plant infrastructure."

Swift Enterprises officials are in discussions with the Federal Aviation Administration, which has initiated a cooperative agreement with the company to evaluate the fuel....."
For more information, go to: <http://www.swiftenterprises.com/Swift%20Fuel.html>

The \$50 Hamburger

We're confronted with fuel cost increases so unusually high that AOPA is suggesting that we rename our website the \$200 Hamburger. I couldn't disagree more! General Aviation is the BEST family recreational bargain in the world today. The cost of the \$100 Hamburger has always been greatly overstated.

I am a Chicago Cubs fan. Once a year I find myself in Chicago with wife, Renee, and daughter, Jillian in tow and we head to Wrigley and

buy four tickets. Jillian always brings a friend. Field Box (Outfield) tickets go for \$60.00 this year. These are not the cheapest seats in the house but they are a LONG way from the most expensive. Throw in ten bucks for parking and you'll part with \$250 for you and your crew to see one baseball game.

The National Pastime is clearly no recreational bargain. What about theme parks like Disneyworld? Parking is \$11 and tickets now go for \$71.00 each. Mickey needs to see \$300 to admit a family of four to the Happiest Place on earth.

What does a Burger Run cost these days? Naturally, it depends on what you fly and how you fly it. Let's run two sets of numbers. First let's say you fly an airplane that burns 16 gallons per hour at cruise. That takes in many of the higher performance singles now in the GA fleet. Next let's look at the average Rotax powered LSA which burns 4 gallons per hour or less. The average price for 100LL is currently \$5.30 per gallon. That's \$21.29 an hour to operate that two place LSA and \$84.80 an hour for the four place high performance single. I know that there are costs of owning and operating an airplane other than fuel but it really makes no more sense to include them in the cost of a burger run than it does calculating the total operating and ownership cost of your car into a trip to the grocery store. You have those costs whether you go to the store or not. Let's say a burger run is an hour out and an

hour back. The complex single pilot will have many more options in his hour long journey than will the LSA pilot as the complex single will cover much more ground in one hour. So you fly out an hour and you fly back an hour. We're talking \$42.58 trip cost in the LSA versus \$169.60 for the complex single. Assume that all seats are filled. That makes the cost of a \$100 Hamburger some place between \$21.29 on the low end and \$42.40 on the high side. Throw in 6 bucks a head or so for a burger, fries and a coke and we come to The \$50 Hamburger - on the high end.

The \$100 Hamburger has always been an overstated myth. It never cost that much in the past and certainly doesn't today. I'll take the blame as my books and website are responsible for popularizing the term.

Here's the point, a Burger run in the family Bonanza is a great way to spend a Saturday and it cost half what you'd spend at Wrigley Field or Disney World! Now that's something we need to sell to our non-flying friends. General Aviation is a thrilling bargain.

Allow me to give you one more reason that General Aviation is such a bargain. Let's say that your family of four lives in Atlanta and you plan to spend the weekend in Orlando.

Good plan!

Many airlines fly the route you have chosen and their fares are competitive. I just looked up the cost to make that trip leaving on Sat-

urday morning June 14 and returning Sunday evening June 15. The LOWEST roundtrip fare available is on AirTran and the cost is \$275.00 per person for a total family air travel bill of \$1,100.00. The airlines have been hit very hard by fuel price increases and they're passing it along in spades! The alternative is to fire-up the family Bonanza. The trip is 342 nautical miles. A Bonanza F33a cursing at 165 Knots will need only 2 ¼ hours to make the trip while burning just 36 gallons of AVGAS. You'll leave PDK and arrive at ORL 48 minutes after the jetliner you could have ridden on arrives in Orlando. You will have saved \$909.20! That'll get you into Mickeyland, pay for your hotel, rental car and a meal or two. The flight will be a family adventure that you'll long remember and look forward to repeating. Your schedule is your own and your wife won't be faced with the customary electronic strip search that accompanies commercial air travel these days.

Keep on enjoying those \$50 Hamburgers; they're your best bet for family fun. Thanks to the rapidly rising cost of airline tickets be glad that you already have your pilot's license so you can enjoy not only the convenience of personal air transportation but save a ton of cash in the process.

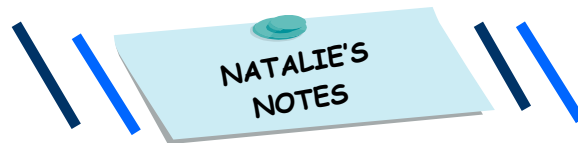
Please don't keep GA a secret any longer, cut your friends and neighbors in on the best travel and recreational bargain in the history of mankind!

As my friend and Cessna 400 pilot John Arie says,

"Life is Good!"

John Purner, Publisher
The \$100 Hamburger
www.100dollarhamburger.com
"The most active group in general aviation"

Phone (407) 965 5557
Fax (801) 684-2069
Email jpurner@100dollarhamburger.com



1. The FAA is updating the application for medical certificates.
2. I have the new Notam for Oshkosh if you want to look at one.
3. Oshkosh is just around the corner. They are still offering discount tickets til June 30th.
4. Thank you to every one who helped at the Rexburg air show. It was a very fun day.
5. Have you seen the pictures of WhiteKnight Two? It is awesome. I can not wait to see it in person. They are going to unveil it to the public in California the week of Oshkosh.
6. THANK YOU to Carol for all the time and hard work so the rest of us can keep up on the latest happenings. Our news letter is the best.
7. There are 40 Hatz airplanes coming to Oshkosh this year.
8. I am working on ideas for emergency packs and will have recipes and some lists in the next news letter.

EAA Chpt. 407 1st Saturday Breakfast Fly-ins



June 28th - SLC Chapter 23 invites us to join them for their breakfast fly-in at Wendover. Meet at the Wendover Airport by 9:00 AM.

July - Family Ice Cream Social. Details to be determined.

August 8th-9th - 2nd Annual West Yellowstone Camping/Breakfast Flyin. Watch for details in future newsletters.

Future Locations

Burley - Nice Mexican Restaurant for lunch within walking distance of 6 blocks.

Alpine - "The Coffee Cabin & Bakery" GREAT Breakfast!! Authentic New York bagels, breads, muffins too. Can walk to the restaurant in <30 minutes through nice subdivision.

**Where do you want to go
for breakfast?**



Sky Fair 2008



Saturday, September 20, 2008
Elko Regional Airport

*****THIS WONDERFUL STORY SUBMITTED BY HAL JOHANSEN.**

Leslie A. Lennox
 Lt./Col. USAF (ret)

Of all the stories that have been written, and movies that have been shown about the 8th Air Force, very little attention has been given to what was involved in assembling 1200 B-17's and B-24's each day, to get them in formation to carry out a strike against Germany. Certainly showing bombers under attack by fighters, or encountering heavy flak, was a reality and interesting to watch. Also, stories about some of the rougher missions make interesting reading. But what was going over England, each morning, could get just as scary to the crews as the time spent over some of the targets. The planning, and coordination, that had to be accomplished during the night, by the operations planners of each Group, so



Sky Fair 2008

Elko Regional Airport • Elko, NV
 September 20, 2008

Held in conjunction with the Ruby Mountain Balloon Festival

- "Fly In" Pancake Breakfast
- Static displays of vintage & warbird* aircraft
- Static displays of aircraft based in or operated locally
- Static Displays of airport firefighting equipment
- Radio controlled model flying demonstrations
- Hot air balloon exhibition • Military displays*
- And much, much more!

* Tentative activities

For more information:
www.elkoflyin.com
www.rubymountainballoonfestival.com



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that the crews could be briefed, was unbelievable. If the planners had failed to do their job properly, there would have been a free for all among Bomb Groups in the skies over England. The rendezvous points, altitude, and times had to be precise and known by all of the crews, before the Eighth Air Force could get in formation.

The success of the planners, in accomplishing their mission, enabled the Eighth Air Force to become the most powerful air armada ever assembled. In my view, how this was accomplished is one of the major untold stories of the war.

I was a pilot in the 95th Bomb Group, in late 1944 and early 1945, and what follows is a typical mission, as I remember it, from a crew member's perspective:

Early in the evening, our Squadron Operations would post the names of the crews that were scheduled to fly the following day. There were two ways we could be notified if the Group had been alerted to fly. One was by means of lights on the front of the orderly room, and the other with raising of colored flags. If a green light was on, the Group was alerted, if a red light was on we would fly, and if a white light was on, the Group would stand down. The light was monitored frequently throughout the evening to learn our status and normally we would know before going to bed if we would be flying the next day.

On the morning of a mission, the CQ (charge of quarters) would awaken the crews about four or five o'clock, depending on take off time. The questions we always asked were, "What is the fuel load?" and "What is the bomb load?" If his answer was, "full Tokyo tanks," we knew we were going deep into Germany. Shortly after being awakened, "6-by" trucks would start shuttling us to the mess hall. We always had all the fresh eggs we could eat, when flying a mission. After

breakfast, the trucks carried us to the briefing room. All of the crew members attended the main briefing, and then the Navigators, Bombardiers and Radio Operators went to a specialized briefing. At the main briefing, in addition to target information—anti aircraft guns, fighter escort and route in - we received a sheet showing our location in the formation, the call signs for the day and all the information we would need to assemble our Group and get into the bomber stream.

After briefing, we got into our flight gear, drew our parachutes and loaded onto the trucks for a ride to our plane. We were now guided by the time on our daily briefing sheet. We started engines at a given time and watched for the airplane we would be flying in formation with to taxi past, then we would taxi behind him. We were following strict radio silence. We were now parked, nose to tail around the perimeter, on both sides of the active runway, and extremely vulnerable to a fighter strafing attack. At the designated takeoff time, a green flare would be fired and takeoff would begin.

Every 30 seconds an airplane started take-off roll. We were lined up on the perimeter so that the 12 airplanes of the high squadron would take off first, followed by the lead and then the low squadron.

Each Group had a pattern to fly during climb to assembly altitude. Some would fly a triangle, some a rectangle and our Group flew a "buncher" (a low frequency radio station] which was located on our station. The pat-

terns for each Group fit together like a jig saw puzzle. Unfortunately, strong winds aloft would destroy the integrity of the patterns, and there would be considerable over running of each other's patterns.

Many of our takeoffs were made before daylight, during the winter of '44 and '45, when I was there, so it was not uncommon to climb through several thousand feet of cloud overcast. Also it was not uncommon to experience one or two near misses while climbing through the clouds, although you would never see the other airplanes. You knew you had just had a near miss, when suddenly the airplane would shake violently as it hit the prop of another airplane. It was a wonderful feeling to break out on top so you could watch out for other planes, to keep from running into each other. To add to the congestion we were creating, the Royal Air Force Lancasters, Halifaxes, and Wimpys would be returning from their night missions, and flying through our formations. Needless to say, pilots had to keep their heads on a swivel and their eyes out of the cockpit.

After takeoff the Squadron lead would fire a flare every 30 seconds so that we could keep him located and enable us to get into formation quicker. The color of our group flare was red-green. The first you would see, when breaking out of the clouds, was a sky filled with pyrotechnics, so you had to search the sky for the Group flare, which would identify the lead airplane of your squadron. Once you had it located you could adjust your pattern to fly more quickly into formation with him.

As each airplane pulled into formation, they would also fire a flare with the lead airplane, making it much easier for the following aircraft to keep him in sight. I think most crew members would probably agree that the pyrotechnic show in the skies over England in the morning when the Eight was assembling was a rare sight to behold.

The order of progression for assembling the Eight Air Force was to first assemble the Flight elements, the Squadrons, the Groups, the Combat Wings, the Divisions and finally the Air Force.

As soon as the four Squadron elements were formed, the high, low and second elements would take up their positions on the lead element, to form a Squadron. When three Squadrons had completed assembly, it was necessary to get into Group formation. This was accomplished by having the three Squadrons arrive over a pre-selected fix at a precise time and heading. The high and low Squadrons were separated from the lead by 1000 feet and, after getting into Group formation, they would maintain their positions by following the lead Squadron. Then it was necessary to get into the Combat Wing formation. We were in the 13th Combat Wing, which consisted of three Bomb Groups: The 95th, the 100th and the 390th. Whichever Group was leading the Wing that day, would arrive over a pre-selected precise time and heading. Thirty seconds later, the second Group would pass that fix, followed by the third Group, thirty seconds later. We were then in Combat Wing formation. The naviga-

tors in the lead airplanes had a tremendous responsibility to ensure that the rendezvous times were strictly adhered to. There were three Divisions in the Eighth, the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. The 1st and 3rd Divisions consisted of B-17s only, and the 2nd was B-24s. The B-24s were faster than the B-17s, but the B-17s could fly higher and up there, the two were not compatible in formation. As a result the 1st and 3rd Divisions would fly together and the 2nd Division would fly separately.

Now that the Groups were flying in Combat Wing formation, it was necessary to assemble the Divisions. This was usually accomplished at the "coast out"-- a city on the coast selected as the departure "fix". The Group leader in each Combat Wing knew his assigned position in the Division, and the precise time that he should arrive at the "coast out" departure point, to assume that position in the Division formation. The lead Group in the Division, which had been selected to lead the Eighth on the mission, would be first over the departure fix. Thirty seconds after the last Group in the first Wing passed that point, the second Wing would fall in trail, and so on, until all Combat Wings were flying in trail and the Division would be formed. One minute later, the lead Group in the other Division would fly over that point, and the Combat Wings in that Division would follow the same procedure to get into formation. When all of its Combat Wings were in trail, the Eighth Air Force B-17 strike force was formed and on its way to the target. At the same time the 2nd Division B-24

were assembling in a similar manner and also departing to their target.

Meanwhile, as the bombers were assembling for their mission, pilots from the Fighter Groups were being briefed on their day's mission. Normally 600 to 800 P-38's, P-47's and P-51's would accompany the bombers to provide protection against enemy fighter attacks. Fighter cover was not needed by the bombers until they were penetrating enemy territory, therefore to help conserve fuel, fighter takeoffs were planned to give them enough time to quickly assemble after takeoff, climb on course up the bomber stream to the groups they would be covering. The combined strength of the fighters and bombers brought the total number of aircraft participating in a mission to approximately two thousand. A major problem that presented itself, on each mission, was that the bomber stream was getting too stretched out. It was not uncommon for the headlines in stateside newspapers- in trying to show the strength of our Air Force - to state that the first Group of bombers was bombing Berlin, while the last Group was still over the English Channel. It made great headlines but was a very undesirable situation. It meant that the Groups were out of position, and not keeping the proper separation. Furthermore, it was almost impossible for them to catch up and get back into the desired formation. This made the entire bomber stream more vulnerable to fighter attacks. Finally, our planners figured out what we were doing

wrong. When the first Group departed the coast out fix, it started its climb to whatever would be the bombing altitude. Then as each succeeding Group departed that fix, it ,too would start climbing. The problem with this procedure was that, as soon as the first Group started its climb its true airspeed would start to increase, and it would encounter different wind velocities. Now it would start to pull away from the group in back of it, and the "stretchout" of the bomber would begin. By the time the last Group had reached the coast out, to start it's climb, the first group be levelled off, with a true airspeed approaching 250 miles per hour, and the bomber stream would be really stretching out.

The solution to this problem that had been frustrating the Bomber crews for so long was pretty simple. We would no longer start climbing at the coast out, but instead, at a designated time, all Groups would start climbing, irrespective of position. This meant that we all would have similar true airspeeds and would be influenced by the same winds aloft. That took care of the problem. I was still possible for a Group to be out of position, because of poor timing, but the entire bomber stream wouldn't get all stretched out. When you consider the way our Air Traffic Control system operates today, and the facilities at their disposal to guide each individual airplane through the sky to ensure its safety, it's almost unbelievable that we were able to do what we did. To think of launching hundreds of airplanes, in a small airspace,

many times in total darkness, loaded with bombs, with complete radio silence and no control from the ground, and do it successfully day after day, with young air crews, with minimum experience is absolutely mind boggling.

The accomplishments of the Eighth Air Force have been and will be reviewed by historians from World War II on. There never will be another air armada to compare to it. I feel confident they will never cease to be amazed by our ability to assemble hundreds of heavy Bombers, under conditions we were confronting, into the devastating strike force we now fondly refer to as, "The Mighty Eighth"



John with his Long Easy



The B-17 down in Ogden



Gooding Pilot's Prejob



Gooding student with Larry



These are Larry Hobb's new tail for his RV7 which he is now building. Go Larry!!!

