
TAILWINDS

October Meeting Recap



Our October chapter gathering was held on October 14. Eric Overton treated the group to a presentation about Corvair engine conversions and his design of custom avionics.

Eric started his presentation with a history of aviation engines. In the early days of aviation, engines were scarce and it was somewhat common to convert automotive engines for use in aviation. After World War II, there were a lot of aviation engines available via military surplus, so converting auto engines was less common. Even today, most experimental aircraft have certified engines from companies such as Lycoming and Continental.

In the 1960s, the Pietenpol Aircamper used an engine from the Chevrolet Corvair and some builders are still using engines from the Corvair today. The Corvair was manufactured from 1960 to 1969. Over the decade, various engines were used. The normally aspirated engine that was included in the cars manufactured from 1965 to 1969 is ideal for conversion for aviation use. The rebuilt engine can have between 100-140 horsepower, depending on the configuration. One thing to keep in mind

is that the engine operates at a higher RPM than typical aircraft engines, so propellers must be pitched accordingly. If you are interested in learning about Corvair conversions, Eric highly recommends attending a Corvair College event.

Eric is building a Nieuport 12 with a Corvair engine. The Nieuport 12 typically has a Rotax 582, Continental A-65, or Lycoming O-170 engine. Eric's aircraft will be the second of the model to use a Corvair engine. During Eric's engine rebuild, he consulted resources such as William Wynne's Corvair Conversion Manual, The Corvair Engine Assembly Manual by Sport Performance Aviation, and www.flycorvair.com. The photos below show, on the left, a Corvair engine "fresh" from the junk yard and on the right is Eric's rebuilt engine.



Eric is also actively developing custom avionics for his aircraft. In his day job, he designs embedded systems at Focus Embedded in Round Rock and has leveraged those skills to compete for the EAA Founder's Innovation Prize in 2016 with his custom sonar system for calculating weight and balance in real-time. Eric is currently developing a microprocessor-based system for reading a variety of engine parameters and outputting the data to conventional "steam" gauges or to a digital display.

December Chapter Meeting

In December, we will enjoy our annual winter Hangar Hop beginning at 10 AM at the Georgetown Municipal Airport, followed by a potluck picnic at 11:30 AM featuring Rob's pulled pork. More details to come on the Chapter Website: <http://www.eaa187.org>.

Upcoming Events

Rockdale Tiger Flight: Help us Build an RV-6!

Rockdale Tiger Flight is a group organized by several EAA 187 members in Rockdale, TX. The group is focused on teaching mid- and high-schoolers airplane building skills. We finished our air conditioned shop in the Hangar and now have a comfortable place to meet and work at the Rockdale airport. We are assembling a Max Air Drifter for rides and youth instruction. We are also

building an engine for the Zenith 601 HDS that we are building. We will also be starting on the RV-6 wing soon. And we are open to all youth and adults. We have kids that travel 1.5 hours to help. We get together **every Saturday at 10 AM**, and focus on building those airplanes. We also offer **weekly Young Eagles rides** to kids, subject to weather and aircraft availability.

This weekly event is free to participants, and we are looking for help! Both kids and adults are welcome! For more information, log on to rockdaletigerflight.org.



GTU Runway Safety Action Team meeting

Thursday, November 30, 2017 - GTU Terminal

Anyone with an interest in GTU are welcome to become a member of the team and attend the meeting at 10 AM.

Future of General Aviation

Courtesy of Pete Christensen, we are featuring an article from ATC controller, Rose Marie Kern. Republished with permission.

One of the biggest concerns across the country right now is the slow decline of General Aviation. The average age of pilots across the nation is now about 49 years old. Has the magic gone out of flying? Anyone who has experienced the exhilaration of Oshkosh Air Venture would not think so, but the numbers nationwide paint a sad future.

So why is this happening? A lot of reasons come to mind – the biggest one of which is simply that there are so many different ways that people can spend their money for personal thrills now. People feel they need expensive computers, TV's, cars, iPhones – and the associated costs to use them. Communities offer their kids Little League, soccer, and many other activities which keep them busy.

Unless a person has enough disposable income to buy and maintain an aircraft, they have limited access to the sport. Most young adults are investing in college or creating good homes for their own kids, whose needs also cost money. The closest thing to flying that the general public now engages in enthusiastically is drones.

So how can we change the perception that flying is an expensive hobby for wealthy people? How do we bring the kids and their parents to airports?

Aviation is an addiction that grabs best when discovered at a young age. The EAA knows this and uses the Young Eagles program to draw in kids everywhere. This idea needs to be expanded, but how?

Let's tackle the problem from different angles simultaneously. The first challenge is to make people comfortable with airports again. High security will still keep away most people unless they are using air carriers, and smaller community airports have been becoming more and more exclusive to the current pilot population.

Most smaller airports are supported by the communities they serve. That is a LOT of land that is often kept completely isolated from any other activity and in many cases the user fees cause the property to be a financial drag. Why can't they diversify? Yes, any activities must not hinder the safety of aircraft in and around the airport, but communities should be able to use these facilities to the advantage of their citizenry.



Bringing people to the airport for any reason is one way of getting them comfortable with being there. Marrying community events with airport facilities also teaches participants the rules – where they can go or not go. It allows people to get close to aircraft.

Some airports have are already engaged in these activities. There are aviation museums in Santa Theresa and Grants. Belen flies Santa Claus in for a Holiday event on the airfield. But there could be so much more.

What if every small airport had a corner of the area where kids and adults could bring their drones and learn about the rules of flying them? What if a local non-profit could use a hanger for a fundraiser? How about giving a local school or scout troop some meeting space or activity space? Maybe work with the science teachers to bring the kids out and help build airplane parts?

And have information available to people about the real costs of flying – starting with aircraft. Many small aircraft these days cost less than some cars, but the perception of the public is that every aircraft costs more than a house.

Many of you reading this may have other ideas on ways to attract more people to the wonders of aviation...I ask you, no, challenge you, to send me your thoughts. Let's examine how we can keep General Aviation alive and growing.

Rose Marie Kern worked in ATC for over 34 years. Her book, "Air to Ground" is a unique resource offering pilots insights into the world of Air Traffic Control and Aviation Weather. You can get it through Amazon or her website www.rosemariekern.com.

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Chapter Board Members

John Nunn (2015-2016)
Deene Ogden (2016-2017)

Meetings

Georgetown Municipal Airport (KGTU)
Terminal
2nd Saturday each mont at 10 AM

eaa187.org