



The Crosswind

Correction

Official monthly publication of EAA Chapter 1232 *Including GFCNA News*

April 11 GFCNA Meeting: A Fresh Start?

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It's hard to know where to start when describing the April 11 GFCNA breakfast meeting with Eric Steger of the County's Department of Public Works presentation/briefing. It was at once successful yet awkward, friendly yet troublesome, and was informational yet it raised new questions. In all, it's likely that most in attendance left with a better understanding of the County's plans for the next five years and the challenges airport management faces, but it's also likely that they left wanting more information and deeper answers. Hopefully this meeting was the first of several in which common issues can be discussed and acted upon.

You have to give credit right up front to Eric for agreeing to make an appearance in front of a crowd that could have been hostile. The user community felt it had been waiting so long for any information and many were frustrated, but the group maintained its' cool and took advantage of the opportunity to get information directly from the source. There were a few terse interactions, but with the exception of one late exchange at the end of the meeting even those were conducted in a respectful manner.

Among other things, the status of the runway extension was discussed, along with the current RFP for a wildlife hazard assessment (required by the FAA this year),

an RFQ for an aviation consultant to create a new Airport Layout Plan with narrative, GIS survey, assist with the grant application "pipeline", and help develop a Pavement Maintenance Management Plan (PMMP). The PMMP is a big deal for us, as it will cover all payment on the airport, not just the runway, taxiway and ramp.

After Eric's initial briefing and during the Q & A period, GFCNA member Don Herzog asked what happened to the project that surveyors were working on a few years ago regarding the ramp. Dan Jensen, who was also in attendance, responded that this was probably the ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) effort that was not funded (an example of a call for shovel-ready projects that weren't really ready here). Sue Royce remarked that she was glad that it seemed like the AWOS was working better, but wondered what happened to the webcam GFCNA had set up? Dan indicated that there were several problems with that particular setup; when he reviewed the recorded video he could see reflection of people in his office and the camera had a microphone, and it used lots of bandwidth which seriously affected his ability to do work online. It turns out that bandwidth is the real culprit (GFCNA members have decided to pursue connections through another ISP. See note in GFCNA news section).

In response to a question about prospects for the ramp area by Steve Knecht, Eric indicated that they were learning more about the FAA process for pavement management, and noted that capital projects are funded by FAA according to a priority list, so matching our request to that list is better and having a pavement assessment number helps. Eric expects the RFQ aviation consultant to help with this, and Dan added that they are planning on crack sealing and slurry job soon, having already placed an order for the materials to do this work.

Probably the biggest news to come out of this meeting was that the County is jealously guarding all reserves from airport operations in order to have the matching funds necessary for the FAA funding for the runway extension in the future. There was quite a bit of back and forth about the merits of/ need for releasing some of these funds for regular and deferred maintenance vs. the need to have the matching funds on hand, but when asked how GFCNA might get the Board of Supervisors to release some of the property tax dollars the airport contributes to the County's general fund (approximately \$300,000/year), Eric noted that there are lots of programs and special interests competing for those same dollars.

There was some discussion of the financial

A Briefing From the County

statements for airport operations, with Eric stating that the information is all there in one form or another. Several members have found it difficult to locate the various pieces of this particular puzzle and put them together to make sense of things, however. For instance, the reserve balance had been about \$600,000 up until recently but as a result of the ALP and Wildlife Hazard work the balance is now down to about \$350,000. It's likely that some of that reduction will be offset by grants that were awarded to the County last November for this purpose, but nowhere is that evident in the financials. Sue Royce suggested a 'thermometer poster, much like the type schools use to show their fundraising status for the year', which could give us

a better idea of the various sources of funding.

Steve Knecht asked if we could see a log of noise complaints from our neighbors, to see how we're doing in our efforts to better inform transients of the noise-sensitive neighborhoods south and southwest of the airport. Dan explained how much better things are now with LiveATC providing him with recorded radio transmissions so he has a better chance to identify the aircraft, and further stated we had about 25-30 complaints last year, most coming from 2 people in Rush Creek; he stated that Bahia residents have been quiet.

Finally, Dave McConnell mentioned that

since the Aviation Commissioners indicated at their last meeting that they wanted to view rents at surrounding airports, do they understand we are not all necessarily comparable? Eric responded that the Aviation Commission wanted to look at leases as one of their goals.

In the end it was Ted Newman who made some comments which were raw and unfiltered, but which pretty succinctly expressed some of the frustrations held by many GFCFA members. And, while it didn't resolve all of these frustrations, this meeting met our goal of establishing some level of trust and dialog between the County and GFCFA that will allow us to make progress going forward.

A Safety "Two-Fer" for May Meeting

Be sure to join us for this Saturday (May 9), when two of our esteemed GFCFA members, Rick Beach and Tim Walter, will make separate presentations after breakfast.

Rick will reprise his recent FAA Wings seminar presentation highlighting a few Bay Area G.A. accidents. As you may already know, Rick became an expert in presenting aviation accident summaries through his work as the Aviation Safety Chair for the Cirrus Owners and Pilots' Association.

Tim will be demonstrating ForeFlight's electronic flight bag, which he has been using extensively since its' release. This is an amazing tool for pre-flight and in the cockpit, and you'll definitely want to see how Tim uses it in real life.

Two great safety presentations PLUS breakfast (still only \$8)? Where else but at a GFCFA meeting. Breakfast starts at 9:00 a.m., but we can always use help getting set up (starting at 8:15) and especially putting everything away when we finish.

See you all there!

Are These the Good Ole' Days?

You know, if you read many of the aviation trade papers and newsletters like I do you begin to wonder if general aviation and personal aircraft will be a thing of the past in the next five years. If it's not unleaded fuel being banned, it's how ADS-B out will price us all out of the aviation market. Or, we just aren't attracting enough new pilots to replace all of us who are 'aging out', so there won't even BE an aviation market. Throw in the constant threat of privatization or European-levels of over-regulation and taxation and we'll all be reduced to drone drivers soon.

But is that really the case? Are we really headed over the abyss?

Recently I began to wonder if all these predictions of doom were unique to our time, or if they're just a pessimistic by-product of the combination of our natural instincts and an industry where the "quickest way to make a small fortune is to invest a large fortune". After a little bit of investigation and re-assessment, I'm actually going to go way out on a limb here and propose that these are the Good Ole' Times in General Aviation, a whole new Golden Age. How crazy is that?

Let's look at some of the challenges and see if they're real, or perceived.

ADS-B: The 800-lb. Gorilla?



First, what about ADS-B out? We've know

that we'll need to have this capability by 2020 if we want to continue to have access to the same airspace we now have, and we've been told that the minimum cost for this equipment (and associated installation) is way over \$5,000. But did you see the news a couple of weeks ago that GOOGLE is going to enter the market to provide ADS-B, subsidizing the cost of portable units so that EVERYONE could afford one? They're predicting \$500 per portable unit (no installation). Sure, the cynic in us sees that they only want to do

... (Google) is predicting \$500 per portable ADS-B out unit, with no installation required...

this because it will make it more likely that they can then flood the airspace with drones, since everyone (including their drones) will have see-and-avoid capability, but does anyone doubt they have the drive, capabilities and \$\$ to do what they set their mind to? They just bought Moffett Airfield and have agreed to restore the historic blimp hangars there, for goodness' sake!

There aren't any new planes?

"There really haven't been any new light-planes built since the mid-80s". Seriously?! Cirrus Aircraft, admittedly at the higher end of the affordability spectrum, has sold over 6,000 state-of-the-art lightplanes in the 14 years it's been in business. And that's with the horrible economy of 2008-2012 thrown in the middle.

On the homebuilt side, Van's Aircraft has

over 9,000 kits flying NOW, with over 20,000 kits still under construction in garages, hangars and basements all over the world. They've already sold over 50 of their factory-built RV-12 S-LSA, and are gearing up to produce higher quantities of this all-metal, American-built two-seater each quarter to fill a gaping hole in flight school and rental inventories.



Speaking of light sport and harkening to the Golden Age of Aviation, CarbonCrafters of Yakima, WA is building a Cub replica with modern materials. They've delivered over 350 kits so far.

In addition the new RV-12 mentioned above, there's even more hope for flight schools and FBOs in the form of completely rebuilt and refurbished training and basic aircraft. AOPA has embarked on a project in which they will have a dozen Cessna 152 completely refurbished, rebuilt to completely new specs, and both Redbird (the simulator guys) and Sporty's (the Sporty's guys) are doing the same with 172s. The prices on these refurbished units indicate they can be a very cost-effective way to upgrade a flight school's line, and if these



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Good Ole' Days (continued)

groups are successful look for others to join in.

If all these are still too rich for your pocket-book you can still build and fly a Sonex for less than \$30,000, all up, and for you hard-core homebuilders/scroungers out there hundreds of folks are still piecing together Pietenpol Aircampers from a stack of wood and perhaps a converted Corvair engine for less than \$8,000. flying.



Oh, but what about those declining student starts?

G.A. pilots volunteering with the EAA's Young Eagles program have introduced almost 2 million kids to general aviation, a truly herculean and worthwhile effort. But has this program actually resulted in any increase in flight student starts since its' inception in 1992? If you're talking about 17 year olds running out to get their Private, no, not too many. However, a 2013 joint FAA/EAA study indicated a bubble of new starts beginning at an average age of about 32, which is when most folks reach a point in their career and family lives they have that kind of disposable income and the time to enjoy it. Think of it; those first groups of kids from the 90's are just now reaching that prime age, with 20 years of Young Eagles to follow. Watch that flight training "bubble" grow!

Flying's just gotten too expensive?

I missed out on those days in the 60's and 70's when you could rent a C-150 for \$7

wet, but a C-152 (with transponder) went for \$24/hr. wet in the Dallas area when I was learning to fly in 1989. Given inflation for that period that \$24 then would be about \$80 which is pretty much right on. Aeroventure at Petaluma rents a C-152 for \$80/hr. wet, club rate. So, it's still not a bargain, never has been. But, relatively-speaking, flying's not a whole lot more expensive now than it was in those good ole days.

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So, here's my takeaway. Unless you're Google or Bill Gates, flying is still likely to take a pretty large chunk of your disposable income. But it's not going away, and in fact there are some really cool things happening in the field that are truly remarkable.

Let the Good Ole Days roll!



Innovation? You want innovation?

The trade newsletters are lousy with news of new flying car designs. Search the Internet for info on the new Switchblade flying car design coming out of Oregon. You want innovation, take a look at the Icon I5 that's being built in Vallejo in a new factory at the Nut Tree airport; they have over 1000 deposits on this beautiful, fun S-LSA amphib. Look at the new Garmin 3X Touch avionics installation in the RV-12, and tell me that's not innovative.

For EAA's May 12 Meeting: Mai Meheigan, N.O.A.A.

Join us Tuesday evening, May 9, when Mai Meheigan of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will be on hand to tell us about the newly-expanded wildlife protection areas off the coast of northern California, why it's important, and how it affects your flying habits. Mai made a similar presentation several years ago to both EAA and GFCA and you won't want to miss her this time around. As usual, the meeting will be held in the C.A.P. trailer in the south parking lot at Gnosson field, and there will be pizza/salad/soft drinks for a nominal fee at 6:30, with Mai's presentation starting at 7:00. See you there!

CALENDAR

- May 9 GFCFA Breakfast Meeting, Scanlon Hangar Gness Field 9 a.m. Rick Beach, *A Closer Look at Several Bay Area G.A. Accidents* and Tim Walter, *Using ForeFlight*
- May 12 EAA Chapter 1232 Monthly meeting, CAP Trailer Gness Field, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:00 Mtg. speaker Mai Meheigan, NOAA
- May 16 AOPA Regional Fly-In, Salinas Airport (SNS), 99.7 nm SSE Contact Ken Mercer mercerv.k@comcast.net for fly-out roster, or if need a ride.
- May 20 GFCFA Board Meeting, Airport Lounge, Gness Field 7 p.m. members welcome!
- May 21-25 EAA's Ford Trimotor tour, Napa Airport (KAPC), [Book your flight here](#)
- May 23/24 Display Days, Petaluma Airport (o69), 10 a.m. -3 p.m.
- May 27-29 Collings Foundation Wings of Freedom Tour, Sonoma Jet Center (KSTS) www.collingsfoundation.org for details, B-17, B-24, B-25, P-51
- May 30 Wings of History Air Museum Open House/Fly-In, South County Airport (E16) 78 nm SE
- June 4 Marin County Airport Commission meeting, Room 329 Civic Center (Board Chambers), 7 p.m.
- June 6-7 West Coast Pietenpol Fly-in, Frazier Lake Airport 1C9 (88 nm 144 true)
- June 9 EAA Chapter 1232 Monthly meeting, CAP Trailer Gness Field, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:00 Mtg. speaker Morey Nelson, *Flying Around Northern California in a J-3 Cub*
- June 13 GFCFA Breakfast Meeting, Scanlon Hangar Gness Field 9 a.m. Speaker Mai Meheigan, NOAA
- June 13 Scanlon Aviation Open House, Scanlon Hangar, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
- June 16/17 Father's Day Fly-in, Columbia, CA (o22) 101 nm E www.fathersdayflyin.org
- June 17 GFCFA Board Meeting, Airport Lounge, Gness Field 7 p.m. members welcome!



Web Gems-This Month's Best

(if clicking these links doesn't work copy/paste them into your browser's address window)

Beautiful photoset of British vintage fly-in. Nice photography:

<http://www.globalaviationresource.com/v2/2015/03/26/aviation-event-review-vintage-aircraft-club-spring-gathering-2015-turweston/>

From our local Bulldog aerobatics specialist, Tim Blofeld: <https://youtu.be/7Ht9EMnnQQE>

Spitfire at Duxford-Merlin sounds: <https://youtu.be/xSU7rSPu8FQ>

Red Flag exercise, Nellis AFB-fantastic photoset: <http://www.globalaviationresource.com/v2/2015/04/08/military-exercise-red-flag-15-2/>

Interesting look at a B-26(Martin A-26 conversion) under restoration: <https://youtu.be/VjaZ0XSEFWc>

Inflight refueling over Afghanistan; KC-10, F-16, Warthog. Are these guys out of high school yet? http://www.liveleak.com/II_embed?f=61e402f990ac

Cross Country: Jerusalem, Israel to Amman, Jordan: https://youtu.be/3THMy7Ad_ck

Much more than the usual \$100 hamburger: <https://vimeo.com/88188990>

Gear Up Touch and Go! <https://youtu.be/LWXndyhO3YM>

Interactive map of The Blitz (warning-you might get lost on this one): <http://www.bombsight.org/>

Paintless graphics for airplanes: <https://youtu.be/8cqDO5baF5w>

From Enrie Ganas: "This video really took me back to my first years with TWA. Transitioning from light planes to the Constellation didn't involve many 'totally new concepts'; it was mostly getting used to bigger, faster and a three man crew. Transitioning to jets was a different matter. I side stepped the Connie and went straight into the jets. Now, there were all sorts of new concepts - radically different from what we were used to. Things like EPR instead of RPM - MP - and BMEP; thousands of pounds of fuel vs. hundreds of gallons; slow engine acceleration; coffin corner (where stall buffet and mach buffet come close together) swept wing 'Dutch roll' and many others. This film features an 'old timer' jet jockey lecturing a bunch of 'new guys' who are transitioning to the B-47 and had been flying B-17s, B-24s, etc. The B-47 and the B-52 were Boeing's 'learning projects' in preparation for the B-707 and its descendents. See how many old memories this evokes": <https://youtu.be/qSE6TbjSMOY?list=PLA8EauFaBPYJ5uyukrBYAOHHUZSkJwljh>



Gross Field Community Association News



Hangar Crawl May 9...

...Is cancelled due to lack of interest. There are probably lots of reasons for the lack of expressed interest, not the least of which people are concerned about revealing anything about their "hangar life" until the FAA clears up the confusion about what can and cannot go in a hangar. That makes sense. We'll find some other social outlet, maybe a BBQ in conjunction with the next Scanlon Aviation open house in June (after the breakfast meeting). Stay tuned.

May 16 AOPA Regional Fly-in

There's also been no interest in organizing a group flyout to this event, but we're still looking to pair up anyone looking for a ride with anyone with a seat to offer. If you're in either of these groups email us at gnoSSFieLdCommunityAssociation@gmail.com. If you're flying yourself be sure to check out the arrival procedures video at <http://www.aopa.org/Community-and-Events/AOPA-Fly-In/2015/About/Salinas-Fly-In>, and download the NOTAM packet via the link at the end of the video.

Webcam

Our original installation was rejected by the County because of bandwidth concerns (we were piggybacking off their ISP), but Sven Pole, Rick Beach and Pat Scanlon are still working to get this valuable resource online. Pat has agreed to let us use his ISP, and he's in the middle of upgrading his service as we speak. With any luck we'll soon have the new webcam online at our website (www.marincountyairport.org) in a couple of weeks-watch for an email to let you know it's "live". Big thanks to Sven, Rick for their perseverance and to Pat for his generosity.

Airport Signage

As noted last month, GFCA submitted a mocked up sign for the airport administration building showing itinerant pilots where the lounge and facilities were. Dan Jenson got the expense approved, and the contractor was selected May 4. The sign is under construction at his shop now, and should be installed in a couple of weeks. This may seem like a little thing, but having a sign like this makes the airport much more

welcoming. First in a long list of things we can work with the County on.

Meeting with Supervisors

GFCA Board members are fanning out this month to talk to each of the Marin County supervisors in an effort to educate them on the issues facing users and tenants at Gness Field. This would normally be done by the individual members of the aviation commission, but we've learned that this hasn't happened for many years and is not likely to happen with the current commissioners, who have specifically stated that it's not their job to pro-actively bring information to their supervisors.

State Division of Aeronautics visit

No word yet as to whether or not representatives from the state Division of Aeronautics actually made their planned April visit to Gness. Part of their visit was to review the new noise abatement signage GFCA proposed last Fall, which included greatly-simplified language that a pilot in the runup areas would actually read. It seems like another simple thing, but how many of you remembered that there are already noise abatement procedure signs in place at both runup areas. They're there, but they tend to blend into to background because they're a little too 'dense' to take the time to read.

Aviation Commission

Frustrated by the Commission's unresponsiveness to input from Marin citizens, several GFCA members applied for the representative position for district 3 (southern Marin, Kate Sears), which was up for renewal May 1. No word as yet as to the status of their applications. Stay tuned to the website for details.

Update from DPW

Speaking of the Aviation Commission, we just received this update from Eric Steger at DPW:

Here's some news for the GFCA membership. The County has updated the Airport and Aviation Commission webpages so that a user can subscribe and receive automatic notifications when there are updates.

That page can be found at <http://www.marincounty.org/depts/pw/divisions/airport/aviation-committee-meetings>

County RFQ for 'professional help'

This is a suggestion GFCA made to the Board back in November after talking with the FAA, and it turns out that having such an expert on retainer (in effect) to help apply for and secure grants is how they (the FAA) require things to be done. There's a nameless airport to the north which has had expert help for some time now. As a result, they've been able to build more hangars, repave the apron, add a new AWOS, new fencing, resurface the runway. During the same period Marin County, working without any such help, has secured no grants outside of the annual "entitlement" grants that every non-primary public airport in America gets. The RFQ was closed April 15, and we're eagerly awaiting the results.

Annual Meeting

Our annual membership meeting will be held during the first part of the June 9 breakfast meeting. In addition to an annual report from our board president, Ken Mercer, we will be electing board members. If you'd like to be a part of determining this organization's direction here's your chance. Just email board member Ken Mercer at mercerc.k@comcast.net or let any board member know, and we'll get you on the ballot. You can even express your interest at the meeting, BEFORE the vote!

Summer Intern

Last month we announced our agreement with Seaplane Adventures of Sausalito to create a summer internship that would provide a summer job for a local high school or community college student along with 15 hours of flight instruction. This month we're pleased to announce that we've selected Will Torous, a Mill Valley 16 year old, as our intern for the summer. Will wrote an amazing application essay and had very strong letter of recommendation from his science teacher, and we're excited to get him started right after the school year ends. Expect monthly updates on his progress throughout the summer. We hope to introduce Will to the group at an upcoming breakfast meeting.

