



The Leader In Recreational Aviation

Chapter 736 Newsletter for April 2008

Gathering of Eagles

The resurrection of the annual Gathering of Eagles event at the Owl's Head Museum held on March 15th was quite successful. Most aviation associated groups managed to attend. The weather (surprise, surprise - more snow) was cause for a few no-shows but, all in all, the event was well attended and informative.



Challenger Progress

Bruce Patten, an A&P and an EAA Tech Rep, came out to Warren Saturday March 29th to inspect the progress Scott Settlemire and Jayne & Wilkes Harper have made on their Challenger projects - tail panel and wing assemblies. Scott and the Harpers, fellow Chapter members, close friends, and also neighbors, are simultaneously building Challenger II aircraft. Bruce was satisfied with their efforts and endorsed their

respective construction logs. Both of these Challengers should be finished and flying by the Fall of 2009.

This August Scott and Wilkes will travel out to Moline, IL to pick up two fuselages. No doubt there will be some good stories to share after that.



Progress on Another Challenger

Mike Watson and friends moved his Challenger fuselage from his workshop to his hanger during the last week of March. He hopes to be starting painting some time in May.



EAA Highlights 51% Rule Issue at Sun 'n Fun

The FAA says some modern-day kitbuilding practices (prefabrication and commercial builder assistance) leave too few construction tasks for the amateur builder, so it is considering more strictly enforcing the 51 percent rule. At EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2006, FAA officials announced its intentions to reexamine its interpretation and enforcement of the 51 percent rule, and have since acknowledged that the agency's own certification practices over time have contributed to these concerns.

On Wednesday, the leaders of three popular kitbuilding companies that may be affected by FAA's new policy ... to be announced in the near future ... gathered at the EAA Member Village at Sun 'n Fun for a mini-forum on the 51 percent rule. Talking to a group of members were Dick Van Grunsven of Van's Aircraft; Mikael Via of Glasair Aviation, and Joe Bartels of Lancair International. And tomorrow (Thursday), EAA will conduct a forum at noon in Tent 2, "The 51 Percent Rule – Keeping it Healthy for the Amateur Builder."

With an entire industry of suppliers, designers, manufacturers, and service providers having built up around the FAA's precedents — and a groundswell of enthusiasts rushing in to support this industry — EAA'ers are urging the FAA not to unduly restrict amateur builders. Accordingly, we believe:

- The FAA should not change the rules that allow amateur builders to design, build, and fly aircraft of any specifications.
- The FAA should protect the spirit and intent of the amateur-building rules and preserve the educational and recreational benefits that so many enthusiasts are realizing in today's environment.
- The amateur-building rules do not and should not prohibit the assistance of paid professionals ... so long as the amateur performs the majority of the construction tasks.

To qualify for amateur-built aircraft certification, the rules require that an amateur builder or group of amateurs personally carry out a majority (51 percent or greater) of the aircraft construction tasks. As the FAA's revised interpretation and enforcement policy looms, EAA and its members are rallying to protect an activity that provides enormous recreational and educational benefits to participants, and advances the development of all of aviation

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held at the Waterville Airport on Tuesday, April 15 at 7:30 p.m.