North East Pilots Association
June 2009 Newsletter

Published by the North East Pilots Association, a Chapter of the Illinois Pilots Association.
Pres: Jim Wertz Vice Pres: Ken Keifer Sec: John McConnochie Treas: Ruth Frantz

General Membership meetings are held at the Schaumburg Airport (06C), in the lower-level conference room, on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM. Visitors are always welcome!

For information about NEPA membership, meetings, activities, etc. call Jim at: (630) 306-3219
Newsletter Editor: Steve Hill Direct email or newsletter submissions to: nepanews@yahoo.com

In This Issue:

NEPA General Membership Meeting

The next NEPA General Membership meeting will be held on Thursday, June 4, 2009. It will be at 7:30 PM in the lower-level meeting/conference room at Schaumburg Airport (06C). This month's program will be a presentation by John McConnochie of the 'OnTop IFR Simulator Program'.

As usual, several of the members will be getting together for dinner at Pilot Pete's (upstairs) around 6:30 before the meeting. Please feel free to join them and participate in the conversation(s) and hangar flying. Hope to see you there!

The following Updates were provided by Bob Frantz:

Company brings Wi-Fi to light aircraft

Virginia's International Communications Group says it has developed a combination satellite phone and Wi-Fi system that can allow Internet access in even light single-engine airplanes. "In response to significant customer recommendations, we have developed the CIS-100 as a simple, low-cost device that will give any aircraft the added safety, convenience and connectivity that owners and operators have only recently been able to acquire for their much larger, more sophisticated business and personal aircraft," a company official says. The 3.5-pound unit allows up to three phone connections, plus Wi-Fi and satellite connections. AVweb (5/5)

USPA EMAIL NEWSLETTER USER FEES

AOPA is always working for the benefit of General Aviation. I seem to recall that then-candidate Obama stated in AOPA's magazine prior to the election in November of 2008 that he was against user fees in any form. We are all aware that John McCain was an advocate of user fees. Perhaps many who read the Obama column may have voted for him in the mistaken belief that he really cared about non-airline flying. My conclusion is this. There is no basic difference between one party or the other. They both say one thing and do the other. Remember, "Read My Lips," etc. The only way we will defeat this once and for all is to lobby our elected officials continuously until we get their attention. I for one am tired of being asked to subsidize one group (the airlines) while they get a free ticket to the bankruptcy court.

I say again, this issue is no different than negotiating with Chavez, Assad, and the Taliban. You do not negotiate with bullies. Instead, you make your case in the media and get the public's attention. When the charity flying ceases because of increased costs, and we begin parking our airplanes, then and only then will Congress take notice that the remedy was far worse than the illness. We need to take the gloves off and once and for all defeat this issue. Stop thinking that being nice will work. It will not.

Our current administration in Washington wants to make all of us equal. Never mind that this radical

form of socialism has never worked. If you want to see what the inevitable results of user fees will be, just look at the European Union. A cross country flight of 500 miles could easily cost you over $300.00 in fees alone.

Steve Uslan, President
United States Pilots Association

GPS outages may start in 2010
Budget proposes axing possible backup

By AOPA ePublications Staff

Delays in the development and launch of new satellites could lead to interruptions in GPS service as early as next year, according to a U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report.
The report, released in conjunction with a May 7 House of Representatives subcommittee hearing on the issue, warns that many of the older satellites currently in use could reach the end of their operational life faster than they can be replenished, resulting in a drop below the number of satellites needed to meet some GPS users' needs.

Additionally, users could lose a potential backup for GPS: The Obama Administration's proposed budget for fiscal year 2010 calls for the decommissioning of loran, in spite of a report recommending that the government commit to upgrading loran as a backup for GPS-based navigation.

"Over the years, AOPA has cautioned against decommissioning loran before a backup for GPS is in place," said Craig Spence, AOPA vice president of regulatory affairs. "The news that GPS satellite failures could start as soon as 2010 underscores the need for a land-based navigational system to back up satellite-based systems."

According to the GAO, the Air Force has encountered delays and significant technical problems that still threaten its delivery schedule for new GPS satellites. If the Air Force does not meet its schedule goals, which the GAO analysis found to be optimistic, "there will be an increased likelihood that in 2010, as old satellites begin to fail, the overall GPS constellation will fall below the number of satellites required to provide the level of GPS service that the U.S. government commits to—potentially reducing GPS service.

Gaps in GPS coverage could be especially problematic as the FAA hinges many of its NextGen modernization efforts on satellite-based technology such as automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast (ADS-B). AOPA has played a major role in the transition from ground- to space-based navigation and significantly contributed to the effort that proved ADS-B can be beneficial if implemented in a way that allows general aviation to experience affordable benefits.

The organization has been actively involved in a number of NextGen committees and working groups, including the Joint Planning and Development Office (JPDO) and the RTCA policy board. The JPDO, an interagency organization within the FAA, plans and coordinates research and development for NextGen, and the RTCA policy board sets standards for aircraft and avionics and advises the FAA on communications, navigation, surveillance, and air traffic management system issues.

In a hearing of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform's national security subcommittee, the Department of Transportation submitted testimony that aviation users relying on unaugmented GPS will experience outages on a routine basis when the satellite constellation is at the government's minimum commitment; users equipped with GPS augmented by a Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS) will fare much better.

In the event of GPS outages, an updated version of loran could serve as a backup, according to an Independent Assessment Team (IAT) report released this year from the Institute for Defense Analyses. The report recommends that the U.S. government complete its upgrade of loran, to eLoran, which will allow it to serve as a backup for GPS. "IAT found that eLoran was the only system which could provide position, navigation, time, and frequency backup capability for all current and potential needs," reads the report, which was sponsored by the Department of Transportation and Department of Defense.

The decommissioning of loran called for in the Obama budget is part of a cost-cutting measure, which the government says will save $36 million in 2010 and $190 million over five years. In information released by the White House Office of Management and Budget, the White House claims the nation "no longer needs this system because the federally-supported civilian Global Positioning

System (GPS) has replaced it with superior capabilities," and is not capable of serving as a GPS backup in its current state.

May 20, 2009

GPS

By Randy James

Hikers do it. Ambulance drivers do it. Even fighter pilots do it. Around the world, millions of people use the global positioning system, or GPS, to know where they are and where they're headed. The satellite-based navigation system has become an indispensable tool for everyone from cell-phone manufacturers to oil drillers, which explains why a government report on GPS released this month prompted a tide of concern. The Government Accountability Office warned of "significant challenges" to maintaining the system at full strength beginning as soon as next year, due to technical problems and delays in a $5.8 billion plan to upgrade the system with next-generation satellites. (Watch the video of the new DASH Express in-car GPS.)

Satellite navigation owes a debt to *Sputnik*, the pioneering Soviet satellite launched in 1957. U.S. scientists learned they could track the satellite's orbit by listening to changes in its radio frequency, relying on the same principle that explains why the pitch of a car's horn seem to change as the car speeds by. The Navy's TRANSIT navigation system was developed in the 1960s, relying on six satellites and designed originally for use by submarines. More than 10 satellites were eventually launched, though ground units had to wait up to several hours to pick up a signal. Meanwhile, engineers Ivan Getting and Bradford Parkinson began leading a Defense Department project to provide continuous navigation information, leading to the development of GPS (formally known as NAVSTAR GPS) in 1973. The military launched the first GPS satellite in 1978 and completed the system in 1995. GPS uses a "constellation" of 24 satellites orbiting 12,000 miles high, each circling the globe every 12 hours. The 2,000-lb satellites broadcast radio signals to Earth with information about their location and the exact time the signal was transmitted (each satellite carries an atomic clock). By calculating the difference between radio signals received from four or more satellites, GPS receivers on the ground can determine their own location, speed and elevation with great accuracy — usually within a few meters or even less. Satellites are regularly replaced as they age and fail; there are currently more than 30 in space, with the extras used as spares and backups. (See "25 Gotta Have Travel Gadgets.")

GPS plays a major role in American military combat, guiding missiles and bombs to their destinations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. President Reagan opened the fledgling navigational system to nonmilitary uses in 1983 after Soviet fighter jets shot down Korean Air flight 007, a passenger jet that had accidentally strayed into Soviet airspace, killing all 269 on board.

Civilian demand for GPS products surged in 2000, when the military ended its practice of intentionally fuzzing the satellite's signals for security purposes. Overnight, navigation devices became 10 times more accurate and swiftly became standard equipment in a slew of industries, from commercial fishing to freight-hauling. Consumers have also rushed in as the size and price of GPS receivers have dropped; they're growing increasingly common in phones, wristwatches and even dog collars. Adventure seekers use GPS for a game called geocaching, a kind of satellite-based treasure hunt that currently boasts more than 800,000 active "caches" waiting to be found around the world. One market-research firm estimates the worldwide GPS market will total $75 billion by 2013. Scientists are continually finding new uses for GPS, as well. Meteorologists gauge wind speed and other variables by measuring satellite signals as they pass through the atmosphere; geologists study earthquakes using GPS receivers placed along fault lines; and technicians synchronize computer networks for everything from power grids to financial networks using the satellite signals' precise timing.

The GAO's report does not predict that the GPS system will fail outright; it offers a more mild (and vague) warning, suggesting only that a delay in replacing satellites may impede "the level of GPS service that the U.S. government commits to." But given the world's growing dependence on the space-age compasses, the military scrambled to quell any concerns. "The issue is under control. We are working hard to get out the word," Air Force Col.

Dave Buckman wrote to worried questioners on a military Twitter account May 20. "GPS isn't falling out of the sky."

TSA lessens security restrictions on transient pilots

By AOPA ePublishing Staff

The Transportation Security Administration confirmed that is has a new security directive signed by TSA Acting Administrator Gale Rossides that tones down proposed security restrictions for transient pilots flying into commercial-service airports.

The new directive, called SD-8G, clarifies and corrects some of the issues that AOPA and the GA community objected to in SD-8F. The new directive will go into effect June 1. As AOPA has previously reported, SD-8F would have required pilots based at or flying into commercial-service airports to undergo a background check and receive a security badge in order to continue to have unescorted access to their airports.

According to the new directive, transient pilots who fly into commercial-service airports no longer need to get an airport badge or background check. However, they must remain close to their aircraft, leaving it only to walk to and from the fixed-base operator, service provider, or airport exit. The TSA also has said that it will make provisions for self-fueling operations and grant allowances for emergency situations.

“We’ve worked with the TSA to have transient and after-hours pilots’ concerns addressed,” said Andy Cebula, AOPA executive vice president of government affairs. “With the release of this clarifying document it is critical that this guidance gets distributed and implemented at the local level. We are encouraging the TSA to have the federal security directors at all airports affected by the SD reach out to the airport community to ensure its implementation is as transparent as possible.”

Pilots who are based at commercial-service airports will have to comply with some new rules. If you lease space, like a hangar or tiedown, or are part of a tenant program, you will still need to get a badge in order to have unescorted access to the airport.

But, the good news is that the TSA did leave some wiggle room. The requirement can be waived if the airport operator approves an alternative, such as an escort program.

How do you know if the airports you frequent are considered “commercial service” and need to comply with the new directive? That term refers to more than airports like Chicago’s O’Hare International or New York’s John F. Kennedy International. It also includes certain smaller airports, like Class C and D airports. About 400 airports are affected, but a list has not been released. AOPA continues to work to obtain a list of those airports.

In the absence of an official list of affected airports, pilots are encouraged to devote some extra time to their preflight planning. Make sure you call ahead to your home and destination airports to get up to speed on the latest security procedures.

AOPA will work with the TSA to address the controversial areas not fixed by the new directive.

May 28, 2009

New FAA chief confirmed

By Chris Dancy

The U.S. Senate on May 21 confirmed Randy Babbitt, former president of the Airline Pilots Association, as the head of the FAA. The position has been filled by acting administrators since the term of the previous administrator, Marion Blakey, expired at the end of fiscal year 2007.

“I look forward to working with Administrator Babbitt,” said AOPA President Craig Fuller. “During his confirmation hearing, and in my conversations with Randy, he demonstrated that he clearly understands general aviation pilots and our needs.

“At the same time, AOPA and its members thank Bobby Sturgell and Lynne Osmus for their efforts as acting administrators to keep major initiatives such as the Next Generation Air Traffic Control System moving forward and to keep the National Airspace System functioning smoothly.”

Babbitt enters the office with several challenges facing him. Two that will directly affect GA are the impending debate over how to fund the FAA and

efforts to transition to the satellite-based NextGen ATC system.

“These are challenging times for the aviation industry, but by working together we can emerge stronger,” concluded Fuller. “I pledge on AOPA’s behalf to work with Administrator Babbitt and the FAA to keep those in the air and on the ground safe and to protect the interests of our members.”

May 22, 2009

An uncontrollable urge to fly

By Sarah Brown

At 71, Jim Chapman (left) and George Futas set out on one of their most ambitious flying adventures: a flight to the four corners of the United States. Seen here in Key West, Fla.

After a hiatus of nearly seven decades, Lt. Col. Maury Marler is back at the controls as pilot in command.

Marler, 91, first earned his pilot certificate in 1941 through the Civilian Pilot Training Program and flew for only a year before giving up flying to serve as a navigator in the Army Air Corps. He made a career in the navigator’s seat but didn’t start to yearn for the controls again until he moved to a retirement community in Renton, Wash., and heard the buzzing of small airplanes from the nearby airport.

“I just got an uncontrollable urge to start flying again,” Marler said. After checking one flight school that wanted nothing to do with the then-90-year-old pilot because of his age, he found an instructor who encouraged him to train for a private pilot certificate. Marler’s pilot certificate from the Civil Aeronautics Authority had become invalid because he did not convert it to an FAA certificate.

Marler has been flying for a year now with instructor Len Quiat. His flight training has garnered attention from the local news station and even led to a lively appearance on The Bonnie Hunt Show this spring, just before his ninety-first birthday. According to Quiat, news of a 91-year-old student pilot elicits strong feelings from people—some disapprove of a man that age flying, while others are inspired to try flying themselves.

The keys to Marler’s flight training, Quiat said, are patience and realism. Marler is in good health and has passed his medical but is in no hurry to solo; older student pilots generally take longer with flight training. Not every 91-year-old should take the controls of an airplane, but Quiat said Marler’s good health, mental acuity, and excitement make him seem at least 20 years younger.

So how old is too old to fly? The effects of aging on itself should not discourage someone from flying; genetics, lifestyle, and experience all contribute to one’s “true age.”

The AOPA Air Safety Foundation is currently conducting research on the effects of aging on pilot performance, working with the University of North Dakota. “Age will ultimately affect most of us in some fashion. Individually, we just don’t know when or how,” said Bruce Landsberg, president of the foundation. “This research will give us some objective benchmarks to help pilots determine when it may be time to throttle back a bit or perhaps to start flying with someone else as PIC. “

Thousands of American pilots over the age of 70 know that a few extra candles on your birthday cake don't have to keep you from the cockpit. Pilots can fly well into their golden years, or even take up flying late in life. When it comes to flying it's attitude and aptitude, not age, that matter.

"Both the medical and actual flight instruction are demonstrated-ability situations: If you can pass the tests, you're in. If you can't, you're out, and that applies across the board regardless of age," Budd Davisson writes in a December 2002 *AOPA Flight Training* feature listed in the Pilot Information Center Subject Report: Older Students, Never Too Old.

The challenges each student pilot faces are unique to the person and depend not just on age but on attitude, life experiences, and learning styles; but people learning to fly or brushing up on their skills late in life tend to have many of the same concerns. Will my health disqualify me? Will I be able to adjust to new airspace restrictions? Can you really "teach an old dog new tricks"? For many, flying may be more attainable than they think—and flying later in life can lead to adventures that may not have been feasible for a younger pilot with family responsibilities and a full-time job.

According to the most recent data from the FAA, more than 27,000 active pilot certificates were held by people age 70 and over at the end of 2007, although not all of those pilots still fly. Those pilots have to have a current medical certificate in order to keep flying. (For private pilots, the FAA starts requiring medical certification more often—every two years—once a pilot reaches age 40.) It may take longer for pilots with medical issues to be approved, but that doesn't mean it can't be done.

"As we age, we're just going to have more medical challenges," said Gary Crump, director of medical certification at AOPA's Pilot Information Center. "But having a problem such as heart disease, diabetes, or cancer in your medical history does not have to be a deterrent to getting your pilot certificate. These are all surmountable problems." But there may be some significant cost in jumping through all of the FAA-required hoops.

"There are a lot of people who think they have to meet 'astronaut standards'" to get a medical certificate, he said. "That's just not the case."
He said improvements in medical treatment and the risk assessment processes of the FAA allow pilots to get a certificate with a medical condition that may have been disqualifyingr 15 years ago—as long is the pilot is prepared to work through the bureaucratic paperwork process to prove to the FAA that the condition is not a risk in flight.

Losing a medical is not necessarily final, either. Jim Chapman, 74, took a break from flying at the direction of the FAA a few years ago when he lost sight in one eye. He lost his medical, but with the help of AOPA's Pilot Information Center, he got it back after three years of proving to the FAA that he was capable.

"It took a lot of time and effort, and they gave me a very, very thorough flight test, but it was fair," he said.

Chapman and his friend George Futas, also 74, have taken advantage of their "golden years" to fly on some of their longest trips together: The second of two 5,000-mile trips through Australia was in celebration of their seventieth birthdays. The following year, the two men went on their longest

trip together yet: a 25-day, 10,000-mile trip from coast to coast and back in Chapman's Cessna 177 Cardinal.

"I still get great pleasure out of flying—I like what I see," Futas said. "It's a different view of the world. You see these mountains and deserts from altitude. … The sights still give me a thrill."

The men saw plenty of sights on their trip to the farthest corners of the country, what they call their "Four Corners" trip. They left from Brown Field in San Diego, Calif., on May 1, 2005, with charts and a few points of interest in mind, but no fixed itinerary. The trip took them across the continental United States; up the East Coast from Key West, Fla., to Eastport, Maine; back across through part of Canada to Blaine, Wash.; and down the coast again to San Diego. Along the way, they stopped at small airports, air museums, and other places of interest, including the striking landscape of Monument Valley, immortalized in the Westerns of John Ford, and the Hudson River VFR corridor on the west side of Manhattan. They returned to San Diego May 26.

Futas said he and Chapman would not have had the flexibility to go on a trip like their four corners flight earlier in life, when job demands and family responsibilities meant trips had to be shorter and more structured. He said he now has more free time and a little more money to put toward his passion for flying.

To embark on the adventure, Chapman first had to overcome another of the obstacles many pilots face upon returning to flying: airspace regulations. He said he got his private pilot certificate in about 1970 and later got his instrument rating—in fact, he was Futas's first instrument student—before taking a two-decade break from flying. He said he had been busy running a business and decided to stop when new airspace restrictions made it a hassle. "Things just got too complicated," he said. "It wasn't the flying, it was the rules."

Those rules were Chapman's primary concern when he decided to take up flying again in the mid-1990s. But he said he came up to speed quickly after doing some research and flying with an instructor to brush up on his skills and knowledge. "It's worth it," he said.

Catching up with new regulations can be intimidating, but "AOPA's Pilots' Guide to Getting Back into Flying" can guide you through the changes and help you get back into the air. The AOPA Air Safety Foundation's free seminars and more than 30 online courses and quizzes will be extremely helpful. Mastering the legal aspects of flying may in fact be the hardest part: The fundamentals of flying have not changed. Habit patterns are deeply ingrained by repetition, and much of flying is repetitive or variations on a theme.

Lessons earlier in life may serve you well: The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has noted that pilots who learned to fly when they were young generally do better than those who waited until late in life. However, you don't have to give up the dream of flying if you don't already have training under your belt. Just be prepared for it to take a while.

Futas, who trained Chapman for his instrument rating nearly 40 years ago, has had students of all different ages and is still providing flight instruction. He said younger students tend to pick up new ideas and tasks that require hand-eye coordination quickly, while older students may have trouble with multitasking or the new technology in glass cockpits. He stressed, however, that a person's individual experience can have a significant effect on the student's learning process. Someone used to doing tasks serially at work may take longer to adjust to doing several things at once, for instance. Young or old, students must be willing to put in extra work for those tasks that give them trouble. That may mean practicing a lot more landings—and it will probably mean a healthy dose of humility.

"It starts with attitude, no matter what their age is," Futas said. He said the hardest students to teach are those who think they already know everything. For older students who bristle at the idea of taking direction from some 20-something flight instructor, Futas sometimes steps in. "Sometimes it takes an older guy to talk to an older guy," he said.

Many instructors have found that older students can be their best students. The same principles apply for pilots across the board. Ultimately, much of safe flying comes down to that ancient aphorism: Know thyself.

"Maintain good physical and mental condition. Seek out the best instruction you can afford," said Landsberg. Older pilots should "approach new situations with caution. Confidence tends to decline more slowly than skill," he said.

At his home airport in Washington State, Marler continues his flight training with the same undying enthusiasm. He and Quiat have made some accommodations for Marler's physical limitations—including using a ladder to reach the fuel tanks during preflight and using a Cessna 172 rather than a Diamond DA20, which was less accessible for Marler. They started out with shorter sessions that were easier for Marler to process and are not afraid to cut a flight short if it stops being fun.

Marler said he flies now with a greater appreciation of the experience than when he was young. "Sure, it was a thrill then, it was a lot of fun then," he said. But now every time he experiences the thrill of controlling the airplane and flying above the earth, he thanks his creator for the opportunity, he said. Even if he never qualifies for a pilot certificate, he said, he intends to keep flying with an instructor because he enjoys it so much.

And he has some advice for other pilots and aspiring pilots in their golden years: "If you can afford it, and if you have fun, do it. But if you're not having fun, don't do it. Give it your best shot while you can. Just because you're old doesn't mean you have to be old."

May 28, 2009

NEPA Meeting Minutes
Ma7y, 2009 (Thursday)
Schaumburg Airport (06C)

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm by Vice President Ken Keifer.

Attendance: Steve Hill, Ken Keifer, John McConnochie

Minutes of the Last Meeting, April 2: The minutes were prepared by the secretary and published in the NEPA Newsletter for May, 2009. Hill made a motion (2nd McConnochie) to accept. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: In the absence of the Treasurer, Hill made a motion (2nd McConnochie) to defer the Treasurer's Report to the June meeting. The motion passed.

Newsletter

- Editor Hill repeated his comments made in previous meetings that he would like someone else to edit and publish the Newsletter.
- The contents of the current (May) Newsletter were discussed.

Outings

- The Charlie Wells event was reviewed. The event will be held on June 6 & 7.
- Vice President Keifer initiated a discussion of destinations for future outings. The following suggestions were made:

  Picnic at a deep quarry that someone knows
  Mendota, IL, Corn Fest
  Lockport, IL, Canal Days
  Union, IL, Railroad Museum
  Klein Creek Farm, which is very close
  Trolley Museum, South Elgin, IL
  Glider Airport on Route 20, Marengo, IL
  Mitchell Domes, Milwaukee, WI

Next NEPA General Meeting: June 4, 2009 (Thursday) at Schaumburg Airport (06C)

A motion to adjourn was made by McConnochie (2nd Hill) at 8:07 pm

The program was a video about the Enola Gay and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The video was on a DVD borrowed from the Mount Prospect, IL, Public Library by McConnochie.

Minutes submitted by Secretary McConnochie

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RETURN TO: Ruth Frantz, 40W297 Apache Lane, Huntley, Illinois 60142 (NEPA Treasurer)