

# WINTERMAIL

EAA CHAPTER 25

MINNEAPOLIS / ST PAUL, MN

FEBRUARY 2006

## Member Profile

### Bert Sisler

*You know Bert Sisler as one of our active chapter members. You may not know that Bert was our first chapter president. Jon Cumpton interviewed Bert this month to learn more about his extensive experience in aviation.*

#### How did you first get interested in flying?

That would have been as a kid in the early 1930's in Grand Rapids. They didn't have an airport then, but every year or so these barnstormers would fly in and as they flew over we would run out and catch the advertising bills they dropped. A group of us started building airplane models in grade school. We had no guidance, so they were pretty crude, and we never had much luck flying them – it was more like we would go out and practice breaking them! My dad said I had an obsession with airplanes, and I suppose he was right. But we were pretty much on our own, and there was really no competition and not much to focus our interest on. Later they built an airport (grass field in those days) in Grand Rapids, and that was a great help.

*(Continued on page 4)*



## Catch 22 (FAA Style) by S. Steve Adkins



*Acknowledgement: My thanks to Chris Cooper whose counsel enabled me to receive my Third Class Medical Certificate.*

For a number of years, I had noticed increasing discomfort when breathing cold air. Simply ... my lungs hurt. I bought a couple of devices to warm the air including a simple dust mask. More recently, I experienced symptoms similar to being out of breath when hauling brush up a steep hill. I wrote it off to old age until the symptoms got

*Steve tows gliders once again at Stanton airport after rescuing his 3rd class medical from the FAA*

*(Continued on page 6)*

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# Cleared for Takeoff *by Jon Cumpton*

I remember my mother telling me two things to remember for good health. She told me not to ride motorcycles, and to take good care of my teeth. At our meeting last month, Dr. Phil Sidell told us if you want to be healthy enough to fly, don't smoke and don't get overweight. (He also told me I talked too much).

It's nice to only have to remember two things to be successful. The other day I was flying over to St. Paul Downtown, and I was a little edgy because I hadn't done it in a while and hadn't talked to anyone in a tower for a while. But I just had to remember to report "abeam 3M" and that I was number two for landing. Now the controller assumed I knew where the heck 3M was, but I'm sure they are willing to tell tourists who don't know to "report three miles". As in, "Excuse me sir, but what does 3M look like?"

One nice thing about recreational flying is that you frequently have some time to think about things before doing something or talking to someone on the radio. And if you're smart, you think about a whole lot of things before you leave the ground. Take flying toward a city with Class B Airspace like Minneapolis. You have to think about where your destination is under the Class B. And at a place like STP you have to know that the B airspace comes right down to the ground about 2 miles from that airport. You also want know about TFRs, and NOTAMs at your destination. I'm already up to four things. I'm thinking about turning the radio off and just flying to Stanton.

Now just think about the folks who fly VFR around Washington D.C. Not only do you have the Class B to worry about, but you've got the ADIZ and the FRZ. Some recent examples have shown that a VFR pilot can get into trouble there even when he is following all the rules. Of course, we've also heard about a well publicized flight where they didn't follow the rules. Recreational flying won't get any simpler, but I hope all you pilots out there express yourselves to the officials in charge when something is proposed that doesn't make sense. Like making an ADIZ permanent when there are obvious flaws in the arrangement.

Those of you who are instrument pilots know that there are a lot of things to keep track of when you are flying an approach. One helpful thing my instructor suggested was to think about the next two things I had to do on the approach – not all 18 things I had to do before I landed. This helps greatly, I think.

At any rate, a change in the Minneapolis Class B is coming this month, and future changes are inevitable. This is one of the reasons why it is refreshing to meet an FAA controller who is also a pilot, and get to discuss with him (on the ground) matters of flying under Air Traffic Control. We are fortunate this month to have Mark Schreier as our speaker again. Mark is going to talk to us about the new Minneapolis Class B rules. This session will also count as credit in the FAA Wings Program if you are involved. Meanwhile, I will keep busy planning the next two Chapter meetings. Any more than that, and I start to get confused.

Jon

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# ON FINAL



Minneapolis/St. Paul

Visit our website at [eaa25.org](http://eaa25.org)

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The Leader In Recreational Aviation

# ***This Month: Wed. Feb 15th—Washburn H.S. 6:30 pm***

**Speakers:** Mark Schreier of MSP TRACON will speak this month. Mark is going to talk to us about the new Minneapolis Class B rules effective this month. This session will also count as credit in the **FAA Wings Program**.

## **Saturday, Feb 18th—Young Eagle flights, 9 am—FBO, Airlake Airport**

Be sure to check with John Koser or Jeff Coffey in advance if you plan to volunteer for this event.

## **Saturday, March 4—Annual Chili Feed, 11 am-1 pm, Chapter Hangar LVN**

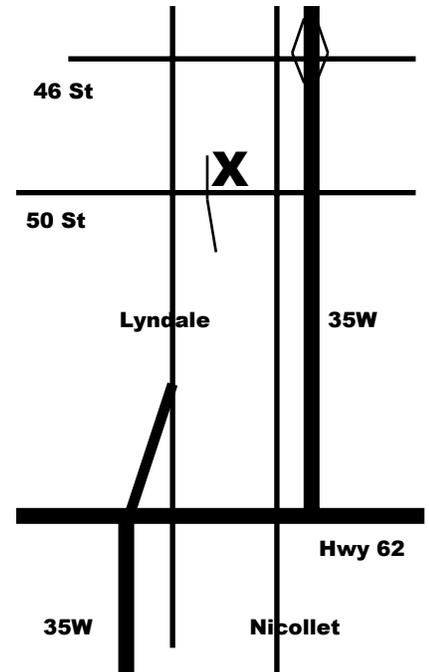
**March Meeting:** We will kick off our 50th anniversary celebration by honoring our founders, former officers and our history. Our guests Paul and Audrey Poberezny will make this a special occasion. Please stay tuned about the specifics of this meeting -- we are considering a different meeting location.

## **Directions to February Meeting at Washburn High:**

**From the South:** Exit 10B from 35W at the Crosstown. Continue north on Lyndale Ave to 50th Street. Right turn and proceed 3 blocks. Turn left into the school south parking lot.

**From the North:** 46th street exit from 35W, turn right on 46th street. At Nicollet, turn left. South on Nicollet to 50th, turn right. West on 50th past the Junior High School to the Sr. High School 2 blocks west of Nicollet. Turn right into the school south parking lot.

**Entry: South door #9, look for signs.**



## **EAA Chapter 25 Meeting Minutes**

**January 18, 2006**

**Presiding Officer: Jon Cumpton**

**Location: Washburn High School**

### **Business meeting discussions**

New members and guests were introduced:

Steve Johnson, Paul Lamberty, Russell Lane, Fred Rogers, Tomas Settell, Kim Frizzell, Franko Fiorillo, Scott Caverly, Gary Scott, Dan Davis, Keith Kristiansen

Members are reminded that receiving the newsletter by email saves the chapter printing and mail expense (\$1200 last year). If you would like to get On Final by email, please let Pete Gavin know.

Members are encouraged to wear nametags during chapter events. See Jon Cumpton to order one at a cost of \$5. The winner of the nametag drawing was Phil Shaffer.

If you have not visited the chapter web site please do so at EAA25.org. It is a great place to send people to who want to know more about our chapter. Jeff Coffey maintains the site. Please pass along any feedback on the site to Jeff.

A treasurer's report was circulated and a 2006 member roster was distributed.

Peter Denny gave an update on Washburn Aviation Program activities. An architecture class will be designing homes for an airpark. **Peter is looking for 25 volunteers** who will act as "clients" for students who will be designing the homes. Peter would also like to borrow a "Sky King" video. Washburn will be starting up an aviation maintenance class and they are in

need of an old 152 fuselage. Please send Peter an email if you can help out with any of these items.

2006 is Chapter 25's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. The first chapter meeting was on March 15, 1956 at Bert Sisler's house. We will have special events during the year focused on the history of our chapter. Please come forward with any historical information you have.

John Koser indicated that we plan to fly about 13 kids at our next Young Eagles event on Saturday, January 21. We are looking for groups of kids to fly. Please talk up the program with people you know.

The chapter plans on offering several scholarships to EAA Aviation Summer Camp at OSH this summer. If you know of a kid that would enjoy this experience, please submit their name to a chapter officer.

Several chapter members are planning on forming a work party to work at OSH in preparation for AirVenture. Stay tuned for more information.

### **Program**

*Members gave updates on their projects.*

*Dr. Phil Sidell gave a presentation on topics concerning medical certificates.*

*Chapter sponsor Franco Fiorillo (Aircraft Resource Center) and Kim Frizzell gave a presentation on Sport Pilot and Light Sport Airplanes. Aircraft Resource Center will become a dealer for LSA aircraft and will provide Sport Pilot training.*

Submitted by Craig Nelson

## **Bert Sisler** (From page 1)

### **Do you remember your first airplane ride?**

My first ride was probably in a Travel Air, in one of the barnstorming events. We would spend a couple days wiping oil off the belly of the Travel Air in return for a ride. While they were giving rides, I remember they would hold a contest. A couple of guys flying biplanes would load up a couple passengers, fly a circuit and land, take off their pants, and fly another circuit in their shorts. Whichever pilot finished first would win the prize.

### **What was your early flight training like?**

I got a couple rides in a Cub where I got to hold the stick, but it really wasn't flight training. The first flight was with a pilot from Hibbing. I remember my dad wanted to meet him first, so he came by the house before taking me up. Another fellow, Babe Alsworth, flew in from Waseca and landed his Cub on the ice near our house one winter. I received another ride from him.

The real flight instruction began when I was a junior in high school, working at the airport in the summer, gassing up planes and changing oil. For working six long (10-12 hour) days I would receive \$6 a week and 1½ hours of flight training. The mosquitoes at the airport were so bad that we would tie down one Cub and leave the engine running while we worked on another Cub behind it. The propeller blast would keep the mosquitoes away! It was fun to taxi the Cubs back and forth to the hangars. During the war years they started up the CPT (Civilian Pilot Training) program, and that provided a lot more work at the airport.

### **Did you fly in the military?**

I joined the Army during WWII and was assigned to basic training in the regular Army Air Corp. They had an evaluation process to slot the recruits into various specialties, and I had my choice of navigator, bombardier, or pilot. Of course I selected pilot and went through several levels of training. I trained in PT 22's, PT 13's, and earned my AT6 wings at Williams Field near Phoenix. This was followed by gunnery training. I was selected for night training in B25's at Douglas, Arizona. I was then transferred to Fresno, California where I was trained in P61's. During that period I was also renting aircraft at civilian airports, and picked up my commercial instructor rating that way. I finished my training in P61's just as the war ended.

They kept many units active for a time after the war as they demobilized, and many pilots moved on to other assignments. I was assigned to the flight line where we supported training of the GCI (Ground Control Intercept) radar crews. They had radar on the ground for initial tracking, and radar in the intercept aircraft for closing in on the target. We would fly at night, and the unit on the ground would vector us to intercept the aircraft being tracked. We would approach the target via vectors until we could spot it on our own radar. As we closed on the target at night from below, the first visual indication was always the



*Bert and son Eric with his first homebuilt, the Stits Playboy*

exhaust rings from the engines.

### **What did you do after the war?**

After the war I returned to college at the University of Minnesota. I started out in aeronautical engineering, but that field was pretty crowded and I switched to mechanical engineering. While in college, I was still in the Air Corp Reserve, and would fly AT6's, AT11's, and P51's. During the summer, I instructed at Grand Rapids. After graduation, I took an engineering job with Kimberly Clark in Neenah, Wisconsin. During that time I rented aircraft out of Timmerman Field north of Milwaukee and earned my commercial instrument rating.

### **How did you begin flying with Northwest?**

There was a lot of competition for airline jobs in those days. The airlines preferred pilots with four-engine bomber experience. I was selected for ground training by Northwest Airlines, but you had to take the training on your own time; you were not placed on the payroll. I returned to Minneapolis for the ground training and took various assignments from an engineering job shop to make ends meet. Near the end of the Korean War I finally got on the Northwest payroll for training flights in the DC3, and was placed on reserve status. When Northwest called, I would drop my pencil and take the flight. This continued for three or four months until I was laid off with the end of the war, when Northwest lost their flight contracts for Korea. I was on lay-off for two or three years – at that time I set a national record as the pilot with the longest lay-off from Northwest Airlines.

When I finally got back on reserve status with Northwest, I spent a year flying DC3's, then DC4's. I was then assigned to their Test Ops section for three years, where we conducted test flights on aircraft being returned to service after repairs and the like. I flew for a year in Lockheed Electras and Boeing jets, finally checking out as captain on the 727. After a few years I went on to flying 707's, and then to DC10's. I spent my last five years at Northwest flying 747's with flights to Europe and the Orient.

*(Continued on page 5)*

## **Bert Sisler** (From page 4)

### **When did you build your first airplane?**

Throughout college, I was always sketching designs for airplanes. While working for Northwest in the 50's, I spent many Saturdays at Southport with others who shared a strong interest in building airplanes. Southport was a grass field at the southeast corner of Cedar and Co. Rd. 42. Of course it is now a shopping center. One member of our group, Fritz Davis, was finishing up a Pietyenpol at the time. He was a very strong influence and a great inspiration for all of us. It was around that same time, probably '54 or '55, that five of us decided we wanted to build an airplane. So we went together and started building a Stits Playboy. We did this with sawhorses, a hacksaw and files – that was our big investment in tooling! These were low-dollar projects, as nobody had any money then. But the support from everyone in the group in those days was just wonderful. George Jenson and I finished the Playboy around 1961.

The EAA fly-in had moved to Rockford by that time, and we flew the Playboy down there a number of years. We would fly down and camp in the woods, and we always had a lot of fun. We did a lot of flying, and the emphasis in those days was on homebuilts. Eventually George bought my share and later sold it. I last saw it down at Jenson airport about ten years ago. Chuck Doyle had it at that time; I'm not sure where it is now.

### **What other projects have you built?**

My next project was a low-wing two-place that I designed. I named it the Pipet. It was an original design – I didn't have any particular airplane in mind when I designed it. But in designing you use what you have learned from other airplanes. So there are similarities to the Playboy and others, but many differences also. I completed the Pipit in 1970. We flew the Pipit around to many fly-ins and had a lot of fun with it.

The Whistler was my next homebuilt. I wanted to make some improvements on the Pipet design to make it easier to fly. These included a longer wing and a longer tail to give it a little more stability. My son Eric learned to fly in the



*The Pipet, Bert's 1st design and 2nd homebuilt*

Whistler, and he really liked the way it flew. The Whistler was kind of a predecessor to the Cygnet.

The Cygnet is the latest design I've built. I originally completed this one in 1977. You can see from the photos that it has a rather unique wing design and superb visibility. I eventually sold it, but a few years ago I found it was on the market again. My son wanted to restore it and get back into flying again, so we bought it. We completely recovered it and replaced the Volkswagen engine with a Jabiru. Eric flies it up to his cabin now.

### **You've also restored some factory built aircraft?**

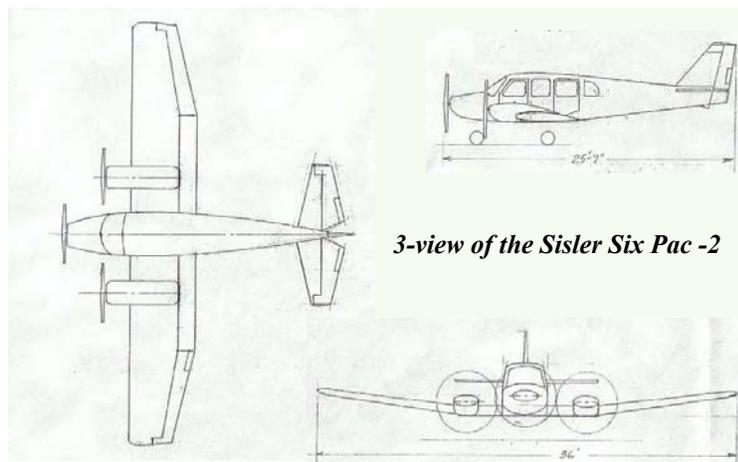
Yes, I restored a Culver Cadet and donated it to the Antique Aircraft Association in Ottumwa. I also restored a Piper Clipper with a 106 hp engine, and a Piper Pacer. I sold the Pacer to Mike Dolan at Sky Harbor, and he is still flying it.

### **Any plans for a new design?**

I've been thinking about a three-engine design for some time, and I've done quite a bit of work on it. That is, I've worked out a lot of the numbers for dimensions, weight and balance, power, drag etc. I've done some work prototyping the cabin, and I have that in my garage. It would be a six place airplane, named the Six Pac. I think the Jabiru might be the right engine, with its high power to weight ratio. But it would take a major effort to complete this, and I haven't committed to that yet. But, we'll see.



*Bert recently tried his hand at hang gliding*



# Catch 22 (From page 1)

more severe. Another clue of health problems was that my iceboating buddies seemed to think pain from cold air is unusual. Note: the only place you can find warnings about sensitivity to cold air is on the web.

After reporting these symptoms to my doctor, I was immediately put on four medications and sent to the Minnesota Heart Clinic. Diagnosis: Angina. Shortly after that, I was given a stress test accompanied by a heart echogram. Soon I was on the operating table where the surgeon was installing two stents in arteries that were 95% blocked. It is a painless procedure. You go home within 24 hours.

Originally, I thought that I would have an entire winter to get my medical waiver\*. But the new rules for the Sport Pilot License offered flying without a medical provided you do not have an official denial or revocation of medical eligibility on file with FAA. So I avoided seeing an Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) letting the winter slip by. But during our club meetings early this year, it appeared that our club would be short on tow pilots so I decided to apply for a medical waiver. I studied the AOPA and EAA websites and learned a lot about successfully getting a medical waiver. To some extent, this effort was wasted and misleading. Based on what I learned, I prepared all the materials suggested and made an appointment with an AME near the MSP airport.

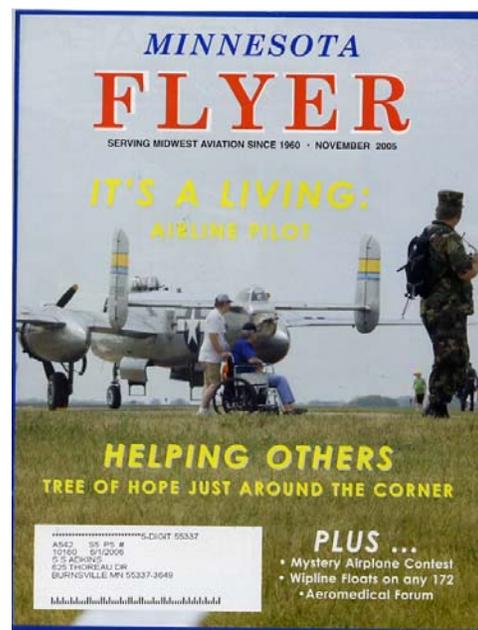
The medical given by the AME was identical to any other medical except at the end, I was not given a Third Class Medical Certificate (I was not yet denied). Instead, the AME doctor informed me that he would forward his exam results to Oklahoma and that I should wait to hear from them. The wait would be about 2 months. The FAA letter would contain a reference number and a list of required tests and reports. The materials I brought to the exam were not submitted.

I didn't feel confident that this AME (not a pilot) was interested in helping with the medical waiver. On the advice of Chris Cooper, I contacted Dr. Schmidt, a pilot and AME located at Anoka County airport. After paying a \$500 retainer, Dr. Schmidt helped me prepare a complete package which was sent Air Express to Oklahoma. You can find similar services on the web but at about triple the cost.

So much time had elapsed, that it was necessary to repeat the stress test and blood tests. I was able to convince the Minnesota Heart Clinic to move my scheduled stress test up two months (nice folks) saving me \$300 to have Dr. Schmidt perform the test. It took 4 trips to the heart clinic and three trips to Dr. Schmidt before I had all the tests and proper paperwork. The FAA has a "catch 22" ... it takes them 90 days to send you a reference number and instructions as to the "current" data they require; but, anything older than 90 days is not considered current!

The rules are simple:

- 1) Obtain the help of an interested FAA doctor who is also a licensed pilot ... immediately;
- 2) Collect all requested materials (exactly what is requested ... no more, no less) and send by Air Express once;
- 3) All tests must have been made within the previous 90 days to be considered current; and
- 4) Do not send extraneous letters asking why it's taking them so long ... be calm and just wait. According to Dr. Schmidt, that wait can vary from two weeks to four months.



*Check out the aeromedical forum in the Minnesota Flyer*

## Actual Time Line:

.... A six-month recovery period shall elapse after your most recent heart event ...

**March 11** ... Exam by AME ...

- AME sent exam results to Oklahoma

**May 22** ... Placed Dr Schmidt on retainer

- writes column for Minnesota Flyer
- helped Chris Cooper with his medical

**June 10** ... Letter received from FAA assigning me a case number and instructions

- given 30 days to respond
- Otherwise, automatic denial

**July 13** ... submitted new stress test, blood tests and numerous reports from doctor including original tracings

**July 19** ... received letter stating "denied" due to failure to respond within 30 days to earlier letter. (Our letters crossed in the mail or in the bureaucracy).

**Sept 2** ... Third Class Medical received

- (letter dated Aug 30)

With proper timing, the three month wait for Oklahoma to respond could have been overlapped with the 6-month recovery period.

## Better Time Line

... still need to honor six-month recovery period

**November** ... Stents installed, start of FAA required 6-month recovery period

**December** ... Exam by AME who

understands the system and knows *(Continued on page 7)*

# Catch 22 (From page 6)

what is required

- AME sends exam results to Oklahoma in order to establish case #
- Meanwhile, AME works with you to prepare what he knows FAA will require

**March** ... Letter from FAA with case number and instructions

**May** ... Submit required material to Oklahoma

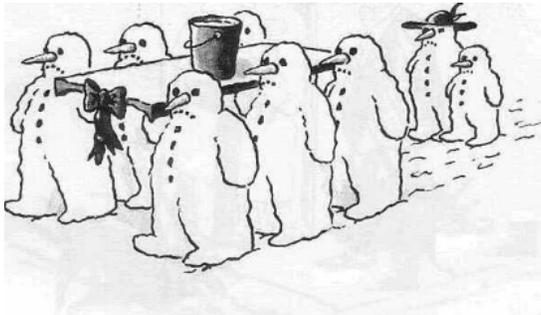
**June-July** ... Receive Third Class Medical

\***Medical waiver** is an imprecise term. Actually one is granted an "Authorization for special Issuance of a medical certificate". The medical certificate is on the standard FAA form without any words about a waiver or special issuance.



## from Mike Dolan

1. He who laughs last, thinks slowest.
2. Everyone has a photographic memory. Some don't have film.
3. A day without sunshine is like ... night.
4. On the other hand.....you have different fingers.
5. Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.
6. I just got lost in thought. It was unfamiliar territory.
7. When the chips are down, the buffalo is empty.
8. Seen it all, done it all, can't remember most of it.



*John Koser, Chapter 25 Young Eagle Coordinator with his son and grandsons at our Jan 23rd YE event*



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## **PLEASE HELP US COMPILE OUR CHAPTER HISTORY**

As you know, 2006 is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chapter. While we have a pretty good collection of stuff, we are making an effort to collect more information about our history. In that regard, we need your help. If you have the following types of information, please contact Jon Cumpton.

Information about officers who have served. We have a pretty good list of Presidents, but need to know who served as President in the following years: 1968, 1971.

Early issues of the Chapter newsletter, meeting minutes, correspondence and photographs, and anything else you have.

Personal reminiscences about Chapter activities, people or airplane projects. We want to collect oral histories of these things

## Chapter Events and Fly-Ins

**Feb 15th Ch 25 Meeting**  
6:30pm Washburn Sr. High  
See page 3 for map & directions

**Feb 18th Young Eagles 9am**  
ARC FBO at Airlake (LVN)

**Mar 4th Chili Feed**  
Chapter Hangar (LVN)

**Mar 15th Ch 25 Meeting**  
50th Anniversary Celebration

**Apr 19th Ch 25 Meeting**  
Dick Navratil's Project Visit

**Future meetings** 2/15, 3/15, 4/19,  
5/17, 6/21, 7/19, 8/16, 9/20, 10/18, 11/15

**Feb 26 Warroad Mn (RRT) 8a-1p**  
Ski Plane Fly-In & Bkfst. Wheel  
Planes at the Warroad Airport.  
Shuttle service available. 100LL  
avail on river. 218-386-1818

**Mar 11 Superior Wi (SUW) 9-3p**  
Fly-in Open house, Young Eagles,  
Chili feed at noon. 218/729-7764.

**Mar 20-21 St Paul Mn** Radisson  
Riverfront Hotel. 2006 Mn Aviation  
Maintenance Conf. 651/297-7652.

**Apr 4-10 Lakeland Fl Sun 'n Fun**  
**Apr 19-21 Willmar Mn**

Minnesota Airports Symposium  
Holiday Inn Conference Center  
<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/>

**May 13 Mn Aviation HOF Banquet**

**Jun 24-25 Brainerd Mn (BRD)**  
Brainerd Air Show.

**Jul 1 SolonSprings Wi (OLG) 9-2p**  
Young Eagles. Burgers & brats.  
218-729-7764 or [www.eaa272.org](http://www.eaa272.org).

**Jul 8 Superior Wi (SUW) 8-11a**  
Ch 272 Bkfst Fly-In 218-729-7764

**Jul 24-30 OSH AirVenture 2006**

**Aug 5-6 Milaca Mn (18Y)**  
Saturday BBQ and camp out.  
Sun. 7-12p Fly-In Bkfst

**Feb 11-12 Aitkin Mn (AIT)**  
Sweetheart Ski-plane Fly-in  
218-927-4104

**Feb 18 So St Paul Mn (SGS) 11-1p**  
Ski-plane Fly-in 612-849-9828

**Feb 25 Eden Prairie Mn 8a**  
General Aviation Safety Seminar  
Presentations begin at 9:30a  
Flying Cloud Airport, Gate G off  
Pioneer Trail. ASI Jet Center.  
Wayne Handly/Rich Stowell/Mike  
Wiskus on Adventures in safety/  
Surviving engine out/The fear factor

## Stuff for Sale/Wanted

Quality radiant floor heated hangar space for rent at Fleming Field. Monthly rent commensurate with aircraft size. Utilities shared. New hangar top notch with excellent light and electric power. Completed and project experimentals welcome. CFI, A&P with IA, EAA Tech Counselor owner. Chris Bobka cell 612/207-3762

For Sale: 2 Continental IO-470L engines with accessories, TT1550 Right & left. Call Dan 612/991-6392.

For Rent: Hangar space at Crystal Airport \$85/mo.  
Darrell Pearson 952-927-9471 wabedo50@yahoo.com

For Sale: 1989 Kolb Twin Star, open cockpit side by side 2 place, 503 Rotax, Warp Drive Prop, \$10.5K, 612-978-6099.

For Sale: 1957 Cessna 172, Cont. O-300 Millennium Cylinders, 501 TT SMOH, 4400 TT A/C, Highly polished alum., 2004 & 2005 OSH Award Winner. \$37,000 Pat Halligan 651/452-7050

## U.S. Sectional Charts Online

I found out about this site through the Flybaby list. It contains CURRENT U.S. sectional charts, with optional weather info available for some airports. You can navigate by dragging the display and zoom in or out. And it's FREE! - Chris Bobka

<http://www.skyvector.com>



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