

Hangar Flyin'



October 2008

EAA Stands Up For the Homebuilt Movement Calls For 'Phase-In' Period to Protect Current Builders

EAA states its case in defense of the homebuilt movement in its official comments to the FAA's proposed policy changes to the 51% Rule, submitted Tuesday, September 30. Through proposed changes to FAA order 8130.2, the agency aims to curb excessive commercial assistance and "pro building" of amateur-built aircraft. Instead, as EAA's comments indicate, the proposed changes would have the unintended consequence of harming amateur-built aviation by adding significant new burdens to builders who follow the current regulations while not addressing excessive commercial building.

Fosset's Decathlon Found

The Bellanca Super Decathlon in which adventurer Steve Fossett (EAA 562868) went missing 13 months ago has been found near Mammoth Lakes, California, authorities confirmed Thursday morning. Madera County, Calif., Sheriff John Anderson announced at a press conference that wreckage had Fossett's registration number, N240R. He also said there were no remains found at the crash site. The [FAA's fatal accident report](#) issued Thursday morning also confirms the identification of the aircraft. Search efforts for the wreckage intensified Wednesday after it was reported that hikers found several items appearing to belong to Fossett, including FAA Pilot Certificates bearing his name, about \$1,000 in cash, and a weathered fleece pullover. An aerial search on Wednesday turned up what appeared to be wreckage of a plane, which was later confirmed as Fossett's. Fossett, who holds several world aviation records in balloons, jets, and gliders, took off on a pleasure flight from Barron Hilton's Flying M Ranch on Labor Day morning, September 3, 2007, about 20 miles south of Yerington, Nev. When he failed to return, an unprecedented search effort ensued, led by the Civil Air Patrol, covering some 20,000 square miles. Smaller-scale searches were also made, the most recent in August this year.

In conjunction with our regular October breakfast for Chapter members and their guests, Hobby Stevens has invited some family and friends to join us for breakfast and to see his RV6. Hobby's family is providing the breakfast, so the regular cooks get a month off.

Monthly Breakfast

The Chapter breakfast will be this

Saturday, October 11th

at Hangar 3, 9AM

Blackie Miers

By Wes Hays

Blackie Miers is a true Renaissance Man. He was born and raised in Longview Texas, and moved to West Texas in 1949 to work in the West Texas oil and gas fields. He settled in Snyder to work for Sunray Oil Company where he retired in 1985. Blackie worked in all areas of the gas plant from the chemical lab to plant operations during his 36 year career.

Blackie and Shirley married in 1951, and they have two children. Glenn, who lives in East Texas, and Deborah who lives in Coronado Camp Southwest of Abilene.

Blackie also played bass in the Sharps and Flats Country and Western band out of Big Springs in the 70's, and his wife Shirley was the lead singer for the band.

He has been a member of the EAA since around 1970, and has belonged to the chapters in Odessa, San Angelo, and has been a member of EAA 471 in Abilene since 2005.

Blackie learned to fly in a T-Craft, and earned his pilot license in an Aeronca in 1954. He has been flying for around 54 years now. Flying just wasn't enough. In 1956, his first major project was to rebuild a Luscombe, which he finished in 1956. After the Luscombe, he built a Benson Gyrocopter which he finished in 1960. By the time 1979 rolled around, he had restored an Aeronca 7BCM, Blackie built a Super Cub fuselage from plans, and mated it with Tri-Pacer wings, with a Lycoming O-320 which was finished in 1985. In 1990, the Super Cub won the Best of Show at the EAA Southwest Regional Fly-in in Kerrville. If that wasn't enough, he finished another Super Cub in 1994, and it also won the Best of Show at the EAA Southwest Regional Fly-in that same year. Blackie then got in the ultra-light business. He has built three Titan Tornados. In 1995 he finished a two place Titan Tornado equipped with a Volkswagen engine and in 1996 he finished a single place Titan Tornado with a 503 (53hp) Rotax engine. In 1997 he finished another single placed Titan Tornado with an 80hp Jabiru four cylinder engine. In the meantime, Blackie helped a builder in Snyder build an RV-6, and about the time it was finished, Blackie came over to offer his assistance on the RV-6A I was building.

Blackie and Shirley began plans to move to Abilene next to their daughter, and they started building their house in around 2000, and moved in 2002.

After the house was finished, you can imagine he just couldn't sit around, so he started his latest project, a single placed Bill Spring's Model Hummelbird. The Hummelbird will have a 32 hp ½ Volkswagen engine, and he is about 85% finished. The pictures in the article are of the Hummelbird that he is building in his shop at Coronado's Camp.

I was very fortunate to get to know Blackie when I lived in Rotan, and was building my RV-6A. He would come over and visit Scotty and me, and I always looked forward to the visits. With his experience and background, he is a wealth of information for any homebuilder. He is a great mentor, true friend, and a master craftsman. If you have any doubt, he would welcome you by the shop at anytime to visit and see the Hummelbird. He lives about a mile south of Coronado's Camp, and the address is 110 CR 685. If you want to give him a call, the number is 325-572-5897.

We in Chapter 471 are very fortunate to have a gentleman of his background and experience to look to for advice and assistance. He has helped several members of the chapter with their projects, and is always willing to do whatever he can to help out another homebuilder. Now THAT is what EAA is all about!





Sam Evans reached a milestone on September 21st, when he put his RV-7A project on it's landing gear for the first time. Engine install will not be far behind. This thing is starting to look like an Airplane!

Ike Causes 'Extensive' Damage to Lone Star Flight Museum

EAA Warbirds of America pledges assistance

September 16, 2008 — Hurricane Ike's destructive forces caused extensive damage to the Lone Star Flight Museum in Galveston, Texas, but thankfully people and many of the aircraft were evacuated before the storm, according to information posted on www.lsfm.org.

In a message posted on the website, Lone Star Flight Museum President Larry Gregory wrote, "The damage to the museum is extensive," and that officials are in the process of conducting a preliminary assessment to determine what the organization's needs will be. "It is just too early to know when the museum will reopen since we don't know what is needed," he wrote, adding that many hours of work will be needed in the coming weeks, along with considerable financial support to get the doors open. See photos of the destruction on the [LSFM website](http://www.lsfm.org).

Bill Fischer, executive director of the EAA Warbirds of America, contacted Gregory and offered the organization's assistance when the Lone Star group is ready and able to receive it.

Prior to the storm pilots were able to fly several of the LSFM aircraft out of harm's way, including the B-17, B-25, DC-3, P-47, F6F, F4U, SBD, PT-17, T-6 and the F8F. Many of these aircraft had been flown to EAA AirVenture Oshkosh in past years, including this past summer, to be part of the warbird activities at Oshkosh.

"We want to thank all of our friends and supporters for their thoughts and prayers," Gregory said.

Prototype SkyCatcher's Loss Complicated By BRS Deployment Failure

ANN has learned some surprising details surrounding the recent loss of a non-conforming flying prototype of the Cessna SkyCatcher LSA during exclusive conversations with personnel from Cessna Aircraft and BRS Parachutes.

Cessna's prototype Model 162 SkyCatcher light sport aircraft crashed near Douglass, KS on what was described as a routine test flight, but a Cessna spokesperson now describes as an extensive evaluation of the aircraft's spin matrix... this particular test being devoted to "Full-Power, cross-controlled spins."

The prototype aircraft, N162XP, was one of three flight test vehicles that Cessna has been evaluating, though this aircraft was not a fully conforming airframe. The accident plane had over 150 flight hours. The spokesperson said the aircraft's structure survived the impact largely intact, with the wing and empennage still attached to the fuselage, and that the emergency centered on issues of aircraft control and not structures. The test pilot bailed out of the aircraft at a fairly high altitude and survived the incident with minor injuries.

Cessna has been pretty open and up-front with the matter, at least to the extent of what is known just a few days after the incident. So far, Cessna and BRS have both confirmed that the pilot entered into some mode of irrecoverable flight condition in the spin tests and attempted to fire the rocket-deployed BRS emergency airframe parachute system. This corresponds to the "pops" and "sparks" reported by some witnesses. However; the BRS "failed to deploy as intended," according to a BRS staffer, and the pilot was left with no other choice but to egress the aircraft. No reason has been given for the alleged failure of the BRS parachute system but BRS confirms that they have personnel on sight to participate in the investigation.

The pilot safely extricated himself and successfully deployed a Free Flight Preserve 1 canopy (thought to be part of a Para-Phernalia parachute system... the leading user of that canopy design), and landing about a quarter-mile from where the SkyCatcher impacted. While the airframe hit the ground largely intact, Cessna confirms that the aircraft is "totaled."

Cessna has undertaken an aggressive flight test program with the SkyCatcher and their spokesperson confirms that the test program "meets or exceeds" the specs laid out by ASTM for LSA Certification. The first conforming test vehicle (P1) will take the place of this aircraft in the test program and resume the examinations fairly soon.

Calendar of Events

Oct 10-11	EAA Texas Fly-in Hondo, TX
Oct 11	Kerrville Multi Chapter Fly-in
Oct 25	Granbury Fly-in Breakfast 0800-1030
Oct 24-26	Reklaw Flyin Reklaw Texas stinsoner@airmail.net 936-369-4362
Nov 8	Pecan Plantation(0TX1) Fall Fly-in 817-559-4665

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