



HIGH SIERRA FLYER

Newsletter of Sierra Chapter 403

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FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Journey to a homebuilt aircraft

What! People can build and fly their own aircraft?

It's 1985 and I have had my Private Pilot License for one year. *KITPLANES* magazine is brand new and full of exciting amateur built aircraft. After several years of investigating and dreaming, I thought maybe I could afford a KR2. After all it uses a modified VW engine.

The Lancair and Glasair were out of reach financially.

I proceeded to buy a dune buggy to learn more about VW engines. I quickly learned that VW made fine engines. That is, until they are modified with aftermarket parts. I realized that I would

not want to fly an aircraft with a Volkswagen engine.

About this time, I visited the Watsonville airshow. It was there that I saw not one, but three GP-4 aircraft. The GP-4 is an all wood two place retractable with a top speed of 240mph! I was excited to send for the information package. The GP-4 is plans-built (i.e. no kit) eight thousand hour project. Perfect, I had more time than money anyhow.

One problem. The GP-4 uses a 4 cylinder Lycoming and this was the 1990's and 4 cylinder Lycomings were becoming scarce and expensive. However, six cylinder Lycoming engines were plentiful and cheap. Fuel costs were also low in the 90's.

Enter the Barracuda aircraft.



Barracuda (Wikimedia Credit: FlugKerl2)

The Barracuda was also an all wood two place retractable, but it used a 250 hp six cylinder Lycoming. This was also a plans-built eight thousand hour project. Perfect, let's get started!

To be continued...

FROM THE SECRETARY

Happy Autumn!

I hope you are all enjoying the cooler weather. Before the year gets away from us, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank everyone who has helped in making this year so successful.

The contribution of your time and talent is essential for the Chapter to continue to offer educational and social events. If you want to help but don't know how, just reach out to a Board Member. There are plenty of tasks to go around.

If you are a voting member, i.e. Regular Member or Family Member in good

standing with both the Chapter and EAA National, please take the time to vote in the current election. As a reminder the slate of candidates is as follows:

President: Robert Grant

Vice-President: Mike Hardison

Treasurer: Mike Zieba

Secretary: Randy Vogelgesang

Members At Large (vote for 3): David Baird, Larry Jones, Dayton Murdock

You will receive a separate email for voting purposes, please respond to that email.

Finally, The Christmas Brunch is almost upon us, Saturday, December 6, 2025. (Flyer attached). Tickets are available at Chapter events and on-line at eaa403.us.

Tickets must be purchased by November 19, 2025.

NO TICKETS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR.

We look forward to seeing you at the Plaza Hotel Events Center (just north of Red's 395).

If you have a donation for the door prizes please contact Trish at secretaryeaa403@gmail.com.

Thanks to our Volunteers!

SAVE the DATE

Chapter 403 Christmas Brunch

Saturday, December 6, 2025
11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Plaza Event Center
801 South Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

\$20 per person
\$10.00 12 years and under
Ticket Deadline November 19, 2025
Cash Bar

**PAYMENT
WILL NOT
BE ACCEPTED
AT THE DOOR**

Holiday Gift Exchange/
Steal Game (Optional)

Bring a NEW WRAPPED gift
(no more than \$10.00)
for a lively
Gift Exchange/Steal
(Please Label
Male – Female – Neutral)
Please note this is not a white
elephant exchange

FROM THE TREASURER

Balances as of 1 Nov:

- Savings: \$72,370.24
- Checking: \$5,615.98
- PayPal: \$1,636.18
- **Total: \$79,621.18**

Financial records and detailed monthly reports are kept in the Chapter House and available to all members for review.

STUDENT PILOT SPOTLIGHT

Our Newest Private Pilot!



On September 24, 2025, at 17 years old, chapter scholarship recipient Julia Williams passed her private pilot check ride! Julia started flying at age 8 with our chapter's Young Eagles flight program.

She continued flying with the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) and passed her check ride in their brand new G1000 NXI Cessna 172.

Julia is the third CAP Cadet (and youngest female Cadet) to earn her Private Pilot certificate in Nevada. She is starting on her Instrument rating now and hopes to have it and her Commercial Pilot certificate by the time she graduates high school in the Spring.

CROSS-COUNTRY LOG

Idaho Adventure

By Dayton Murdoch



Jim Richmond (photo, JRBAF Website)

"Jim Richmond loved the wild places. Whether in Washington, Idaho, Alaska, Canada or elsewhere, going to remote areas away from the hustle and bustle of everyday urban life was precious to him. In addition to a deep appreciation for the beauty of non-urban landscapes, Jim also intuitively recognized the spiritual, mental, and physical benefits all people gain by spending time in the outdoors."

"Experiencing the backcountry was always profound for Jim, and ultimately,

he dedicated his entire professional career to sharing his backcountry experience with others by designing and building specialty aircraft to allow others to access those wild places that he so cherished. After having spent many years building a successful company (CubCrafters) to manufacture best-of-class backcountry aircraft, Jim next intended to dedicate his personal time and resources to further improve public backcountry access by identifying key sites where aviation could uniquely provide public entry to remote areas and then opening or developing those sites for public use.

“Jim passed away unexpectedly in 2021, but his vision for more and better public backcountry aviation access remains. The primary mission and intent of the Jim Richmond Backcountry Aviation Foundation (JRBAF) is to acquire, develop, and maintain a portfolio of aviation accessible backcountry properties for the public benefit in perpetuity.

“By preserving and maintaining the 45 Ranch, JRBAF has opened a rare doorway into one of the last truly wild regions of the American West. Its airstrip is not just a convenience but a lifeline—connecting modern pilots with a land that remains almost unchanged since the frontier era. For those who fly in, the ranch is more than a destination; it is a reminder of Jim Richmond’s vision, where aviation becomes the bridge to

wilderness, history, and the kind of solitude that is almost impossible to find anywhere else.

*(Excerpts from JRBAF Website:
<https://jrbaf.org/>)*



Robert, Mike, and I, along with Larry, flew from Carson City to 45 Ranch in Idaho for an overnight adventure that included a wonderful dinner cooked by Robert Grant.



We had had a blast learning to fly down a narrow canyon for the first time in order to land at this wonderful airport.

The airport is situated at the bottom of a canyon which is a little unsettling. But

the stars were amazing as 45 Ranch is in the “dark skies” part of the United States far from city lights.

We are already making plans to make the trip again next year!

BUILDER’S LOG



Larry and Robert Grant restored the Zodiac project back to flightworthy status following some structural updates.

Dayton Murdock has been working on upgrading our rotating griddle.

The new and improved version should be a hit at Young Eagle Rallies and keep up with any demand.

Take a look at the base. Look familiar? Do you know what it is? Answer is at end of the newsletter.



VMC CLUB

The VMC Club meets on the fourth Thursday of every month at 1800 in the Chapter House. Dale Smith leads the group.

IMC CLUB

The IMC Club meets on the third Thursday of every month at 1800 in the Chapter House. Tim Rowe leads the group.

MEMBER CLASSIFIEDS

Gary Childers has two projects for sale:

1. Bowers Flybaby
2. Mitchell U2 with Rotax 277

Email him at lloydllc2@gmail.com and he'll send you more info and builder's logs in PDF format.

Sandy Munns has a project for sale:



EAA Acroport single seat, with EAA Biplane wings (two ailerons, rather than four). Mostly complete. Needs engine, fabric, final assembly. Includes: completely welded fuselage, tail feathers; LG legs with Cleveland wheels and brakes; two engine mounts, one dynafocal, one standard; fuel tank and smoke oil/or header fuel tank; fiberglass turtle deck; Cabane strut completed; all four wings completed; Scott tailwheel; all control linkages; fiberglass turtledeck

complete; sheet metal and nose bowl for cowling complete. Includes EAA biplane and Acroport plans. All original work was done by an A&P mechanic. I don't have the time, \$\$, or a place to finish it, so it has to go. \$1,500 OBO. Lycoming O-320 rebuildable core available separately.

Contact Sandy at 775-224-3473 for more details or to see it.

Torry and Sandy Johnson have an RV9-A for sale which they purchased from Shade Tree Aviation at KCXP in 2020. Mike Hardison and other EAA403 members were very helpful with a pre-buy once-over. While located in southern AZ (KOLS), they fly into KCXP regularly and would be happy to bring the plane north should a serious buyer be interested in taking a look.

2007 VANS RV9-A * Asking \$129,900 *
2007 RV9-A, Mattituck (Lycoming) TMX O-320 160 hp engine with 1,135 TT on engine / airframe, jaw-dropping Advanced Flight Systems 10" Skyview HDX VFR Advanced Panel, Dual E-MAG P Model w/alt (with auto 4-lead kit), 2020-Compliant ADS-B Out, new ELT, Angle-of-Attack On-Screen Display, Garmin GMA245A audio panel with Bluetooth, new tires and tubes, freshly painted fiberglass, retractable canopy sun shade, engine pre-heater, engine trickle charger,

no damage or history of hail, Condition inspection performed July 2025.

Contact

Torry (775.790.4637) or Sandy Johnson (775.720.9565).

More Items

We had a special visitor at the NOV monthly meeting. Steve Radcliffe was a long-time member of the Livermore EAA chapter 663 and now lives in Nevada. He has retired from flying, and has several useful pieces of equipment that he wanted to let us know about:

- Arbor Press
- Band Saw
- Lathe
- Mill (Bench Type)
- Table Saw

If you are interested in any of these items, contact Steve via txt, phone, or email.

925-216-2516

s.radcliffe@comcast.com

FROM THE EDITOR

Assisted Build in Minnesota

I spent September in southern Minnesota at the Gyro Technic factory

for “assisted build” of a VX2 gyroplane. I’m using a combination of canary yellow paint (powder coat) and black anodizing for the aluminum airframe.



Partially completed airframe with Rotax 912iS mounted. I will share more assembly photos in the next issue.

We experienced some unexpected delays with the supply chain, including a Rotax service bulletin that required my 912 iS engine to have a hardness test of the crankcase. The engine passed its test and arrived in time to be installed in my airframe while I was at the factory.

With the blessing of the manufacturer, I left my gyro at his shop and will return later to complete the build.

I learned a LOT and benefited from a professional workspace with the

required tools, construction components, jigs and fixtures, and experienced folks to advise me on the various tasks.

I would not have made this much progress if I were building the kit at home without the great support I received at the factory.

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President

Robert Grant, 915-241-1330

Vice President

Mike Hardison, 858-774-1060

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Treasurer

Mike Zieba, 775-343-5948

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David Baird, 785-648-0141

Board at Large

Dayton Murdock, 775-721-9476

Board at Large

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Larry Crapo, 310-200-1912

Ray Scholarship Coordinator

Marlys Pryor, 914-498-1731

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Jim Nunnelee, 775-790-1396

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Newsletter

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Answer: radial engine mount.

Thanks to our Volunteers!