



The huge peaks of the Andes provide a backdrop for one of the RV-9As operated by Chile's Club Aéreo de Santiago.



Left: The truly obnoxious TSA regulations recently inaugurated have made trips across the US/Canadian border difficult for citizens of both countries.

We certainly saw this at a recent airshow in Arlington, Washington. With British Columbia just a few miles away, and a cooperative U.S. Customs booth on the field, Arlington usually attracts quite a large Canadian contingent.

Not this year...

However, it's possible that the new rules won't apply to those attending this airshow in this previously unknown country which evidently has similarly named provinces...

Right: Ken Scott recently made a trip to Alaska. This time a B-737 did the job, rather than his RV-6. RV-9 builder Mike Ice gave him a bed, breakfast and an introduction to local RV builders in the Anchorage area.

According to Ken "Mike and his wife are on their bicycles darn early in the morning, so when I finally got up at 7 a.m., I enjoyed some excellent wild currant jelly they'd put out on the counter and got a chuckle out of the FedEx package Mike left on the kitchen table.

Even the FedEx guy was interested in Mike's airplane project!"



President Tom Green has taken considerable flak from the Dodge Ram crowd in the production shop. They considered his Honda Ridgeline an effete, unmanly truck. Not a real truck at all, really. (Sort of the automotive equivalent of the "real men fly taildraggers" crowd...)

So when Tom saw an entire RV wing kit loaded in a customer's Ridgeline, he just had to record the event.

WHAT'S IN OUR HANGAR

KEN SCOTT

I give a lot of tours and demo rides as part of my job. I go along and point at things as prospective builders amble through the shop, wonder over the sheer volume of parts to track, watch the punch presses punch, and end up in the hangar. The airplanes there are old friends to us. Perhaps we take them a bit for granted, but demonstrator airplanes have always been important to our business. There's always a little intake of breath when people get their first look at our hangar full of demonstrator airplanes.

When airplanes are developed, there's usually a short-lived prototype, followed fairly quickly by another airplane incorporating the lessons of the first. The original airplane dies a quiet death or, if it's very lucky, ends up as a curiosity in a museum. Things are a little different in our hangar – almost every airplane in it is a “first” and even after years of service, they're still flying

In about 1985, N66RV, the prototype RV-6 started flying rides off the grass strip in North Plains. (I remember exactly when I first saw that airplane. I was sitting on the porch behind my studio in Forest Grove, taking a break from unloading a hot kiln. A little blue airplane came zipping over and circled around the fields to the west – the common practice area for Hillsboro. Soon it pointed north, raised its nose and flew slower and slower. From my vantage point it was centered between two branches of my apple tree and it just... stayed there. I knew just enough about flying to wonder how the heck an airplane that was going that fast just a few seconds before could go that slow. A few weeks later, I aimed my bicycle toward North Plains and rode the back roads until I discovered Van's shop, down at the end of dead-end, rutted road. Van himself was kind enough to let me sit in the 6, even though I'm



It's tough to get a photo of all our demonstrators at rest. Here you can see both RV-10s, the RV-9A and the RV-7A waiting to fly. Just visible behind the RV-9A is the RV-8A.

well. So let's take this space to give Van's demonstrators a little recognition, interspersed with a few personal recollections.

Our demo fleet currently contains the first RV-7(A), the first RV-8A, the first RV-10, the first RV-6A and the first RV-9. Our RV-9A and RV-12 are also “firsts”, even though there were earlier airplanes with the same designator.

Van first started flying rides in his prototype RV-4 N14RV, somewhere back in the late 70s or early 80s. Before that, trusting soul that he is, he'd let a few journalists and prospective customers fly his RV-3. Both of those airplanes are now in the EAA museum at Oshkosh. Relative to later airplanes, they probably flew fewer rides – but they were very important rides, setting the foundation under what was to come.

sure he thought I was just another dreamer. I was, actually – but a year later I drove his non-air conditioned truck to Oshkosh. Part of the “pay” for that job was a ride in the RV-6 and like so many, I came down convinced I had to have something that flew like THAT. However, it wasn't my first RV ride. My first one was in N6RV, the Art Chard RV-6 that flew even before Van's RV-4. I've had the chance to fly in N6RV, N66RV and N666RV. If anyone's got N666RV, I want a ride!)

N66RV was retired many years ago. We've still got it in storage and I hope it will eventually find a home in a museum – surely the progenitor of the most popular kit aircraft every sold has some historic value. Its sibling N666RV, the first RV-6A, began demo ride duty in about 1987 and spent the next several years operating

off the grass strip at North Plains, slogging through ruts, mud and tall grass. This airplane, now known as “Ole Blue” is still going strong. Mike Seager uses it as a transition trainer and hundreds of new RV pilots have flogged it around the patch, bouncing it off of pavement and grass while they tune their senses to that beautiful RV handling. With well over 5000 airframe hours, it may be the highest time RV in existence. (I made my first RV solo in this airplane, and still fly it every chance I get – the uphol-



Above: “Ole Blue” is the very first RV-6A. Over twenty years old, and still flying regularly, it spends its days teaching pilots the basics of flying an RV safely. Mike Seager (in the right seat here) has spent thousands of hours in the right seat of this airplane.

Left: the first RV-8A. This airplane has been called Van’s answer to the T-34. Plenty of room for two large people in a tandem configuration and the ability to see over the nose while taxiing.

stery is tired, the paint is chipped and faded, the instrument panel is an ergonomic disaster, but it still flies like a silk glove.)

N58VA, the first RV-8A, flew from our shop in North Plains in 1998. It still serves us well with 1450 hours on the clock. When it first flew, it was a very popular demo airplane, (the RV-9 and RV-7 hadn’t arrived on the scene yet) but it doesn’t fly nearly as many rides as it used to. Blame that on the introduction of the RV-7—more about that in a minute.

The RV-9A began with a variation of the RV-6 we called the RV-6B. This was a one-off tricycle gear airplane, powered by an O-235, used to test some ideas like a leaf spring main gear. It was damaged in an off-airport landing and rebuilt with a completely different wing and tail and dubbed the RV-9. This airplane gave us the data and confidence we needed to bring an all-new design to market. Our first real RV-9A -- we added the “A” for the sake of consistency – was and is

N129RV. During assembly it served as a proof-of-kit airplane and ever since it has been our factory demonstrator. We’ve flown it all over America, landing on surfaces from rough gravel to clumpgrass to slick pavement. It has become a favorite of our demo pilots and the most desired mount in the 2-seat fleet when a long cross-country is necessary. It now has 1950 hours, and continues to impress us with its overall performance and sweet flying qualities.

N179RV, the first RV-9 (with a tailwheel) flew a couple of years later, reversing the usual order of nosewheel-developed-from-tailwheel airplane. We flew it for several years with a stock O-320/Sensenich combination. It was quite light and surprisingly fast, but it was not the mainstream airplane -- the vast majority of customers were opting for the tricycle landing gear. Van flew it as his personal commuter for a while. Then, last year, it donated its low time engine to the RV-9A.



Left: the RV-9A has been one of our most popular demo airplanes. N129RV is the first RV-9A built from kit parts, but the design started with N96VA, below.

This was a one-off airplane, originally a version of the RV-6 called the RV-6B. It was later re-built as a proof-of-concept airplane and called the RV-9. We didn't use the "A", because at the time, we didn't contemplate a tail-wheel version and didn't need to differentiate. Later we changed our minds, and the tri-gear version was officially labeled the RV-9A.

At bottom: the very first RV-7 was and is N137RV. As a tailwheel airplane it introduced the world to the RV-7 concept. It still does the same job, but now it flies on a tricycle gear.

We parked it on the lift in our hangar where it sits, looking a bit forlorn, awaiting a mission that may or may not re-appear. It was the last tailwheel airplane left in our fleet, and with its retirement, those of us with tailwheel endorsements will have to stay current on our own gas money.

Soon after we moved to Aurora, we rattled the kit airplane world a bit when we unveiled the RV-7 in 2001. Developed behind closed doors as replacement for the RV-6, N137RV had more fuel, more power, more rudder and more wing than the RV-6. Even more important was a matched-hole kit that was far, far easier to build. For two years we flew it as a taildragger, then converted it to the first RV-7A. *(The last day it flew in the tailwheel configuration, I taxied out to give a ride, passing right by a fifth-wheel dolly some truck driver had left in our aircraft parking area. "I better remember that," I thought and went flying. Of course, taxiing back in, I forgot it entirely. It was completely hidden behind the cowl and it was only by providential grace that something – to this day I don't know what – warned me. I stomped the brake as hard as I could and pivoted the airplane so hard the tailwheel*



hopped. I missed sticking the prop into several hundred pounds of steel and rubber by inches and it took a couple of minutes before my heartbeat was slower than the number on the tach. A month later I taxied in to the same spot, this time in the just-converted RV-7A, and could see where the dolly had been parked from a quarter mile away. Score a big one for nosewheels.)

It has probably flown more RV demo rides than any





airplane other than Ole Blue. As of this morning there are 1752 hours on the Hobbs. I don't know what percentage of potential RV builders have been pushed over the edge by a ride in N137RV, but I'll bet it's pretty high. It's not as light or nimble as Ole Blue, but it's a powerful, comfortable flying machine. We commonly use it for potential RV-8 customers, explaining that with essentially the same wing, engine, weight and very similar frontal area, the RV-7A just can't fly much differently, and by flying in the right seat they can use the right stick/left throttle arrangement they'd find in the 8. The RV-7A also allows them to fly without having to sit in the back with no instruments and no forward view other than the demo pilot's sweat-stained hat.

When we decided to produce a four-seat airplane, the result was N410RV. With the CAD technology and computer controlled machinery in our shop, we no longer needed to produce a prototype just to make sure all the parts would fit. We introduced the airplane in 2003, so when it attends AirVenture this year it will be celebrating its sixth birthday with about 1300 hours on the clock. Other than fitting an improved composite cabin top and doors, we've done little to it. It just goes and goes – literally,

it goes! It often outruns even the 200 hp two-seat airplanes on cross-country trips. It's roomy, comfortable, relatively quiet and warm inside. The excellent door seals and powerful cabin heater actually make winter flying enjoyable. Hundreds – maybe thousands – of people have flown in N410RV and it's done its job so well that very soon we will record our 1000th RV-10 kit shipment.

A companion airplane, N220RV, was developed soon afterward. We installed a six-cylinder Continental IO-360 rated at 210 hp. This has proved to be an excellent airplane. It is some fifty pounds lighter than the Lycoming powered version, which makes up at least some of the difference in power. Although we've enjoyed flying it, it never struck a chord with the buying public. Prospective customers more often wanted to talk about more power, rather than less. In the end there was no point in producing engine mounts and cowls for an engine which few people wanted, so TwoTwenty has faded into the background a bit. It doesn't fly as much as it deserves to, but it fulfills a useful function as a back-up airplane and transition trainer for new RV-10 pilots.

Finally, there's the RV-12. N912RV served as a proof-of-concept airplane but our red demonstrator, N412RV, is the first RV-12 built from kit components. It has flown steadily since its first flight in early 2008, flying tests, rides and its first trip to Oshkosh. It is a definite improvement over the first version – toe brakes, thank God – and it flies very well indeed. The only difference I can think of between it and the airplanes that customers will be rolling out by the end of the year is the steps. We quickly learned that the step needed to be lower, so all kits have been provided with a modified version that will make getting in and out much easier.

Given the easy flying characteristics, solid structure of the airframe and the apparent indestructibility of the Rotax 912, we expect this airplane will be with us for quite a while.

It has a hangar full of good company.





QB STATUS

After a relatively brief, but frustrating, interlude, QuickBuild production is back on track in the Philippines. In the last two weeks, we've received a container of RV-10 fuselages and control surfaces, followed by two containers of various two-seat airplanes. It's good to see fuselages and wings on the QB roll-around racks again!

We inspected the kits carefully when they arrived, and we're happy to say that construction quality is very good indeed, at least as good as, maybe even slightly better than kits built in the older facility.

At this point, we anticipate nothing but good things for the QuickBuild program. Photos of the new shop show a clean, well-lit facility with good shipping access. The new location in an "economic zone" will allow us more flexibility on shipping and staffing, as well as lower expenses for shipping bonds, etc. All models are currently being assembled. We expect lead times to return to normal shortly.



Despite the rumors that circulated on various websites and blogs, we never felt the QB program was in any real danger. We were as frustrated and anxious as any customer about the delays – after all, we make our living by providing kits to customers, so anything that gets in the way of that causes us concern.

We certainly appreciate the patience of the vast majority of QB customers who kept the faith and waited for shipments to resume.

FITTING RUBBER GRIPS TO CONTROL STICKS



We use bicycle handle bar grips on the control sticks of airplanes. It makes sense – in both cases, a comfortable non-slip grip aids control. In the RV-12, the installation is standard, but the grips are one of the very few parts not included in the kit. The builder's manual says to buy a set of grips and "install (them) over the end of the WD-1212 Control Sticks."

I've spent most of my adult life around bicycles but somehow I've never installed a set of handlebar grips – all my bikes have bars wrapped with handlebar tape. So, off I trotted to the local bike shop, bought a set of grips... and spent an hour and a half trying to get the first @\$! grip to slide down the control stick.

It went about an inch, and then friction took over and I just couldn't slide it any further. I tried brute force. The rubber grip smiled. I tried WD-40. The rubber grip grinned. I tried a film of motor oil. The rubber grip grimaced. I tried fervent cursing and pushing down around the rim with a bicycle tire iron. The rubber grip, I swear, snickered. Obviously, in the infinitely long list of things that many people in the world know and I don't, is how to put a rubber grip on a steel tube.

The next day, I'm heading out on a bike ride and there's Tom Green in his front yard. Tom knows a thing or two about bikes, so I pull in and explain my total inability vis-à-vis rubber handle bar grips and control sticks. Tom smiles slightly and I know that he knows the secret. I smile slightly and Tom knows I will shoot him *where he stands* if he doesn't tell me, right now. So he tells me.

"Just insert the nozzle of your air hose between the bottom of the grip and the stick and let it rip," he says. "The grip will slide right down on a film of pressurized air." Compressed air? Well, o.k....nothing else had worked, so I tried it.

I hate it when Tom's right.

INSTALLING FUEL AND FUEL RETURN LINES

Fuel and fuel return lines are made from 3/8 and 1/4" soft aluminum tube, respectively. There's nothing particularly difficult about bending, flaring or installing them. (If you're new to aluminum tube, you might burn up a few extra feet of tubing learning how to flare and bend, but really, the learning curve is pretty short.) The placement of the tubes in the tunnel is important, especially back by the F-1204 bulkhead. You must keep the tubes as close to the belly skin as you can, as far aft as you can. They will want to slant up slightly from the F-1276C Systems Blocks to the snap bushing in the F-1204 bulkhead, setting up a potential interference with the flap handle which is coming soon.

I let exactly this happen, and found that changing the shape of the installed fuel and return lines a difficult prospect requiring some lateral thinking. Trying to push a new shape into the line didn't work – in the restricted quarters of the fuselage, I couldn't bend them enough to make them yield and assume a new position. They just sprang back. I decided to use impact and fashioned a suitable bludgeon from a 1x3 piece of 3/4" thick wood about a foot long. I curved one end and filed a slot into it that fit the diameter of the tubing. The business end looked vaguely like the working slots of a real tubing bender. I put two layers of tape over the fuel line, put the curved end of the stick up against it and gave the back end a couple of sharp raps with a hammer. Darned if it didn't work! It accentuated the curve in the fuel line just enough to clear the flap handle by about 0.80".



Ain't nothin' you can't fix on an airplane if you have a big hammer and a fixit stick...

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION SPECIAL AIRWORTHINESS CERTIFICATE			
A	CATEGORY/DESIGNATION LIGHT-SPORT		
	PURPOSE AIRPLANE		
B	MANUFACTURER	NAME	N/A
		ADDRESS	N/A
C	FLIGHT	FROM	N/A
		TO	N/A
D	N- 412RV	SERIAL NO.	2
	BUILDER Van's Aircraft Inc.	MODEL	RV-12
E	DATE OF ISSUANCE	07/26/2009	EXPIRY UNLIMITED
	OPERATING LIMITATIONS DATED	07/20/2009	ARE PART OF THIS CERTIFICATE
	SIGNATURE OF FAA REPRESENTATIVE		DESIGNATION OR OFFICE NO.
	George A. Marcom		NM FSDO 09

Any alteration, reproduction or misuse of this certificate may be punishable by a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or imprisonment not exceeding 3 years, or both. THIS CERTIFICATE MUST BE DISPLAYED IN THE AIRCRAFT IN ACCORDANCE WITH APPLICABLE TITLE 14, CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS (CFR).

FAA Form 8130-7 (07/04) SEE REVERSE SIDE NSN: 0052-00-693-4000

VAN'S RECEIVES S-LSA CERTIFICATION

This small pink piece of paper is a Big Deal.

After years of intense effort building two airplanes, testing them extensively and completing mountains of paperwork, we celebrated the fortieth anniversary of Apollo 11 by receiving a Special Light Sport Airplane



airworthiness (S-LSA) certificate for the RV-12.

RV-12 builders are now assured that they can license airplanes conforming to N412RV as Experimental-Light Sport (E-LSA) aircraft.

This has come just in time, as the very first RV-12 to come out of a shop other than ours is up for inspection within the next few days. Van's East Coast representative Mitch Lock rolled out his very, very blue example.

Mitch has served as a "beta" tester and advisor as his project progressed. We've provided him parts and kits a little ahead of other builders in order to take advantage of his feedback. His RV-12 will fly soon and will be available for demo rides to those who cannot make the trip to the Correct Coast to visit Van's.

RV-12 PROP

I've been telling callers that the RV-12 will come with a fixed-pitch Sensenich prop. Turns out I'm wrong – although four months ago I was probably right. One zig behind the zags, I guess. We've

decided that standard RV-12 prop will be a Sensenich ground-adjustable unit with the high-pitch stop set specifically for the RV-12. This will be good news to those living in higher density altitude areas, because during the hot months they can re-pitch the prop for better take-off performance. (You may or may not need to. On the way to Oshkosh last year, I took off from Sun Valley, Idaho in 90+ degrees. Friedmann Memorial is at 5300' elevation and I was approximately 70 lbs below gross weight. With the cruise prop setting, the RV-12 had no problem getting off and climbing out of the valley.)



more than twenty stitches and a rather dramatic scar – that that metal edging is sharp and nasty. Be careful when you get your engine!

RV-12 AVIONICS KIT

The RV-12 avionics kit is now available! Now you'll get the chance to see if you installed all that wiring in the fuselage correctly. The kit includes:

- Customer's choice of Garmin 296, 396, 495 or 496 GPS and choice of database
- Dynon FlightDEK D180 electronic flight information system/engine monitor
- Garmin SL-40 com radio
- Garmin 327 Transponder (GTX 328 with Mode S available for Europe)
- Artex ME406 ELT
- Flightcom 403 stereo intercom

All necessary installation components and materials, including switch panel, fuses, etc.

Prices for modern avionics always seem sobering, but if you consider all you get in the Avionics Kit – pre-wired plug-n-play components, high quality electronics and capability that would have been reserved for business class airplanes just a few years ago – the kit is an excellent value.



RV-12 POWERPLANT KIT

Components for the RV-12 Powerplant Kit are steadily building up on our shelves. Walking through the production shop last week, on the way to the hangar, I noticed a pallet of RV-12 exhaust systems. Beautifully made (here at Van's), they should be very easy to install.

We've received our first shipment of twenty-five Rotax engines. We opened all the boxes to inspect them and were glad we did – they were delivered with a different water pump configuration than we specified. This was easily and speedily corrected.

A word of caution: Rotax engines come in wood boxes with metal edging. I've found – to the tune of

Left: A flock o' boxes arrived in our warehouse recently, all containing shiny new Rotax 912ULS engines. It won't be long until we have the powerplant kits going out the door.

Below: we DO have avionics kits going out the door. Below is the standard RV-12 panel.



ANOTHER COOL MACHINE

Remember last issue's article on Cool Machines at Van's? Here's another one:

Mike Ekstrand and Bill Bobbit have spent the last month building, installing and tuning up a new RV-12 spar riveting fixture (either that or they've made a secret trip to Area 51 and returned with parts from an alien ship...).

Based around the big power riveter mentioned last month, this new table/rack/indexing jig will allow us to build spars in-house. Except for anodizing, everything from initial punching to final assembly will be under one roof.

Mike, engineer Ken Krueger and operator Ben Ramos have been co-operating on a batch of spars, each learning from the other as we accumulate the knowledge and methods we need to produce even better production parts.



NEW LED POSITION LIGHTS

Options for LED position lights have been available for some time, but many of the systems have been very basic "home-brewed" designs, with minimal testing for durability or the ability to meet FAA standards for light output.

The stock generator on the RV-12 requires that we use lights with a very low current draw. After evaluating the available products, we decided to use the AeroLED™ lights.

AeroLEDs™ landing and navigational lighting products are designed for some of the most extreme operating conditions on the planet. They introduced the world's first LED-based Nav/Strobe lighting product that meets TSOs C30C and C96a-C2. The PULSAR line is a "clean sheet" design, utilizing advanced mechanical/electrical computer modeling and optical ray-tracing software to accurately predict the performance of the final product.

The design has many benefits compared to traditional lighting systems: zero maintenance, reduced power consumption, no harmful substances such as xenon or mercury, extended lifespan, lighter weight, reduced aerodynamic drag. All units are sealed and nitrogen purged. These are a direct retrofit when replacing legacy products, with no mounting modifications. No power pack or high voltage wiring is required – the strobes connect directly to a switched 9-36v supply. A built-in filter eliminates noise from the aircraft audio system. Strobes can be synchronized.

Two systems are available to suit RVs:

- Pulsar NS90 c/w Suntain. Wingtip position/strobe lights combined with a tail light/strobe for rudder mounting. This fits the post-2000 RV-7/8/9/10 wingtips with a recess, and is the standard installation for these models. Similar to Whelen A650 c/w A500 lights (LN SYS 6).
- Pulsar ExP. Wingtip position/strobe lights combined with an aft facing white light, similar to Whelen A600. These fit the RV-12 and older W-415 type wingtips (no recess) on the RV-4/6/8, on airframes without the rudder light.

Prices are still being finalized, but will be competitive with the Whelen systems.



IF WE'RE LUCKY, AIRPLANES NEVER DIE

KEN SCOTT



The lead article about our long-lived prototypes suggested this historical note:

About a year ago, I wrote an article about a restored Staggerwing Beech that ran in *AOPA Pilot*. Local old-airplane guru and restorer John Pike and his crew turned what John called a "debris field" into a beautifully restored flying machine.

While I was visiting John's hilltop shop, he took me into a large back room and showed me his personal airplane. It was large high-wing monoplane with a huge cabin and a big radial on the nose. I looked at the wing-like lift struts and immediately identified it as a Bellanca, but beyond that I was lost.

John helped me out. It was, in fact, a Bellanca CH-300 Pacemaker, built in 1929. John bought it as a complete wreck (for \$150.00!) and brought it back to life. The project took fifteen years and uncountable hours. During the restoration, he researched the airplane and found it had a unique place in history: NC251M was the very first airplane purchased by Inter-Island Airways, now known as Hawaiian Airlines.

Stanley Kennedy, the founder of Inter-Island had learned all about flying over open water as a Naval aviator in WWI. He spent the war flying open-cockpit Curtiss flying boats over the North Sea looking for German submarines. When he returned to his home in Hawaii, he joined the family shipping business. In a few years, he persuaded them that airplanes were a viable way of getting between islands in the Hawaiian chain. He selected Sikorsky flying boats as the workhorses of

his new airline, but he knew that almost nobody in Hawaii had actually flown — virtually all the aviation in the islands was military. He decided that an airplane dedicated to flying rides and introducing the idea of flight to the public would be a good investment.

To that end, he purchased the brand new Bellanca — one of the most efficient airplanes of its day. Kennedy and members of his family traveled in the airplane from the Bellanca factory in Delaware to San Francisco (this was 1929...). From there it was shipped to Honolulu.

It spent three years flying rides (at \$3.00 a head!) and introduced thousands of Hawaiian citizens to the idea of air travel. The Sikorskys did the heavy lifting, flying freight and passengers between landing strips (and occasionally bays) on all the islands, but it was the Bellanca that launched the airline.

It then moved on to a long career in Alaska and British Columbia before a takeoff accident in the 60s destroyed it... or would have, if John Pike hadn't discovered the wreckage on a duster strip in Oregon.

NC251M is now in the final stages of a complete restoration at the Port Townsend Air Museum. Hawaiian is the longest continuously operated airline in the United States and they plan on celebrating their 80th anniversary late this year — by flying their very first airplane from the same location it made its first Island flight.

How cool is that?

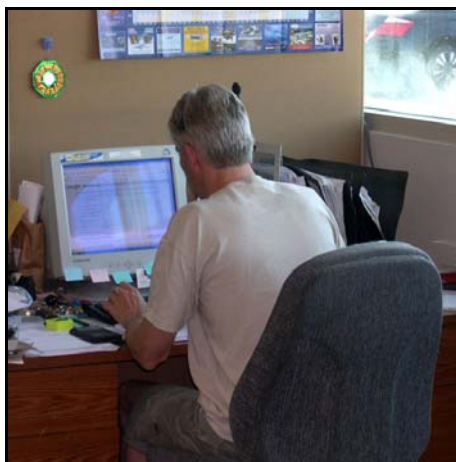
REPEAT OFFENDER'S CORNER



Dave Wilson, Galesburg, IL is the first to be featured in our new "Repeat Offender's Corner." Dave has built three RV-8s. We've seen his earlier ones at Oshkosh, and they've been beautifully built examples, worthy in every way of the awards that they've received. So nice, in fact, that Dave can't seem to hold on to them — there always seem to be other people who recognize the quality and are prepared to pay for it.

His latest airplane, he says, is his best yet. According to Dave: "I can't believe this machine (82803). Absolutely everything is SPOT ON! Cruise at 24/24, feet off the rudder pedals and the ball is precisely in the middle. I guess that's why I do this. I continue to be amazed."

We aren't exactly amazed after seeing Dave's earlier efforts — but we are impressed!



SHOCK AND AWE

Did we seem a bit slow on the phones the morning of July 13? No doubt. We were all in a state of shock, awe or amazement that made it difficult to concentrate.

And what caused this state?

Gus Funnell, without any hint or prior announcement, arrived at work...without his trademark ponytail! There were dozens of gasps, a couple of chest-clutches and even more stunned silences. Then, as a group, we chorused: why?

According to Gus, "It was time."

So, when you encounter Gus at Oshkosh or some other fly-in — you've been warned.

CALENDAR

VAN'S HOMECOMING 2009

It's summer, so the two big upcoming events on our calendar are Oshkosh and Van's 2009 Homecoming.

For the third year in a row, Van's Aircraft will hold the Van's Homecoming event at Independence State Airport (7S5) in Independence, Oregon. The date for the 2009 event will be August 28th and August 29th.

The event is hosted by EAA Chapter 292 and the residents of Independence Airpark. The Van's Homecoming event is not a fundraising event for Chapter 292, the members of the Chapter put this on as a "friend raising" event for the RV community and Van's Aircraft. Van's Aircraft supports the event by reimbursing the Chapter for costs as well as renting a tent for the event.

For those who have not attended this event, the Homecoming is held at Independence Airpark in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. Independence Airpark is a 200 home residential airpark situated on a 3000' paved, lighted state maintained airport with two fuel suppliers and a nice airport restaurant. There are 53 RV's based here, a number of which are under construction, including all variants of RV's. The past years have seen approximately 90 RV's fly to Independence, some from faraway places like Canada and the eastern U.S., some are a 15 minute flight away and only come for the dinner and a few hour visit. Independence Airpark residents volunteer to host Van's Homecoming attendees at no cost during the event. Those of you who have visited in the last two years know the great friendships that have formed at this event. Some accommodations include hangar space, some include tie down space at the home. All accommodations include the chance to meet people who share your passion for friendship through aviation. Van's Aircraft brings some of their aircraft here and there are Van's employees onsite generally throughout the weekend.

HOMECOMING PROGRAM

Thursday, August 27th, 2009 - Aircraft arrivals from out of the area are welcome to arrive and check into their pre-arranged free guest host housing. No events are planned.

Friday, August 28th, 2009 – Aircraft arrivals will be welcomed to check in with their guest hosts if staying overnight. Local transient aircraft welcomed.

- Arrivals are encouraged to mingle, meet Van's people, and enjoy the airpark.
- Various RV builders' hangars will be open all day on Friday. A walking map will be provided at the EAA 292 Chapter Hangar.
- From 4:30-6:30 - RV "social" and dinner at EAA 292 Hangar. The Friday night social meal, paid at the door for \$8.50 will consist of a pulled bbq pork sandwich or a thai chicken wrap. Soft drinks, beer and wine will be available. Cost \$8.50 per person. Friendship is spoken here.
- From 6:00PM to 10:00PM - By popular demand from last year, there will be musical entertainment free of charge which will be held in RV-6A builders Dennis and Eileen Krummel's hangar. The show will be provided by airpark resident and former Las Vegas entertainer Dave Upton.

Saturday, August 29th, 2009 – Aircraft arrivals continue throughout the day.

- 7:00AM until 10:00 AM –All you can eat breakfast served by EAA Chapter 292 members and volunteers. Cost is \$5.00
- Various RV builders hangars will be open throughout the day on Saturday. A walking map will be provided at the EAA 292 Chapter Hangar.
- No-Host Breakfast and Lunch is available at the Starduster Restaurant, on the field.
- A winery tour, organized by airpark residents will begin about 1PM. Last year there were 5 vehicles full of "tourers/tasters" that visited several area wineries, all are located just a few minutes from the field. This was a popular event last year.
- Van's Aircraft Homecoming banquet will be held in a large tent at the EAA Chapter 292 Hangar. Tickets (\$20.00 per person) should be purchased from Van's Aircraft. Some tickets will be available at the door. Happy hour 5:30 PM. Start time 6:00 PM.

Sunday, August 30, 2009 – Aircraft depart

- No-Host breakfast available beginning at 6:00AM at the Starduster Restaurant

Saturday night banquet:

8 oz Prime Rib or Chicken Breast

Dinner Roll

Pan seared vegetables

Dinner Salad w/balsamic vinaigrette dressing

Chocolate Mousse

Water, soft drinks, beer and wine available

SAME WAY, SAME DAY

KEN SCOTT

We spent most of last week at the big Pacific Northwest fly-in in Arlington, Washington. The RV-12 spent the whole show parked in front our booth, while our other airplanes shuttled back and forth between Aurora and Arlington.

Sunday, Scott and Cynthi Risan were scheduled to fly the RV-12 home and one of us would ferry a truck-driver up on Monday to bring home the van with our booth and boxes of airshow paraphernalia. Northwest weather had other plans. Scott and Cynthi ended up driving the van home in steady rain, which left the RV-12 sitting, forlornly, all alone on an almost deserted airport.

Two days later, the system had finally blown through and Scott asked me if I could ferry him north to pick it up. I suggested we take the RV-9A and fly the two airplanes back side-by-side to check the relative fuel consumption.

At first glance, this might seem a silly comparison — the tiny 74 cubic inch Rotax vs. the 320 cubic inch thumper from Lycoming. The reasonable assumption would be that the bigger engine would burn more fuel.

Well, it's more complicated than that. The RV-9A has a faired landing gear, a constant speed prop and flush rivets. It has a unique and very efficient wing. While its engine is certainly capable of making more power than the Rotax, the airframe really doesn't need that much to cruise at lower speeds.

We flew up to Arlington at 23"/2300 rpm, never climbing above about 2000' due to the overcast. We made it in about 1:15, burning about 10.5-11 gallons. Coming home, Scott flew the 12 at about 24/25" and 4800 rpm (pretty relaxed for that engine) and I found that to stay off his wing, the RV-9A required 16"/2100 rpm. I leaned as best I was able at the low altitude — Scott didn't have to, because the Rotax has altitude-compensating carburetors.

Getting precise fuel burn numbers was more difficult than we expected, due to some inexactitude in filling the tanks on both airplanes. But as best as we can tell, after 1.6 hours of flying, the total consumption was:

RV-9A: 8.4— 8.8

RV-12: 8-5—9.0

Margin of error, at least 1/2 gallon for either airplane.



The great circle distance between Aurora and Arlington is 177 nautical miles. We probably flew a bit over 200 to avoid airspace and clouds. This means that both airplanes averaged about 24 smpg — probably better than most of the cars we flew over while moving twice the speed.

It's not a scientific test by any means. Just an interesting thing to try. But it did prove to me that you could have a lovely day's flying on relatively little fuel — in either airplane.



CAPTION CONTEST

We got quite a few responses to Rian and his Sun'N Fun "ground crew." Most of them were printable, and many were pretty funny!

Winner, by popular vote of the people who count (no, I'm not revealing names...):

"I thought the shop said they installed a 'chip' magnet ... but I'm not complainin'" **Patrick Kelley 23264 & 40937.**

Honorable mentions:

"In war, there are Victors and the Defeated; in love, Romeos and Deadbeats. You look like a Romeo Victor to me." **Craig Dixon 91863.**

"Van's Aircraft, making people (engineers) cool since 1978." **Axel Alvarez.**



IT'S A COMET!

A couple of readers correctly identified this massive all-wood airplane as a deHavilland DH.88 Comet. Not to be confused with the Comet jetliner that came later, the original Comet was an all-out racer that won the London — Melbourne (Australia) race in 1934.

Now, there's a serious homebuilding project! Two deHavilland six-cylinder in-line engines, an all-wood airframe and a two-seat tandem cabin.

At least one DH. 88 replica has been built and flown in the USA. If this one in New Zealand flies, it will raise the total number of DH.88s completed (including those built by deHavilland) to...seven. Beautiful airplane, huge job.