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# EAA Chapter 569 Newsletter

Lincoln, NE



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## Meeting Announcement

**Date:** Tuesday, August 12th

(Please note, due to Oshkosh, the meeting is a week later than normal.)

**Time:** 7:30pm

**Program:** Maj. Daniel L. Smith

Maj. Smith is with the Nebraska Army National Guard. Everything he does is with helicopters.

**Place:** Duncan Aviation Engine Shop  
5000 NW 44<sup>th</sup> St – Lincoln, NE

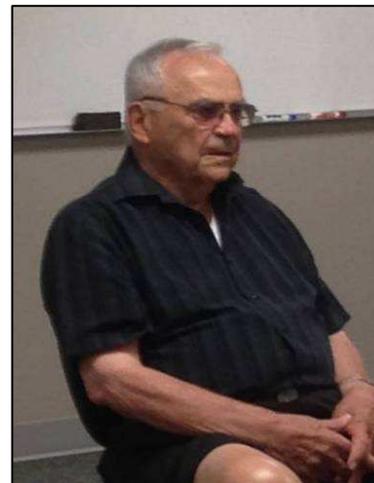
### President's Message Cristi Higgins



Hope everyone is having fun at Oshkosh! It is exactly getting together that is the most wonderful part of any club. Ours is extra special because we revolve around the best industry of aviation. You all know we have lost some members as we grow older as a club. The good news is we have also gained some. Aviation is a family hobby and many of us share the passion with our family. I love to see members bring their family to our events. We have several new or potential members right in our households. Sharing a hobby is so beneficial and creates wonderful memories so share away and bring them along!

Happy Landings,  
Cristi Higgins

## July Program



B-17 pilot Dick Miller had the audience's undivided attention as he spoke about his distinguished flying career at the July meeting. His 487th Bomb Group still reunites every year, last year in San Antonio, TX and this year in Rapid City, SD. The group's children have formed an auxiliary and plan to continue the annual reunion.



This nice looking C-172 flew in for the July breakfast. Based out of Fairmont, this plane only has a little over 600 hours on it. Not bad for 1974.



Russ and Judy Kelsea were surprise visitors at the July Chapter breakfast. Now living in New Hampshire, they dropped in on their way to Fort Collins, CO. Russ served as Chapter 569 President in 1999 and 2000.

there both westbound and eastbound. Warsaw has two runways, good service, fair prices, and an active pilot community. The locals at Warsaw provided great hospitality and welcomed us into their community for our eastbound overnight stay. We will certainly stop there again. Altogether, we flew about 32 hours, almost evenly split east and westbound, on our flight from Concord, NH to Longmont, CO and return.

Thanks again to members of Chapter 569. It was good to be a part of your activities again, if only for breakfast. ”

Russ & Judy Kelsea

“We had a good time at the Chapter breakfast on July 19. It was nice to visit with old friends and see some of the new people in the Chapter. Thanks to everyone for the hospitality! After the weather improved, we continued our trip to Colorado. By the time we arrived at Longmont, the temperature was 101 degrees F and the density altitude was 8,700 feet at the airport surface. The old Cherokee was certainly feeling the effects, both on arrival and when we started eastbound a few days later. Longmont's airport was a good choice for our stay in Colorado. They have an active group of local pilots, many of whom are associated with their local EAA Chapter, plus a food trailer (think food truck) that has a great reputation with the locals. Our favorite airport on the trip was Warsaw, Indiana. We stopped

Ask Siri ...

(for iPhone users)

"What airplanes are above me ?"

	type	slant distance
N929ML		20 miles N
Delta Air Lines flight 1731	Boeing 757-200	18 miles WNW
Allegiant Air flight 436	McDonnell Douglas MD-83	30 miles SSE
SkyWest Airlines flight 6242	Canadair Regional Jet CRJ-700	32 miles NNE
Southwest Airlines flight 190	Boeing 737-700	45 miles W

(locations based on projections of delayed data)  
(angles with respect to nominal horizon)

Sky map

Staff Sgt. Prange

Staff Sgt. Benjamin G. Prange, 30, of Hickman died July 24th of wounds suffered during an IED attack on his vehicle in Afghanistan. Chapter 569 member Doug Prange is a great-uncle to Benjamin. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Prange family.

Going to Oshkosh?

If you would like to share your Oshkosh pictures and stories in the September Newsletter, please have them to me by Friday, August 22nd. You can email them to [rv7doug@gmail.com](mailto:rv7doug@gmail.com).

Welcome new members!

Name: Keal Bockelman  
 Aviation experience: Airline experience, Nebraska Army National Guard UH-72 pilot  
 Airplane Project: Zenair CH640

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Name: Bill Kreuser  
 Aviation experience: Private, complex, high performance, instrument



## plane talk by Lauran Paine, Jr

IT WAS JUST AN AIRPLANE RIDE FOR someone. Naw. That's a huge understatement. It was going to be a lot more than an airplane ride. It was going to be a ride in a Stearman, and the passenger would be my youngest son, Darin. This would be his first ride in the old biplane, flying again after a two-year restoration.

It was a men's morning out. Just the two of us on a calm summer day with lots of blue sky and an old airplane with an ambience all its own. Was I looking forward to it? Another understatement. You bet. Sharing the things you love is fun, especially when it's with family.

And I wondered what Darin felt. After all, children, indeed generations, often see things differently. Their music is often our noise, and our music is their b-o-r-i-n-g. But a Stearman ride? As Shakespeare said, "A Stearman is a Stearman is a Stearman." (That is what he said, isn't it?)

Would my son grasp the airplane's history, the sounds, the noise, the wind, the view? Would he enjoy it? So I asked him to tell me—in his own words—and I'm going to sandwich his feelings in here with mine. (Besides, it fits in with a college class assignment of his—write an article for a magazine.) It's tag-team journalism. I'm excited to share it with you.

First, any airplane ride worth its salt starts with breakfast at the favorite local breakfast place, The Original Pancake House. You know the place: The worn linoleum floor creaks when you walk on it, you don't have to ask for coffee, you don't need a menu, and you ask the

waitress how her kids are doing in school.

The food, a known quantity, happens while my son and I talk of classes, school, dreams, and the upcoming ride. Bonding is happening; anticipation is happening. Anticipation is the prelude for the subject to come. Warmed, comfortable, and buoyed by the beautiful summer morning, we head for the airport. Was my son excited? Or just curious? Or what? *So my dad says the restoration took only two years, but it felt more like six or seven. Children don't always understand or want to be affiliated with the "hands in pockets" phase. This is where men in overalls stand around and look at the beautiful, classic tool of aviation knowing what needs to be done, but they are in no rush to get there. I was young. I saw a plane with no engine on it yet. But I managed to enjoy myself at the ol' hangar in a small town. I tried to be helpful and contribute whenever possible.*

*In my young mind it's hard to improve on the day after having minced ham and eggs for breakfast. But it's flight day, and the sky beckons. On our way to the hangar I had my window down, enjoying the warm morning, and found myself staring at the inviting blue sky. The anticipation had built for years, but I found my excitement to be surprisingly calm. One of those rare moments came over me. I say "rare" because this is not something kids normally do when they are excited. I was relishing the moment; time was at a standstill.*

Hangar doors make music. Not everyone understands that, but they do. Whether they rumble, squeak, stick, or squeal, to an aviator it is

music. It's the preamble for the flight to come. And the doors give way to the theater that houses the main attraction, the long-legged, round-motored, two-winged, muscle-bound Stearman. I'm feeling all this, but I'm just a stupid, sappy, emotional adult.

*There it stood, proud and boastful. The plane looked as though it could fly on its own. We, the Stearman, Dad, and I, had been waiting a long time to fly together. The time was upon us, and my anxiety began to build. We looked like the good ol' boys who flew this plane so many years ago, the teacher and the student. Like my dad, I had my leather jacket on. Well, I think mine was leather. It did have cool aviation patches on it.*

We push the Stearman into the sunshine. We preflight it. Ah-ha, I've got him now! You can't lay hands on the old biplane and not feel something. It's big, it's strong, and it's proud. But really, I'm not searching for an emotion from my son—I just want him to live his life, to be productive and happy. I'm just hoping he'll find some joy in that which I love so much. Parents have feelings; we can't help it.

*I walk around inspecting the plane, as I've seen my dad and other pilots do. Top Gun and The Right Stuff are good references for preflight. I search for anything out of the ordinary, but all I find is a flight-ready machine. This doesn't surprise me. The Stearman has been ready for some time in my youthful eyes. But I know every good pilot performs his or her preflight with a critical inspection. That's me, a good pilot. Or at least a soon-to-be good pilot. Maybe even a great*

*pilot, like my dad.*

We climb on the wing, step over the coaming, stand on the seat, and slide down into the cockpit. This is how you put on an airplane that has character. Instruments, floorboards, rudder pedals, seat belts, stick, and throttle. And you can look straight up and see blue. No roof. Just a beckoning sky. This is home. Cockpits have been a home to me for more than 30 years. What are they to a young person just going for a ride?

*Now comes the cool part. I get to strap in and put on the World War II like leather helmet and goggles that were ordered and received months before this day. I'm in the cockpit. I'm excited, confident, curious, and ready. I get my instruction on the radio, one click for Dad, two for the tower. Where are the machine guns in case we see the Red Baron?*

Switches on, prime, start button, winding sound, prop turns, engine coughs, sputters, catches, belches smoke, and settles into a throaty idle. It's a symphony, a round-motored symphony. You can hear it, feel the wind from the prop, and feel the vibration course through the airplane—and your veins. What just happened has meaning. I don't know what the meaning is, but it *does* have meaning. To me, anyway. I nudge the throttle open, and the Stearman begins a slow walk, bumping along in rhythm with the taxiway. Flight is close at hand.

*As the engine rumbles, so does the body. I see the coughed up smoke and hear the engine settle into a deep, soul-awakening idle. The throttle moves, and we begin to roll forward. Passing hangar after hangar, then plane after plane.*

*People hear the radial engine singing and come out to look from their hangars (hands in pockets) and from the flight deck at the restaurant.*

*The other planes even seem to be looking, as if their grandfather is walking by. As we bounce along the taxiway, I realize I can't see a darn thing in front of me. I look side to side. I assume it's the same for my dad because the tail swivels a bit now and again. Anxiety is building.*

Lined up on the runway now, power up, noise increases, stick forward, tail up, stick back, air wraps itself around the wings and lifts the wheels off the ground. The head in front of me is looking straight ahead. The ground moves away, the vistas become broader, and the patterns of life begin to reveal themselves in the landscape below. The head in front of me is still looking straight ahead. Thinking what?

*That moment is frozen in my mind as something I'll never forget. That moment when I looked down to the earth drifting away and then looked up in fear, realizing there was nothing over my head. The image of Hank Herman, an old family friend, hanging from an open-cockpit plane because he forgot to strap his harness on tightly played in my head. Then I quickly regained calmness. My harness was strapped on. I was out of harm's way. My dad and the Stearman were teaching me a lesson and letting me have the experience of a lifetime. A large smile came over my face and, I think, stayed there the rest of the flight.*

A gentle turn out of traffic and level off at 1,000 feet. Any higher would waste ambience. We are exploring

and feeling, not separating from the earth. The beautiful landscape that is Oregon's Willamette Valley is everywhere. Fields, streams, farms, and mountains in the distance.

The 90-mph wind is in our faces and around our wings. The old biplane has wrapped us up and is sweeping us away, giving the best it has to offer. Right now we need or want nothing else. We linger in the air for an hour. I've nothing else to say or describe; I'm just *feeling*. The head in front of me is looking left and right. Feeling what?

*My eyes are as big as the dials in front of me. I take in everything, the view beneath me, the view above, the view around, the smells, the sounds, everything. We fly over our house and circle. Mom is on the back deck, waving a kitchen towel, and my best friend and family dog, Chelsea, is looking in curiosity, wondering what I'm doing up there. At least that's what I remember my puppy doing.*

*My mom had flown in the Stearman before, and I was the one on the back deck. She went to wave at me below and got her arm blown back pretty hard. As I went to wave I remembered this. Slowly I began to extend my clenched fist, holding my arm stiff, lust when I thought the wind wasn't that strong, I threw my arm all the way out only to have it blown back pretty good as well. Another lesson learned.*

We head for the airport. We're going to land, but this flight will never be over. What I'm writing about happened five years ago, but writing in about it, it might as well have happened yesterday. It's that fresh in my mind. Physiologists will tell you that you can't etch a brain. I'm here to tell them they're wrong.

Downwind now, the head in front of me looking straight ahead again, at something. On base, my passenger is getting comfortable now, his elbows resting on the cockpit's sides. He asks, "Where's the airport?"

"Look off your left shoulder."

"Oh," he says.

"Darin, could you move your elbows down for a second? I have to look around the sides of the cockpit to see to land this thing."

"Sure."

We land, a slight crow hop, and roll out, gently bumping along again to the familiar rhythm of the round-motor in idle. So what was it? Fun? Cool?

*I considered myself a fairly educated kid. I knew my times tables, knew how to field a ground ball, knew that the road runner was faster than the coyote, knew it all. So as the plane began to descend I was pretty sure there should be a landing strip in front of it. At first I thought I just couldn't see it, but I was looking pretty hard. Finally I asked, got the answer, and saw it in plain sight to my left. Another lesson learned.*

*I observed everything in front of me as we came in on final. The sink movements, the throttle movements, the instrument readings were all being noted. As we rolled along, off the runway onto the taxiway, I kept thinking, "Let's do it again."*

We mosey up to the hangar, give a little burst of power to swing the tail around, and then shut off the engine. It's quiet now, except for the occasional crackle as the engine cools. We don't say anything, just slowly unstrap. When we hop off the lower wing to the ground our eyes meet and my son smiles, raises both hands, and gives me a high-

five. High-fives are good for parents.

*As I stepped off the wing I felt I was now a part of something. I was a part of aviation history thanks to a ride with my dad in the historic Stearman. Names like the Wright brothers and Chuck Yeager came to mind and thoughts of pilots who flew against tyranny in great wars. Now that I'm older and a product of higher education, I can put my thoughts into words. When I was younger I probably just said it was "way cool."*

*I was able to have an incredible experience I wish more people could have. I'm lucky. Dad is now building an RV-8. Upon completion of the RV and some ground school, I hope he can instruct me in the near future. This way perhaps I will be able to give to my own child what my dad has given me.*

We put the airplane to rest and head for home. On the way home Darin says, "Thanks, Dad. That was great. That thing is so cool."

"You're welcome. It was fun for me, too." Yet another understatement.

At home, some of his buddies were waiting for him, hats on backward, ready to play "some hoops" in the driveway. They ask, "Dude, where ya been?"

"My dad and I went for a ride in the biplane."

"Cool!"

One high-five, a thanks, and a cool. That's a darn good day for a stupid, sappy, emotional parent.

*(This article originally appeared in the May, 2001 issue of EAA Sport Aviation.)*

The meeting was called to order promptly at 7:33 PM CST by President Higgins.

The speaker for the evening was Mr. Dick Miller, who served as a B-17 pilot during World War II. Mr. Miller received his pilot training at Arrow Airport in Lincoln in 1936 in an 85 hp Travel Air 2000. His flight instructor was Alva White.

Mr. Miller was originally scheduled to be sent to the Philippines but stayed in the U.S.. He was sent to Massachusetts for training in the amphibious brigade and acted as the E.O.. Mr. Miller served as the base operator in Grand Island in 1943. After being sent to Europe, Mr. Miller served as the pilot of a B17 for 13 missions. His bomber never returned to base with less than 7 holes in the airplane. His luck ran out when the B17 was damaged so badly that he could no longer maintain flight. They were down to 1 ½ engines and struggling to maintain air speed. The B17 crash landed in Posen, Poland. He and his crew were met by the Russians who where advancing on Germany from the east. The Russians were unsure what to do with them so they were put in jail in the Gestapo headquarters. They then hitch hiked to Lodz, Poland and along the way accumulated some 50 other downed crew members. They were transported back to England in a C47 with several interesting stops along the way.

Special awards were given to Ray Hernandez, Don Shoemaker and Beatrice Ford Lincoln and Silverhawk Aviation for their help in having the B17 in Lincoln.

The treasurers report was given by Mark Werth. Mark reported that the B17 visit grossed \$3,843.00 less (\$1,450.00) in expenses netting \$2,393.00 for the chapter's treasury.

Young Eagles will fly on July 16th and 23rd from Silverhawk Aviation.

A motion was made and seconded to continue the breakfast gathering at the Crete Airport. The motion carried. The call went out for additional volunteers to supplement the team currently serving.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 CDT.

Respectfully Submitted  
Doug Elting, Secretary, Chapter 569

## Events

**York Airport (JYR)**, EAA Chapter 1055 Fly-in breakfast on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month. 0800-1000. Free will donation.  
**Crete Airport (CEK)**, EAA Chapter 569 Fly-in breakfast on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month. 0800-1000.

**July 28 - Aug. 3**, AirVenture, Oshkosh, WI, <http://www.airventure.org/>

**Aug. 31** - Genoa (97Y), Fly-in breakfast, 0730 - 1130 sponsored by Genoa Lions Club. Pilot and passengers eat free. More info: Don Pearson: 402.948.0067



### How to Become a Member...

Becoming an EAA Chapter 569 member is very easy to do! We now have an online registration system which helps make the registration process easier and faster. If you would prefer not to register online, we also have a form you can print off, fill out, and mail in. For more information about these options and how to become a member, go to [www.eaa569.org](http://www.eaa569.org) and select Join.

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