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EAA Chapter 569 Newsletter

Lincoln, NE



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Meeting Announcement

Date: Sunday, September 15th

Time: 4:30pm (eat around 5:00pm)

Program: Chapter 569 Annual Picnic

Place: Denton Airfield (NE40)
11215 W Yankee Hill Rd
Denton, NE 68669

There are two drives going south from West Yankee Hill Rd. Use the west drive. The drive is over ½ mile long. Click [here](#) for map.

Feel free to fly in. The 2,500' x 30' asphalt runway is in good shape. Please use **122.8**.

What to bring: Table setting, main dish, side dish or dessert. Drinks will be provided. There will be chairs but if you want your comfy, campsite chair, feel free to bring it. Also, if you're up for lawn dart or corn hole competition, throw that in as well. To cap off the festivities, Dennis Crispin will present a wonderful AirVenture '24 recap.

Hangar cleanup: Will take place on Saturday, **September 14th at 9:00am**. If you can help with the cleanup, please text Holly (402.432.1612) or Tiffany (402.219.2289) and let them know you're available.



As summer begins to wind down, we find ourselves in the midst of a busy and exciting time for aviation. I had the opportunity to attend the FAA Drone/AAM Symposium in Baltimore at the beginning of August, and I'm gearing up to attend the Four States Airports Conference in Kansas City this week. I wanted to take a moment to share some insights from these events and highlight how they impact our community.



**President's
Message
Tiffany
Thompson**

The FAA Drone/AAM (Advanced Air Mobility) Symposium was an eye-opening experience, bringing together industry leaders, regulators, and stakeholders to discuss the rapidly evolving landscape of drone technology and advanced air mobility. The symposium focused on the integration of drones into the national airspace system, touching on critical topics such as safety, regulations, and the future of urban air mobility. For pilots, there were significant takeaways, particularly around the evolving regulatory environment and the need for increased awareness of drone operations in shared airspace. As we continue to see growth in drone usage, it's crucial for all of us to stay informed about these changes and how they may affect our flying activities.

This week, I'll be attending the Four States Airports Conference in Kansas City. This conference is a gathering of aviation professionals from Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska, including airport representatives, consultants, and various aviation-related organizations. It's a unique opportunity for these groups to come together, share knowledge, and discuss the pressing issues facing our central region. The conference will cover a wide range of topics, including the latest developments in airport management, aviation safety, and infrastructure improvements. It's a chance for us to collaborate and ensure that our region remains at the forefront of aviation advancements.

As we continue to navigate the challenges and opportunities in aviation, it's events like these that keep us connected and informed. I look forward to sharing more insights with you all at our next meeting.

Safe flying, and see you in the skies!

Omaha Eppley Airport Disaster Exercise Request for Volunteers

October 19, 2024 – 7:00am – 2:00pm

(Volunteers are required to stay the entire time – end time is approximate.)

Volunteers (age 18 or older) are needed to portray accident victims during a **mock** disaster incident at Eppley Airport. Pre-registration is **REQUIRED**. Please forward your name, age, email and contact phone number to Patti Motl at mrceppley3@gmail.com. Updates and more information will be provided when all information is received!

A Ride on *Doc*

A Once-In-a-Lifetime Adventure!

By Dennis Crispin

During the EAA AirVenture convention in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, I was honored to participate in a rare moment of living history. With my family Ann Dovel and Craig Stoffel, I rode on the historic B-29 aircraft named *Doc*.

First a bit of background.

THE LONG-RANGE BOMBER.

As America was drawn into World War Two, it became apparent that America did not have a bomber aircraft capable of flying the vast overwater distances needed to take the air war to the Japanese home islands. Several aircraft companies submitted design proposals. The contract for a new long-range bomber was awarded to Boeing Aircraft Company. The new plane was – at that time - the largest American military aircraft to be put into production. It carried a level of technology far beyond anything that preceded it.

The plane – known as the B-29 Superfortress – went on to conduct devastating attacks on the enemy. It won the war for America.

But the airplane had its faults. Rushed into production before all of its problems were corrected, the B-29 suffered many operational failures when taken into combat.

After the war, the flaws in the design were corrected and the resulting craft was given a new designation, the B-50. But propeller driven airplanes of all types were soon obsolete by the beginning of the jet age.

Of the 3,970 B-29s built, only a dozen or so remained as museum displays. Only one, the Commemorative Air Force's *Fi-Fi*, remained airworthy prior to *Doc*'s restoration.

THE AIRPLANE THAT SURVIVED!

In the last days of the war, a squadron of eight B-29s was formed and the planes were named for the characters in the then newly released movie, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. The war was over before the squadron could be deployed to a combat area.

After the B-29 had been phased out, the Air Force transferred a group of B-29s to the Navy who towed them to a range in the California high desert with the intent of using them for target practice.

Many decades went by, and it was discovered that one of the planes just might be salvageable. The dry desert climate had preserved an airplane from the *Snow White* group, the one named *Doc*.



The historic B-29 Superfortress *Doc*, at the airport in Appleton, Wisconsin, starts its engines for another flight with adventurers in living history.

DOC'S FRIENDS.

A group to be known as Doc's Friends was incorporated and a major fundraising effort was undertaken. After a lot of work, possession of *Doc* was accomplished and the airplane was dismantled and trucked to Wichita, Kansas. In a hangar within sight of the factory where it was built, *Doc* was brought back to life.

The piece by piece, rivet by rivet, restoration took 16 years, many millions of dollars and 400,000 hours of skilled volunteer labor. The original cartoon of the Disney character *Doc* was repainted on the nose.

Doc is now the most precisely restored large antique military aircraft in the world.

Doc's Friends maintain and operate *Doc* as a living memorial to the flight crew, maintenance

personnel and factory workers whose efforts saved the American way of life in a time of great peril.

Doc's Friends offer a flight experience on *Doc* as a way of, in part, raising the enormous costs needed to operate the aircraft.



The Disney character Doc graces the nose of the airplane, just as it did in 1945.

MARK NOVAK

Mark Novak is a career Air Force pilot/officer who flew the B-1B and KC-135 in the Air Force and Nebraska Air Guard, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel. He became involved in the Commemorative Air Force organization, flying such historic aircraft as the AT-6 and A-26. He eventually became part of the pilot group that flew the CAF's B-29 *Fi-Fi*.

When *Doc* came online, Mark began flying *Doc*, quickly receiving the designation of Chief Pilot. There are only eight individuals qualified to serve as pilot-in-command on B-29s. Mark has the most pilot time in B-29s of those currently flying them.

THE ADVENTURE

Our adventure in living history began with a bus ride from the AirVenture site to the airport at Appleton. *Doc* flies passengers from Appleton to avoid the congested air space over Oshkosh. We arrived at the airport just as the earlier flight was departing, giving us a photo op of *Doc* departing and landing.

Our pilot/aircraft commander was Mark Novak, my friend and neighbor from Southeast Nebraska. The plane flies with a crew of six, the pilot, copilot and flight engineer in the cockpit and three scanners in the rear compartment. The scanners keep a constant visual check on the landing gear, control surfaces and other aircraft systems.

Three participants ride on the flight deck plus one lucky individual that occupies the bombardier's seat in the glassed-in nose. Seven people enjoy the flight from the gunner's seats in the rear compartment.

We climbed on board with a ladder through a hatch on the side of the craft. Most of the seats are windowless, but it is unimportant as we can get up and move around as soon as the plane is off the ground. The interior is unfinished with electrical wiring bundles and control cables running across the

sides and top of the compartment. The noise from the powerful engines is rather loud in the un-insulated space.

My seat is just behind the right spotter's station where I can see over his shoulder and view the wing, landing gear and terrain below.

When the signal to move around was given, I managed, with some difficulty, to get into the spotter's seat. The view was fantastic. I was pleased that the plexiglass "bubble" did not cause optical distortions in my photos.

There is a seat mounted some distance above the deck which puts the rider's head and shoulders into a Plexiglas dome that affords a 360-degree view above the plane. With the limitations of my arthritic body, it was unwise to attempt to climb into that chair.

Ann and Craig made the crawl (yes, it is quite literally a crawl) through the tail cone to the rear gunner's compartment. They reported that the view was great, but the ride in the extreme rear of the plane was a bit rough.

There are two large video monitors in the front of the compartment. One shows a map of the area. The other is connected to a camera that shows the pilot's view out the front of the



A view of the Wisconsin countryside under the wing of Doc.

plane. Headphones at each station allow the rider to listen in on the radio calls and the talk in the cockpit as the captain and crew read through and respond to numerous checklists. On takeoff and landing, a "sterile cockpit" is in force – no talking except for that necessary for the operation of the plane.

All too soon the half hour flight is nearly over, and the call is given to return to our assigned seats and buckle up. We watch the monitor as the B-29 slides down the approach path toward the center line on the long runway. The landing is perfect with only the gentle chirp of the tires to indicate that the weight of the airplane has been transferred from the wings to the wheels.

After landing, those of us that rode in the rear compartment were given a short tour of the flight deck. There was an opportunity for photos and autographs.

THE EXPERIENCE

So, why go for a ride in a noisy, uncomfortable, 80-year-old airplane? If it were only a flight experience in a rare aircraft, it would be an enjoyable, fun time. But this is *Doc*, the keeper of a heritage that every American should know and understand.

We should remember the young men who were the crews on B-29s in 1945. They were mostly 18, 19, or 20 years old and had never been more than 100 miles from home when they suddenly found themselves in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, engaged in the most violent and destructive war in human history.

They did not have the privilege of a gentle flight on a nice summer day in Wisconsin. Their service involved a high-risk takeoff in a plane overloaded with fuel and munitions. They flew a thousand miles over an ocean where rescue would have been impossible in case of trouble. Over the target they met an enemy determined to defend its homeland. They did this while flying in a plane that was built by young women who had never seen a big airplane before they went to work in the defense factory and maintained by mechanics whose previous experience was changing the spark plugs in a John Deere. A great many of those brave young men never returned home.



The group from Nebraska. Dennis Crispin, pilot Mark Novak, Ann Dovel and Craig Stoffel. Note the reflections in the highly polished surface.

So, Doc honors not just the flight crews, but all of the military and civilian organizations that supported them. And beyond that, *Doc* honors all of those who served in all branches of the military and the American nation whose people rolled up their sleeves and made the sacrifices that brought that terrible war to conclusion.

To one who has a lifelong fascination with aircraft and is deeply interested in 20th century history, the ride on *Doc* is the ultimate flight experience. I feel that the experience on *Doc* is one of the great privileges that life has given me.

EAA Chapter 569 Calendar		
Month		
September	15	Chapter 569 Picnic - Shoemaker Airfield 4:30pm
	21	8:00am - 10:00am Crete Fly in Breakfast, EAA Chapter 569 - KCEK
	28	11:30am - 1:30pm Hastings Hamburger Fly in Lunch (rain or shine) - KHSI
October	1	7:00pm General Meeting
	19	8:00am - 10:00am Crete Fly in Breakfast, EAA Chapter 569 - KCEK
	26	11:30am - 1:30pm Hastings Hamburger Fly in Lunch (rain or shine) - KHSI
November	5	7:00pm General Meeting
	16	8:00am - 10:00am Crete Fly in Breakfast, EAA Chapter 569 - KCEK
December	1	EAA 569 Christmas Party - Antelope Park Shelter 5:00pm
	21	8:00am - 10:00am Crete Fly in Breakfast, EAA Chapter 569 - KCEK

Money for BIE, more hangars at SWT

From The Lincoln Journal Star

A \$4.8 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation will help the Beatrice Municipal Airport reconstruct its apron and taxiway next spring.

The grant from the Airport Improvement Program is part of \$18 million award to 24 airports in the state. It's the largest grant of the 24, exceeding even the \$3.46 million for Omaha's Eppley Airfield and \$3.4 million for North Platte Regional/Lee Bird Field.

Airport manager Dennis Schmitt said the airport has been pursuing money for the project for at least five years. The work has been contracted to Vogts-Parga Construction, a Kansas company.

Once they start, Schmitt said the project will take about six months. "It's going to be split into four different phases," Schmitt said. "And the reason for the phases is just, you know, to keep the airport open, keep runways open, and to be able to allow fuel sales aircraft to get fuel. So they're splitting it up into four different sections." Schmitt said the taxiway work is to add a turn between it and the apron. FAA requires that as a safety feature instead of the straight shot that exists now.

The apron itself has become too worn.

"The current apron, ... a few years ago, some core samples were done, and it's just a little beyond needing rehab," Schmitt said. "It kind of needs to be replaced."

Schmitt said he didn't know how old the asphalt was.

"I know some of it's been probably resurfaced and many times, but yeah, there's a lot of cracks in the over the years," he said. "They've done, done our best to maintain that with crack sealing and everything, but it's just gotten to the point where it needs to be replaced."

They will also move a fuel island from the middle of the apron to relieve congestion and add an above ground tank to the southeast side of the apron.

Other Southeast Nebraska airports receiving money are:

- * Farrington Field in Auburn, \$215,000, for hangar design;
- * Fairbury Municipal Airport, \$225,000 for hangar design;
- * Brenner Field in Falls City, \$135,000 for apron, runway, taxiway and taxiway rehabilitation;
- * Hebron Municipal Airport, \$365,573 for taxiway construction;
- * Nebraska City Municipal Airport, \$365,573 to construct a fuel farm;
- * Plattsmouth Municipal Airport, \$365,573 for apron, taxiway and runway rehabilitation;
- * Seward Municipal Airport, \$365,573 for hangar construction.

And finally ... Italian Freccie Tricolori demo team



Dennis Crispin captured this photo of the Italian Freccie Tricolori team performance at AirVenture. Click picture to enlarge. Flying Aermacchi MB-339PAN trainer jets, this was their first performance at AirVenture since 1986. Grab a bag of popcorn and your favorite drink and check out more of Dennis's AirVenture 2024 photos in the Photo Gallery at www.eaa569.org.

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