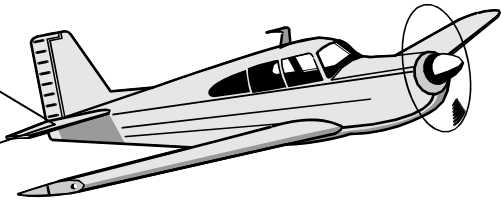


SKYWRITING



November 2008

October Flight Time

<u>Aircraft</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Last Annual</u>
N5303L	26.7	April 2008
N80213	23.6	June 2008
N6231F	11.0	
N8114F	19.4	June 2008
N2516V	17.6	

Total Hours: 98.3 (Up from 86.0 in September)

Surcharge: \$1.06/gal

www.flyingcc.org

Local ASOS Numbers

Moline	309-799-7096
Davenport	563-388-2154
Clinton	563-243-8934
Muscatine	563-263-0902

Dues Paying Members: 66

The Spring Plane Wash is Saturday, May 3, 2009

Members

There is nothing to report this month from our instructors or Membership Chairman.

Office Security

The board has been pondering an effective way to retain keys that members should turn in after their active membership has terminated. A key deposit was instituted as an economical way to do this, but apparently \$20 for a key is not incentive enough for most going inactive. At the October board meeting it was disclosed that we are still not getting keys back from shareholders going inactive. There is now a recommendation before the board to increase the key deposit to \$50 per key, and to change the door lock tumblers to a new key. Stay posted.



"Board at Work" – Scott Latham

Club Computer

It was disclosed at the October board meeting that the new computer still has issues preventing members from using it effectively. **Scott Latham** has looked

into it, and by this printing things should be back to normal.

Scott asked me to be sure to let you know if you have some sort of trouble with the office computer to give him a call at his cell phone 563-505-7591, or at Chrysalis Computer Solutions 309-764-3100.

Thanks again, Scott, for all you do for the Club!



The Club's Cessna C177RG in Flight

Add These to Your Shutdown

Pilots can do some simple things when they fly or shut down that may help the club stay off the FAA delinquent list.

When you are flying to or from a VOR either VFR or IFR you can make a VOR accuracy check, but you should remember to make a note of it on the time sheet.

Before you shut down tune a radio to 121.5 MHz for a second to see if the ELT is transmitting. That can save people a lot of grief if it's been tripped without an accident happening.

Also before shut down, briefly turn the magnetos off long enough to see if the engine will shut down. If the engine keeps running it means the magneto ground wire is broken, and the mags will be live even with the engine stopped. Even if the AD is up to date in the engine log, the main concern is that the airplane is safe to handle. Wires break on their own schedule, not

some FAA schedule such as every 100 hours. Since you're the first one to handle that prop after shutdown it is in your interest to assure the ground wire is good.

Maintenance Notes

The board recently got involved in maintenance issues that were not going away. The board was disappointed to learn that several squawks for the C152 were still open after weeks (rotating beacon, PTT button), and in one case, the TANIS heater, for months. We believe the problems will be history after the 2nd week of November.

We've received a report that there's a nose wheel shimmy during roll out. That is currently being investigated.

If you have issues concerning the C152, please call plane captain, **Mike Smith**, at (563) 386-5424.

* * * *

Dick Kvach is plane captain of our newest C172, and he has been diligently working to correct several things done to N6231F.

A TANIS heater has been installed.

The airplane hasn't flown much since we obtained it due to a "low power" situation. Several items have been checked to figure this problem out to no avail. We believe we finally have things figured out. An intake valve on #1 cylinder was not opening as much as it should have due to a bad rocker fulcrum seat. That has been fixed. Also, during the TANIS installation it was found that an intake manifold bolt to the cylinder head on #2 cylinder was broken, which was allowing too much air to be drawn into the cylinder during operation. That has been fixed also. The tachometer read 180 rpm low, and the tach has been replaced.

Dick reported that a new face plate for the DME has been ordered, and the #1 NAV radio tested OK. If you have a problem with #1 NAV radio please report that promptly to Dick.

ELT Changes

If you enjoy taking a club airplane to Canada for fishing or playing with polar bears, you might not be able to do that soon. Canada is proposing to force GA to adopt 406 MHz ELT's to operate in Canadian airspace effective February 1, 2009. It isn't a rule yet, AOPA has been actively fighting it, but it bears watching. Our club currently does not have any aircraft equipped with the 406 MHz ELT's since they will cost about \$1,000 not including installation.

However, beginning February 2009 the COPAS-SARSAT satellites will no longer monitor the 121.5/203 MHz signals our ELT's transmit, because of the extremely high false signal rate.

The 406 MHz, or TSO C126 ELT will not improve the false signals, but those units will transmit more information about the aircraft digitally, to the satellite system. Search resources will not be squandered if a signal indicates the aircraft is located on the field at MLI for instance.

At some point in the near future our Club should begin replacing ELT's with the newer units, however.

Fuel Pricing Explained

(Editors Note: The following article is lengthy, but since one of our major costs is fuel, I felt this was appropriate to use. DJE)

*From Avweb.com/blogs/insider/
By Paul Bertorelli*

Earlier this week, as I was freshening the flowers in my patio shrine to Friedrich Engels, reader Will Alibrandi asked this perfectly reasonable question: If the price of oil has tumbled on the spot market, why hasn't the price of avgas come down?

The short answer is it has, you just haven't seen it yet. Or maybe it hasn't. It just depends. Is that confusing enough? If so, I apologize, but getting a handle on how the pricing of avgas works is like rounding up ball bearings with greasy gloves on. But as it happens, I did some research on this last week and can at least offer an informed opinion.

You've probably noticed that avgas prices tend to be less volatile than mogas prices, which sometimes seem to change once a day or more. There are several reasons for this, according to a distributor I know in the avgas business.

The single largest seems to be that avgas isn't traded as a commodity so there's no reported national price point for it. It is pegged to the price of premium unleaded, but refineries treat it as a boutique product, they don't make much of it (compared to automotive gas, or mogas) and, because they traditionally operate as self-contained business units, they set prices at will. That's one reason why avgas is more expensive—there's just less market-wide competition and with no readily available price point, refineries are free to set market-will-bear prices.

But two other factors figure in higher costs. One is the expense of buying and handling the tetraethyl lead used in avgas (plus other additives) and the other is transportation, which is either by truck, rail or barge for avgas. Because of the lead and low volume, most pipelines don't handle avgas and pipelines are the most efficient way to transport anything that will flow through them.

But it's a different story with mogas and with Jet A. Both are traded on the New York Mercantile with prices on current contracts reported every day. Refiners, distributors and retailers are therefore free to adjust prices accordingly and they generally do, which explains why the price of regular at the corner gas station goes up (and down) a dime over night. It has less to do with what the retailer paid for the gas in his tanks than what its perceived market value is at the moment. The more volatile the market—as it was this summer—the more often prices change. Mogas prices seem to fluctuate more readily upward than downward and part of this has to do with volume. A busy service station may take several loads of gas a week, all at different prices.

Avgas tends to be more price-stable because if an FBO buys a load at a certain price and sets his margin—say \$1.25 above wholesale—he's likely to retain the price until he buys the next load. "But these little airports have to be careful," one fuel distributor

told us, "because if they don't move up with the market swings they can be behind enough not to have enough money to pay for the next load."

As of late September, my distributor source told me 100LL was wholesaling on the east coast for \$4, including delivery and taxes. As of this weekend, the refinery price dropped to \$3.50 in this region, although it's different elsewhere, I'm sure. That means the cheapest avgas retailers are seeing margins of about a buck to \$1.50, compared to 15 cents or a little more for mogas retailers, before credit card and other fees. Sounds like a lot, but for many FBO's, avgas sales are the only revenue and as prices rise, sales decline. But FBO's still have to pay the bills and the cost of doing business on an airport continues to rise. So let's not beat up on the FBO's too much. Being in that business has always been tougher and it's not getting any easier.

Oh, and the-we've-got-plenty-of-oil argument surfaced again this week in our little blogosphere, as it always seems to. Reader Samuel McCauley, who identifies himself as a "life-long oil man" raised the issue. The basic argument is that if the regulators would just get out of way, the U.S. is sitting on hundreds of year's worth of oil. It's actually not hard to support this argument in some way with genuine facts. Google around a little and you'll find competent writing on the subject, much of it centered on vast shale Kerogen deposits in Colorado and other intermountain states, plus offshore deposits on the coasts, which are more iffy. I've been covering this since the 1970s and for just as long, the oil industry has been arguing about the size and economic recovery of these reserves. At some point, they do become economically recoverable and with as much as a trillion barrels in estimated shale reserves, the total makes Saudi Arabia look puny.

Unfortunately, both the technology and economics of large scale shale oil production remain unproven and will probably remain so for a decade, at least. Even if regulators stepped aside entirely—something I'm not sure the public really supports at this juncture--that will still be true. Meanwhile, the elephant in the room is 20 million barrels of U.S.

consumption a day, 12 million of it imported. Just for reference, the U.S. imports about 2 million more barrels than Saudi Arabia produces each day. If we made Saudi the 51st state, we would still have to import oil.

That's why I remain convinced that until shale, tar sands and new offshore reserves come into play (if they ever do), a sustained effort to improve vehicle efficiency—something that's readily within reach—is the only short term solution that can make substantial gains. But before we can even consider that, we have to at least be able to have a civil conversation on the subject. Thus far, that has eluded us all.

Stay Focused

From Your Board of Directors & Staff

Gene Fildes, President Mark Conner, Director
Joe Gallagher, Treasurer Gary Hardy, Director
Dennis English, Secretary Dick Kvach, Alternate
Newsletter – Dennis English
Webmaster – Gene Fildes

Plane Captains

C152 Mike Smith
Skyhawk Richard Husson
Archer II Joe Gallagher
Cardinal RG Dave Sandholm
Cherokee 6 Tim Leinbach

Flight Instructors

Gene Fildes CFII
Richard Hebbel CFII
Brian Johnson CFII
Tim Leinbach CFII
Jerry Lowry CFII
Ben Sorgen CFII