

The Congressional Record

Newsletter of the Congressional Flying Club and Montgomery Senior Squadron, CAP

Vol. 28, No. 11

Gaithersburg, MD (KGAI)

November 2010

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President's message

The 182 repairs are progressing. Dick has more details elsewhere in this newsletter. The propeller had to be overhauled and one of the blades replaced — it was an incorrect blade. We also had the prop governor overhauled. The oil pump (inside the engine) will need to be replaced. We have ordered all new pistons, rings, and jugs, as well as a new camshaft. As of this writing, we don't know about the case.

Dick just got word from Firewall Forward that the main crankshaft in our engine did not pass inspection because of heat checks. Heat checking is the result of (in this case) the crank journal (where the piston's connecting rod attaches to the crankshaft) overheating that section of the crank. The result is journal overheating. Normally there is a blue-black discoloration of the journal, and the journal also displays fine surface cracks. Sometimes the cracks are visible only upon "magnafluxing" the surface. A crankshaft with heat checking is weakened and has a high probability of failure not too far down the road.

Meanwhile, 35R is languishing in the hangar, waiting on some folks to help with finishing the annual inspection.

The Board of Directors has decided to farm out the next annual inspection. When you balance the cost of the inspection vs. the lost income from the plane not flying for two months, it is almost a wash. We are going to try taking the plane to Martinsburg (Howard Aircraft) and see how this works out. We may have to raise the rates a few dollars but aircraft availability is also very important.

December brings the annual cycle of elections — also, the membership will get a chance to comment on things such as the Rules and Regulations and some other administrative changes. You will be getting some e-mails in the next weeks, which will be your opportunity to look over the proposed changes and to voice your opinion.

❖ **BOB HAWKINS**

Chaplain's corner

ON SOWING AND REAPING

November is CAP Conference month. Members from squadrons across the State will gather in Ellicott City for some very interesting information sessions, excellent fellowship, and even the festivities of the formal Saturday evening ball. How amazing that such an organization as the CAP invests so much to be ready to serve in an emergency, to promote aerospace education, and to develop character! It's natural that our flying club feeds into all of this, for the Civil Air Patrol is much about flying. And flying is what we are most interested in at the Congressional Flying Club.

Another factor that does not pass without note is that all of this is voluntary. There is something amazing about volunteering. The law of reciprocity works in it, too! We get out of our volunteering what we put into it, and it seems, always a little more. No doubt the universe, our world and our human nature are designed that way. We say hello, we give a smile, we caress, and lo, a hello, a smile, a hug comes back to us. We invest in an endeavor or a business and we increase the likelihood of reaping benefit or turning a profit.

It is written in sacred scripture, "Give and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over ... with the same measure you give, shall it be given unto you again." (Luke 6:38) We are giving ourselves to studying the art of flying. We are giving ourselves to practicing the skill of flying. We are investing in readiness to serve in time of emergency. We are constantly trying to live the good and godly life. And from all of this giving of ourselves, we are receiving benefit and blessing. Thanks be to God! Amen.

❖ **CHAPLAIN (LT COL)EDCO BAILEY, D.MIN,**
B.C.C.

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It happened to me

UNSECURED/LOST FUEL CAP

On the morning of 13 September, 2010, another pilot and I were preparing to depart Blairsville, GA (KDZJ), in N739BA, one of our Cessna 172's. We asked for the aircraft to be topped off the previous evening so we wouldn't be delayed in the morning.

The weather was clear, but bands of ground fog were periodically rolling across the airport, at times reducing runway visibility to ½ mile or less. I performed the pre-flight inspection while the other pilot paid for the tie-downs at the FBO. I had completed everything except for sumping and sticking the fuel tanks when my copilot returned.

While I sumped the tanks, the other pilot climbed up on the right wing and checked the fuel level. He expressed mild concern when the fuel stick indicated only 16 gallons instead of something closer to the 20 gallons that we had expected. At this time I stepped up and checked the left fuel tank, which also contained 16 gallons.

A quick mental calculation followed. With the aircraft's fuel consumption at 8.6 gph, the 32 gallons of fuel on-board would give us slightly over 3.5 hours of fuel. The leg to Blacksburg, VA (KBCB), our scheduled fuel stop, flight-planned right at 2.5 hours. The 32 gallons of fuel would get us to Blacksburg with just over an hour's reserve, my personal minimum for a flight of this duration.

With the preflight complete, we hopped in the plane, started the engine, back-taxied, performed the runup, and departed during one of the periods when we could see the full length of the runway.

Engine start was at 0822, we were off at 0829, and landed at KBCB at 1115, for a total flight time of 2:46, plus taxi and runup at KDZJ. Headwinds turned out to be slightly higher than planned, but the flight was uneventful, except for my copilot suggesting that I might consider switching to the right fuel tank for a few minutes, since the left tank appeared to contain somewhat less fuel than the right. We were only about 20 minutes out from Blacksburg, so I dismissed his suggestion and continued the flight with both fuel tanks selected.

Upon landing at Blacksburg and securing the aircraft, I immediately headed for the fuel desk, ordered fuel, then headed for the restroom. Imagine my surprise (horror, embarrassment, anger, etc.)

when, upon returning to the airplane, the lineman pointed to the left wing, where the fuel cap should have been! I had failed to secure the fuel cap before departure from Blairsville.

Before refueling at KBCB, we stuck the tanks and determined we had a total of seven gallons of fuel remaining — two in the left tank (most of which was probably unusable), and five in the right tank, three of which were probably usable. We were two extremely fortunate pilots!

In thinking back over the sequence of events, I realized that we were dealing with two distractions that morning. The first was the bands of fog that threatened to delay our departure; the second was the incomplete top-off we received the previous evening and the resulting mental calculation of our fuel reserve.

In our haste to depart, I failed to perform my final

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Meetings: Every Tuesday at 2000 at the CAP Trailer, Montgomery County Airport (KGAI), Gaithersburg, MD

Physical address: Box 4, 7940-I Airpark Dr., Gaithersburg, MD 20879

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examination of the fuel caps. I cannot count how many times I have been strapped in my seat, ready to start the engine, and then think about the fuel caps. I will invariably unbuckle, exit the aircraft and visually confirm that both fuel caps are properly secured. I have never forgotten to properly secure the caps — until the one time that I didn't check!

We were fortunate in several ways:

- First, we didn't run out of fuel. It's not uncommon for the low-pressure area above the wing to quickly suck all the fuel out of the tank.
- Next, we were lucky that the fuel cap departed the aircraft on takeoff. A pilot landing at Blairsville spotted the cap on the runway and called the FBO to retrieve it. The cap has since been returned to us, chain and all, showing little if any damage.
- Third, had the fuel cap not departed the aircraft on takeoff, the left wing would most likely have sustained considerable damage from the banging of the fuel cap on the wing surface.
- Finally, the FBO at Blacksburg had a spare Cessna fuel cap, and there was someone there to retrieve it for us.

This incident has caused me to rethink my pre-flight discipline. I never thought I would do something as stupid as not securing a fuel cap, but I did. It has reiterated in my mind just how crucial it is to not be interrupted or distracted during a pre-flight inspection. While my previous "final inspection" focused primarily on fuel caps, I have vowed to expand it. In the future, I will always perform a complete walk-around of the aircraft, checking tie-downs, chocks, rudder locks, baggage door, fuel caps, pitot cover, cowl plugs, oil filler door, and tow bar. It will take all of 30 seconds, and should prevent future recurrences of this embarrassing — and serious — Stupid Pilot Trick.

❖ **DICK STROCK**

My third (approximately) airplane ride

I really don't remember my second ride, but this one took place somewhere around my third ride. By now I had learned not to grab the structural tubing in terror and pull it in to give the aircraft a wasp waist. As with my previous account, the lo-

cation shall remain nameless to protect the innocent.

It was a dry, clear, sunny day. I was at the airport with the CAP group messing around with airplanes. One of the pilots asked if I wanted to fly over my house and get a good look at it from the air. Of course! After a brief discussion, involving a borrowed road map, we walked over to a fabric-covered, tandem, 65hp, tail dragging, bungee corded Taylorcraft. I climbed in, straddled the stick, belted up, and we locked ourselves in. Someone spun the prop and we were on our way, bouncing down the patchy runway until we lifted off and gained altitude. We cleared the power lines and crossed the river. Flying down the wide, flat valley bottom, we found the correct road leading up into the surrounding hills, turned right and followed it out a few miles to my folks' improved stump farm. (For you city folk, this is farmland with a number of stumps remaining from cleared trees.)

We found my house, lost altitude and circled until my mom came out to see what the noise was about. My dog immediately began chasing us. We lived only a few miles from a couple of military airports so large aircraft were common. Although he never caught one, he never quit barking at and chasing them. But this was a low flying slow plane that he might actually catch, so he was even more excited! My pilot climbed to a "safe" altitude, put the little plane into a dive, pulled up and completed a loop. I was impressed with the quietness as we went over the top. We followed this with a second loop. Regaining altitude, he cut the engine, stalled the plane and did three turns of a right hand spin. Wow, I thought, so this is how you fly a plane! I gotta learn to fly! We did another circle of the house, waggle of the wings, consulted the road map, and then headed back down to the valley and the airport. After landing, taxiing, and cutting the engine, I asked when we could do that again. "Later" was the tantalizing promise. That evening, when I got dropped off at home, my mom wanted to know if all that flying stuff was safe. I told her "Of course it is, that's how you fly!" Several decades later, when I was finally able to take lessons, in a modern aircraft, aluminum skin, higher power, intercom and radio, and an actual yoke, I found out that that was NOT the way everyone flies. What a disappointment!

❖ **MYRON WAXDAL**

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Bits and pieces

N5244N

The engine is at Firewall Forward in Loveland, CO, literally in bits and pieces. The shop is awaiting the results of the case and crankshaft inspection. Reassembly will take four days plus one day on the dynamometer. It is expected to be on its way back to us 23 or 24 November.

Sensenich Propeller Service in Lancaster has completed overhaul of the propeller and governor and are awaiting return to Landmark in Frederick. Based on the above schedule, Landmark has blocked off time for reinstallation the last week of November/first week of December.

FUEL PURCHASES

A few of our members still appear to be challenged when making accurate, timely entries on the flight logs for their fuel purchases. Rarely a month goes by where I don't have to ask at least one intrepid pilot for clarification of, or additional information for, a fuel entry.

The information needed includes:

1. Number of gallons purchased,
2. Total cost of the purchase,
3. Where it was purchased,
4. Account to credit.

If any of this information is missing from the flight log, or appears incorrect, the pilot will receive a zero-dollar credit memo. When you receive flight invoices and fuel purchase credit memos, please check them for accuracy. If you find a discrepancy, let me know via e-mail as soon as possible. Once the flights for the month are closed out, it becomes very difficult to correct the errors.

Aircraft rates are based, in part, on the quantity of fuel purchased and the cost of that fuel. If the information provided is incomplete or incorrect, it could adversely impact those rates.

OIL DIPSTICKS

There have been a few instances of the oil dipsticks being over-tightened on some of our aircraft. I would remind pilots that the dipsticks need only be very lightly secured. The dipsticks tend to tighten as the engine heats and cools, and excessive tightening could result in a loose, or worse, broken oil filler tube. Use a light touch.

ELECTIONS

Annual elections are scheduled for 7 December. I urge all members to consider running for a spot on the Board of Directors or for President. Board members serve a two-year term, while the President serves just one year. Contact one of our Election Committee members, **Joe Stubblefield** or **John Rabner**, if you would like to run for a position.

In order to vote in the election, you must be a member in good standing the night of the election. Several members' accounts are currently in arrears, rendering them ineligible to cast a ballot.

❖ **DICK STROCK**

Fly-ins

The annual Holly Run to Tangier Island is set for 4 December (snow date 11 December). The new staging location is Bay Bridge Airport (W29). Contact me or www.tangierhollyrun.com for details.

❖ **JOE STUBBLEFIELD**

Aircraft rates

Following are our aircraft hourly rates as of 1 November 2010.

Aircraft	Rate
N5244N	\$130
N20300	\$114
N25883	\$83
N5135R	\$98
N739BA	\$101

Unless otherwise noted, rates are per tach hour, wet.

❖ **BOB HAWKINS**

Work hours

Amy McMaster (AJMcMaster@venable.com) is our Work Assignment Officer; contact Amy to find out what jobs are available.

Arjan Plomp takes care of recording the hours that you work. You can e-mail your work hours to arjan@plompvanbergen.com. When sending e-mails, please put in the subject line: *Work Hours, your name, # hrs worked*. This will help Arjan organize the e-mails for future reference if there are any discrepancies.

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Work hours monitor

November is the fifth month of the "work hours year," so by 30 November you should have 8.3 hours of credit.

Here are the work hours "waypoints" listed by quarter. If you have the indicated number of hours at the end of a quarter, you're on course.

Qtr 1	30 September	5.0
Qtr 2	31 December	10.0
Qtr 3	31 March	15.0
Qtr 4	30 June	20.0

If you're in doubt about your work hours, contact **Arjan Plomp**; if you're looking for jobs to do, contact **Amy McMaster**.

❖ **DICK STROCK**

Annuals to be outsourced

As was announced at the last two general membership meetings, the Board of Directors has decided to outsource future annual inspections to an external shop. With the reduced number of A&Ps in the Club and the lack of interest by the general membership to assist with the necessary work, it has become virtually impossible to complete an annual inspection in a reasonable time frame.

The annual on N739BA, completed in early July, took just under two weeks and required a significant amount of effort and coordination on the part of the Crew Chief, the A&Ps, and the scant few members that came out to assist with the work. In contrast, the annual on N5135R has already taken seven weeks, and will probably take another several days to complete. The Club can ill afford to have an aircraft that is so heavily relied upon to be out of service for almost two months.

As a result of this decision by the Board, the annual maintenance cost for each aircraft will increase by an estimated \$1,500. With our aircraft usually flying 150–250 hours per year, this translates to an increase in aircraft rates of \$6–\$10 per hour. While the final hourly rates for each aircraft have yet to be determined, the plan is to implement new rates on 1 January 1 2011.

The Club plans to continue to perform 50-hour inspections and general repairs internally. These inspections and repairs will, however, become more intensive. While in the past we were able to

defer some of the cosmetic maintenance and repairs, such as carpet cleaning and interior trim replacement until the annual inspection, these tasks must now be performed during the 50-hour inspections, as we may not have access to the aircraft during the annual. The same holds true for much of the owner-approved maintenance, such as tire and brake pad replacement.

It is unfortunate that the Club must take these measures. Over the years, the capability to perform self-maintenance allowed the Club to provide clean, reliable, and well-maintained aircraft for use by our members at very attractive rates. It also provided members with a unique opportunity to more fully understand the aircrafts' systems, which always enhances safety.

Thanks to the A&Ps and those members who diligently showed up, regardless of the weather, to help maintain our fleet of aircraft.

❖ **DICK STROCK**

Your flying account

Dick Strock is in charge of our flying account tracking. Dick is posting aircraft usage on a weekly basis and a doing a full close just after the first of the month. You will receive the monthly statement of your account at the beginning of the month for the previous month's activity. You will also get a weekly e-mail that shows your latest usage.

If you don't have an e-mail account, please let Dick know and he will print out your statement.

Crew chiefs

A/C	Chief	Ass't Chief
N5244N	Dan Hayes	Dan Boyle
N20300	Richard Strock	John Peake
N5135R	Vic McGonegal	Phil Carls
N739BA	Gashaw Mengistu	Vacant
N25883	Linda Knowles	Ruth Hornseth, Todd O'Brien, Dev Kavathekar

Address for checks

Please note that the address to mail Congressional Flying Club checks is:

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Congressional Flying Club
7940-I Airpark Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Checks can also be brought to the meetings and given to **Bob Hawkins**.

Funny stuff

From the Airman's Lexicon (courtesy of **Bob Gawler**):

Flashlight(n.): A tubular container, usu. metal, that is used to store dead batteries.

❖ **ANDY SMITH**