

# The Congressional Record

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

Vol. 29, No. 2

Gaithersburg, MD (KGAI)

February 2011

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## President's message

[Editor's note: Bob wasn't able to produce his usual sparkling prose for this month's issue, so we'll leave the space vacant and look for some sage words from Da Prez in March.]

❖ BOB HAWKINS

## Chaplain's corner

### WHAT TIMES! WHAT TIMES!

Fly-ins. 50-hour inspections. Annuals. Weather. Deaths: Bill Hanna (Wing Commander's father-in-law); Bill Mayhew (husband of Jett); Frank Zuno's wife. Sickness. Fuel price fluctuations and dancing aircraft rental rates. What times! What times! We have our share of so much! And yet, we have faith and hope in goodly proportion.

There is new life, new accomplishment, new resourcefulness among us. Our Club and Squadron live and move on despite ADIZ, and recession, and aging aircraft. We move on! We renew our aircraft. We ride out the recession. We adjust to the ADIZ. We move on! We see the silver lining despite the cloud. We choose faith, hope and optimism.

We have learned that the power to live is in the positive thought, the good wish, the strong desire, yearning, and intention. Long ago the Lord Jesus affirmed, "Your faith has made you whole!" Let us keep on believing that despite every challenge that confronts us, we shall live; we shall prevail; we shall overcome as a Club and Squadron. And not only so; but we shall enjoy our life together as a people who appreciate the things that relate to aerospace work and play. We welcome the mission upon which we focus in our life together. We claim for ourselves still, all the blessings of a hap-

py new year at flying! May the peace of the Lord be ever with us! Amen.

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

## Fly-ins

Coatesville or Georgetown on 19 Feb for lunch? Right now have three going in club plane(s) and possible RVers too. Let me know if you have preference and want to go, otherwise you don't get to vote. For Coatesville, see <http://www.airnav.com/airport/KMQS>.

❖ JOE STUBBLEFIELD

## New work hours tracker

It's with many thanks to **Mike Regen** and **Arjan Plomp** that I take over as the Club's official recorder of work hours. Arjan has given me the spreadsheets — please check to see that your hours are up to date, and reply right away with any additions/corrections.

A request to the Board and Crew Chiefs: would you please let us all know about upcoming work hour opportunities you anticipate within the next couple of months, so that those who are especially behind can plan ahead and not find themselves slammed in June? Fly safe and submit work hours often!

❖ JUDY BRADT

## Aircraft rates

Following are our aircraft hourly rates as of 1 February 2011.

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

Unless otherwise noted, rates are per tach hour, wet. (Note: 883, the 152, is being sold).

❖ BOB HAWKINS

## Pilot report: Diamond DA40 XLS

To help answer the question "what would I fly if I won the lottery?" I recently flew the latest version

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of Diamond's DA40 — a 2008 DA40 XLS. In many ways, the DA40 is a modern version of the Cardinal. Among other things they share is the Lycoming 360, light and harmonized controls, good fuel efficiency, excellent visibility, and outstanding safety records.

I had flown some earlier DA40s, so I was interested to see if the latest version had retained the type's advantages while maybe improving some of its shortcomings. The XLS did not disappoint. Flying the DA40 is a joy. It gets off the ground and lands in the same distance as a C172 but climbs like a C182, better actually both in terms of rate and climb attitude. The stick is easy to get used to, and landing is simple. Visibility is outstanding — the long, thin wing is set back like the Cardinal so you can easily see all of the area around, above, and below you. I found that the XLS, despite a weight gain of around 120 pounds, still delivered. (It has a Powerflow exhaust, which undoubtedly helps with regard to climb performance.)

As with any airplane, however, there are some compromises in the DA40, mainly in the area of comfort. Basically, the early DA40's cockpit, despite being six inches wider than the C172, felt cramped. This was at least partly a result of the fact that the seats are fixed (to meet Part 23 crash standards) and so when flying with a co-pilot you can't offset shoulders by having the seats at different distances from the panel. Also, like the Cirrus, I find that "plastic" aircraft vibrate more than our more traditional aluminum Cessnas. Finally, I had found the earlier Diamond interior to be rather loud, which I had attributed to the extensive glass canopy and the lack of soundproofing, as evidenced by the bare composite interior (which made it feel more like a boat than an airplane). An hour in the new XLS, however, has convinced me that Diamond has made significant progress in all of these areas (and more).

First, it has a new taller and wider canopy (you enter the DA40 front seats by lifting up the entire windshield and front part of the roof). Subjectively, it felt roomier, probably because it's easier to rest your left arm on the canopy sill than before. The seats are also more padded. Vibration and noise have been significantly reduced. The XLS has a new, lighter, composite two-blade prop that seems to have tamed the earlier shaking. According to many on the DA40 owners' site, the source

of the noise is the ventilation outlets. The XLS has redesigned round outlets instead of the earlier square ones, which appeared to be effective. In addition, soundproofing has been added to the cockpit. Finally, the XLS (and other DA40s with long range tanks) has a wider rudder, which makes taxiing and takeoff easier. The DA40 has a free-castering nosewheel, so ground control is by rudder and/or differential braking. On the earlier version, I found I needed the brakes for speed under 20 knots. On the XLS, however, I found I could basically steer it like one of our Cessnas, albeit with somewhat more enthusiastic inputs.

So what's not to like? Well, a couple of things remain or are actually worse. The additional weight, while compensated for with an increase in gross takeoff weight, has resulted in an aircraft with a more aft CG and narrower range. Consequently, it's difficult to fly with four people. Also, with the great visibility comes heat in the summer

*This newsletter is published monthly by the Congressional Flying Club, Inc., and Montgomery Senior Squadron #18073, CAP. Unsigned articles represent the opinion of the editors, who are solely responsible for their content.*

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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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and difficultly seeing in sunny weather. For some reason, Diamond doesn't have sunshades, so I found flying into a winter's afternoon sun very irritating. (Interestingly, the twin version — the DA42 — does have visors). Air conditioning is now available for the summer heat, but at a significant cost in payload in an aircraft that is already more like a Cardinal than a Skylane. Nonetheless, the Diamond DA40 XLS remains on my list of desirable airplanes. Now I all I have to do is pick the winning number!

❖ **BERNARD SEWARD**

## Work hours

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

**Judy Bradt** takes care of recording the hours that you work. You can e-mail your work hours to [workhours@bradt.com](mailto:workhours@bradt.com). When sending e-mails, please put in the subject line: *Work Hours, your name, # hrs worked*. And please enter the date and nature of work performed in the body of the email (new requirement).

## Work hours monitor

February is the eighth month of the "work hours year," so by 28 February you should have 13.3 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 **Judy Bradt** at [workhours@bradt.com](mailto:workhours@bradt.com); if you're looking for jobs to do, contact **Amy McMaster**.

❖ **DICK STROCK**

## Your flying account

**Dick Strock** and **Bryan Absher** are 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 be-

ginning 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	Linda Knowles	Todd O'Brien
N5135R	Vic McGonegal	Phil Carls
N739BA	Gashaw Mengistu: Note: Looking for new Chief for BA	Vacant
N25883	Note: aircraft is being sold and is no longer available	

## Address for checks

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

Congressional Flying Club  
7940 Airpark Road  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Checks can also be brought to the meetings and given to **Bob Hawkins, Richard Strock** or **Brian Absher**.

## Funny stuff

From the Airman's Lexicon:

*Sectional (n)*: A detailed chart used for VFR navigation. Sectionals have a unique property: No matter how you fold them, the area you need is always on the other side.

❖ **ANDY SMITH**