



Moontown Airport News

By George Myers November 2008

This is only the second newsletter that I have written this year. I seem to have run out of things say. Actually, a lot of things happened including the death of my uncle K.C. who was a Capital and United Airlines Captain. His son sent a lot of history to me that will show up in future writings. There is movement on the 100LL AVGAS replacement and EAA is concerned about the 51 percent rule for homebuilders. It is very difficult to guess what impact the next U.S President will have on General Aviation and that should present some food for future writings. I will try to do better in the future.

Automated Runway Lighting

I monitor Moontown Unicom at the house and have noticed that at least once a week someone tries to turn the runway lights on with anywhere from five to seven clicks. Moontown has low intensity lights and only three clicks are required to activate them. Five clicks turn them off and five to seven clicks does nothing if the lights are not already on. This information is properly noted in all appropriate FAA documentation.

Aircraft Maintenance

Kim McCutcheon has returned with McCutcheon Services to perform aircraft maintenance at Moontown. He started

business way behind the power curve. I did not count but there were at least seven airplanes in the queue when he opened for business. The rental planes and the Soaring Club Pawnee were top priority and all needed much attention. Many customers had to find another place to get their annuals completed. I'm sure that once Kim catches up that he will be able to provide the same quality service that he has in the past.

Rental Planes

The loss of Rickey Weldon happened with both the Cessna 150 and 172 due for annual inspections. At one point all three of our rental planes were grounded. The Champ came on line within several weeks. The 172 and 150 are still not ready. We plan to sell the 150 and have taken a very nice Cessna 152 on lease back. The 172 should be ready in a week or two with many structural, mechanical, and esthetic improvements. The HSC tow plane will follow. Kim tells me that much has been done but has not given us a completion date on either plane.

Increasing Rates

Having a lease plane on line and very high repair costs on our other planes, we have had to sell the 150 to cover costs

and increase the rental rates on the planes. The rates for the Champ, the 152 and the 172 are \$70, \$80, and \$95 respectively. But that will not be the end of increases. There will be an increase in aircraft storage rates effective January 1, 2009. We have not calculated the rate but it probably will be around 10 percent. It is the first increase in several years. The good news is that the fuel prices are starting to come down. We are at \$4.95 today and expect a sizable decrease when we purchase our next load.

Year in Review

I tend to judge the health of general aviation by the flying activities I have been associated with and we seem to be very active and healthy. Moontown has had some really great fly-in breakfasts this year. One fly-in saw nearly 70 aircraft. The September weekend fly-in was hampered by weather in the surrounding areas but we still had a good turnout over the two-day event. The banquet was well attended and the Red Stars showed up in force.

I have also participated in several events at other airports, mostly with the Yak and the Red Star organization. We flew in events at Scottsboro, Albertville, Windward Point, and Lebanon, TN. Additionally I flew the Yak in the 50th anniversary 50-plane formation at Oshkosh. Coming up next month will be a Veteran's Day event at Reform, AL. Other members of our group flew in Fayette, AL and a few other locations.

Three non-Red Star events were also attended. Paul Jacobs and I took his Champ and the L-16B to the Aeronca fly-in in Middletown, Ohio. Also, I was invited to participate in the second Gathering of Liaison Aircraft at U.S. Air Force Museum (USAFM) at Wright Field, Ohio. Both trips included tours of the Air Force Museum. Since the USAFM event occurred the same weekend as the Cessna 120-140 fly-in at Moraine, Ohio, I joined with Blake Mathis to attend it as well.

Shirley and I usually use the Mooney to fly on a vacation to some distant land but this year we decided to take a road trip to WV to see the fall colors at Canaan Valley and along U.S. 220, and attend the WVU-Auburn game. We did take three other family trips in the Mooney to attend my uncles 90th birthday, Shirley's 50th high school reunion, and our annual Memorial Day visit with family in East Lake, Ohio. Photos of some of these events are attached. Just pretend that we actually went on the fall colors trip in the Mooney.



Figure 1: Paul's Champ and George's L-16 at the Aeronca Fly-in



Figure 2: Red Stars During Saturday's Show at AirVenture 08 (Not perfect but still impressive)



Figure 3: Some of the L-Birds at USAFM (Note the LAT-6)



Figure 4: Some nice Cessna 140's at the Cessna Fly-In



Figure 5: Go Mountaineers. Sorry War Eagles