



# Mountainland Flyer

**EAA Chapter 17, Knoxville Tennessee**

**Next Meeting:**

**June 6th 19:00 EDT: EAA Chapter 17 Meeting  
at Sky ranch**

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**B-17 Tour Chairman**

David Brown



Scenes from Downtown Island Fly-In.  
May 27, 2006

Topic suggestions for *MountainLand Flyer* Articles:

We have compiled a list of suggestions in case you may want to write an article:

**First solo**— what was it like, what went through your mind as you watched your instructor walk away?

**Most memorable views aloft** – What have you seen that made you realize “this is what flying is all about”?

**Most valuable flight lesson that you didn't understand until now**— We have all had it happen, we learn to fly, pass the tests, build the hours, and get on with life. Then one day, years or even decades later, we find a situation that makes us understand why they teach this stuff. What was YOURS?

Send your contributions to: [gprou@chartertn.net](mailto:gprou@chartertn.net) , and be eligible for a \$20 gift certificate

**Chapter 17  
50th Anniversary Hats  
will be available at the  
June Meeting,**

for those who purchased  
them, and those who want  
to buy!

## Win Buck\$ for writing what you know!

—Mark Scheuer

During one of the nominating committee meetings, a suggestion was made on how to make our monthly newsletter easier to publish for our new editor, as well as making it more interesting to our members.

The idea of having our members submit stories was floated and all at the table agreed that that would be an excellent idea.

But HOW to motivate our members to submit these stories? [Money.](#)

It was suggested that at each meeting, a drawing would be made from names of the individuals who had submitted and had published, an article that had something to do with aviation. A trip, a lesson learned, hints on making that perfect landing, even an old war story. The only requirement is that it would be aviation related.

Through a small grant from PS Engineering, Inc, along with the chapter's help, funds have been made available to offer the winner at each month's meeting, a \$20 gift certificate good at Sporty's Pilot Shop. You don't have to be present to win.

Then, at the January 2007 annual banquet, the names of the monthly winners will be placed back into the hat and a drawing made for a PS Engineering, Inc. hi-fi stereo headset, valued at \$280!

The articles should be submitted by way of email to Gary Picou ([gpicou@charternet.net](mailto:gpicou@charternet.net)) not later than the **15th** of each month, for consideration in the next newsletter.



## A LONG SOLO CROSS COUNTRY

by: Leon Ridenour

**I**n a moment of weakness in the mid 1970's Ferris Thomas agreed to take on his last two student pilots, me and Jim Cliff.

Teaching began at "Maggie" where the old Smoky Mountain Aero was offering 10 hours of C-150 for \$100, wet!

I managed to solo at Maggie — concentrating so much on the radio work that I couldn't recall the mechanics of flying.

Then Jim Clift acquired a C-140 and generously agreed to share it with me and our new instructor. Flying lessons then moved to Sky Ranch.

I often tell people that I soloed in a C-150 but I learned to fly in a C-140. Anyone who has landed the spring gear tail dragger knows what is meant by that statement.

In the late spring of 1974, Ferris was talking about a trip to the Oshkosh fly-in. Jim Clift wanted his C-140 to be in attendance at the fly-in and Ferris suggested that one of his new students fly the 140 to Oshkosh.

Weather and work schedule had not allowed Jim to complete any solo x country work.

I had managed to complete one solo to London, KY, so it fell to me to fly the C-140 to Oshkosh Wisconsin fly in.

Ferris and Jim would fly ahead in Ferris' 172 powermatic.

Ferris was a straight line flyer. His idea of flight planning was a

pencil line on a sectional with 50 mile tick marks. Full tanks on take off — note the time — fly on one tank till empty, check your watch, and before that time interval elapses again, be on the ground.

Our gas stop on the way to Oshkosh was at Ha Field (a grass strip long lost to the subdivisions), W. Lafayette Ind. The Ha Bros. were WWII ferry service buddies of Ferris.

Then on to Oshkosh. I recall Gary Ind. coated in brown, the Chicago skyline with the twin towers like two finger poking up through the haze, and over flying Meigs Field. About 7 hours of flying, total, to Oshkosh.

When it came time to leave, there was a storm approaching Wittman Field, just before the air show began. I was the last aircraft out before the field was closed. I flew on to Hales Corners where the FBO allowed me to sleep on the office couch. Ferris & company arrived the next



Baumann Brigadier

morning and we toured the old FAA Museum. Ferris was particularly interested in seeing the Baumann Brigadier, a four-place twin pusher he had helped to develop and promote after WWII.

One more gas stop in N. Vernon Indiana and then on to Knoxville. Looking back it was a thrilling high to a new flyer, but I didn't

know enough then to be as concerned as I should have been.

A low time student pilot flying with a wet compass, vacuum powered DG artificial horizon com. VOR radio, could have run into problems he couldn't manage. The weather was pretty good and I guess I was pretty lucky.

I went for my pilot license check ride in October 1974 with "Mama Bird". It would be interesting to know of other long cross country student pilot solos, is mine a record?

P.S. A cautionary postscript on tank timing a 0-172 for fuel management - on a flight with Ferris from Knoxville to Tampa, Fl. Ferris had done the tank switch, and I noticed he valved back to his "dry" tank for a few minutes and checked his watch. We had a good tailwind and a ground speed of 150 mph, but we were at 5,000 feet with the Tampa airport in sight when Ferris called the tower and calmly announced "I think I'm out of gas." The tower responded "take any runway you can make". When he lowered the nose fuel flowed again and we made a landing under power.

The 0-172 POH listed 52 gallon capacity, 48 usable. We took on nearly 50 gallons. The miscalculation occurs with full tanks. There is a cross feed between wing tanks that permits consumption from both tanks until the fuel level drops below the cross feed. This condition creates an error in tank timing, not in the pilot's favor.



## EAA Chapter 17

### EAA Chapter 17, Knoxville Tennessee

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EAA Chapter 17's mission is the promotion of education in aeronautics, flying safety, navigation, amateur or home-built aircraft, antique aircraft restoration and construction, and related aero-sciences. To foster aviation, education, and progress in light aircraft development and other closely related phases of aviation. And to maintain a non-profit cooperative association to obtain instruction and education in aviation.



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