



First Quarter 2016
Volume 9, Issue 1
February 2016



Letter from the Editor:

Hi folks, Last year was interesting for Donna and me. I can only assume that 2016 will be interesting as well. This issue of *Hangar Talk* will be mostly about the Light Sport Expo in Sebring, FL. I have not received any pictures or items for the Lightning of the Quarter or the Pilot Spotlight, so I assume no one is interested in sharing this time. I would like to encourage everyone to take a little time, answer the questions for either the Lightning of the Quarter and/or the Pilot Spotlight and send them to me. We all have beautiful planes and we all have our stories. I am sure everyone would be interested in reading about them.

The LSA Expo was a good one this year. The weather cooperated somewhat in that all of the manufacturers were able to fly in on time. There was heavy rain on Friday and severe weather warnings, so the Airport Manager shut down the expo. Saturday, the winds were pretty high so there were some brave souls flying and actually hovering (almost flying backwards) in the wind.

Blue Skies,
Dennis W. Wilt
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At The LSA Expo in Sebring, FL (KSEF)



US Light Sport Aviation Expo - 2016

Article by Dennis W. Wilt



This year, the weather was somewhat better for the expo. Nick was able to fly down in the XS on Tuesday and I flew over on Wednesday morning before the control tower opened.

exhibitor's tent was closed because the winds exceeded its design capability.



When I arrived, Nick and Buz were waiting for me. The checkerboard pad was ready and we pulled the plane to the demo area and backed it onto the pad. The XS was already there and tied down. Oh yes, I can take a selfie, too.

Over all though, the show was a success. We talked to a whole lot of folks about the Lightning. Greg sold one of the used Experimental Lightnings that meets LSA requirements and signed an agreement with a gentleman that lives in the Dallas - Fort Worth area to come out to the build center in Marana, AZ to build a Jet.

There were some issues with the weather, Friday was crazy rain and severe weather alerts. The airport manager closed the event. So, Nick and Buz took in a movie, I hung out in the terminal, and Greg and Crystal had to take their RV and trailer off the grounds. I eventually found them on Friday afternoon and we went to Capt. D's for dinner. Saturday was high winds and the

There was a lot going on at the expo and I did not get a chance to see everything. There were so many people looking at the Lightnings, I spent most of my time at the booth. Between Nick, Greg, Buz, Crystal, and me we must have talked to most of South West Florida. I saw Nick getting interviewed on camera at one point. Maybe AOPA? I am not really sure. Nick was able to make some demo flights in the XS Jet on Wednesday and Thursday afternoon, but the weather killed all chances for demos on Friday and Saturday.

If you have been reading the AOPA and AvWeb reports, you have seen the article that the Commuter Aircraft has finally flown. This is an interesting plane with a canard and a twin boom with a horizontal stabilizer and elevator. They are still working on the design, but it is an interesting aircraft. The owners have talked with Nick and have discussed design issues with him, so at least we know that they are serious. I have been watching the plane take shape over the past few years at Oshkosh and Sun-N-Fun. The plane is currently flying with a Titan IO-340 turning a three blade fixed pitch prop.



Commuter Aircraft

There was a little plane at the show that may be getting some press. It is a small single place airplane that will have the capability to use a reciprocating engine or an electric motor. The Merlin PSA (Personal Sport Aircraft) is a kit built by Aeromarine LSA out of South Lakeland Airport in Lakeland, FL. You can do some simple searching on the web and get more information. Until the FAA is persuaded to change the Special Light Sport Aircraft rule, the electric powered plane cannot be certified as a Light Sport Aircraft. The company (and other hopeful electric powered aircraft manufacturers) are working to change the rule. They might get some high power assist since both Boeing and Airbus are looking at electric powered light aircraft.



The Merlin PSA

As usual, Velocity was there even though they are not an LSA. They have been asked to show their plane at least the last few years and have flown it over from my home field, Sebastian Municipal Airport (X26)



The Velocity Twin

AOPA had a presence as did the EAA. The South East Region representative (I may very well have his title wrong) was there flying in in his "company car", a beautifully restored C-152. The AOPA guys gave some forums and manned their booth and are very interested in helping people set up flying clubs. Having learned to fly in a flying club, I highly recommend this method for finding the least expensive method of obtaining your Private Pilot Certificate.



The AOPA C-152

During Wednesday and Thursday, there were lots of folks flying their aircraft to showcase the capabilities of each type. I got a chance to take a picture of a backpack powered parachute pilot having fun. After watching two guys doing some interesting flying with their powered parachutes, Buz and Nick discussed the possibilities of two guys in these aircraft taking flight with paintball guns and doing a little dogfighting I wonder if anyone has actually done it. Likely, it's been done.



The Auto Gyros were there, although I did not get a picture of them flying. They were definitely having fun when they were in the air.



The Calidus Auto Gyro

If you would like to look at all of the aircraft that were there, I am sure you can find them all at the LSA Expo web site, US Sport Aviation Expo. The following are pictures I took some other things to see around the show.



The Arion Booth



Buz's New Ride

Buz drove down from Virginia in his brand new 2016 Corvette. We put "Made in the USA" signs in both Lightnings and the Vette. Buz is driving his Vette to his 50th anniversary of graduating from the Unites States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. He says he had a new 1966 Vette when he graduated and now he is going back with a new 2016 for his 50th. Very cool.



I Caught Crystal Taking a Break

You almost never get a chance to see Crystal sitting. She is usually cleaning and waxing airplanes. Or on one cold Saturday morning, she made us hot cocoa. Thanks Crystal.



An Interesting Sight at the Expo



Greg Talking to a Potential Customer



A Stemme Motor Glider

I always wanted to take a ride in one of these. Another day perhaps.



The Evekotor



The Booth from a Different Angle



My Jet Again, with Some Reflections

At the end of the day on the last day of the Expo, we get a nice twilight photo of the XS. It was a good show and hopefully will eventually sell more than the one kit I know about. See you all there again next year.



My Jet at the Expo

You are going to see a couple pictures of my Jet. I am writing the Magazine ☺.



The Booth Closed for the Evening

News from the Factory

As always, things are going on at the factory. The first Lightning with air conditioning has been completed and flown home. This airplane is absolutely beautiful and is a more than a Jet with the Aero Sport Power IO-340 (pictures below). The AEAC Electric Lightning is in finishing up and the airframe will be shipped to their facility for installation of the electric motor, batteries, and avionics (the pictures of it being completed before shipment are below). The Superior IO-320 I reported on in the last issue is well on its way and nearing completion. I have a picture of it below as well. Nick is flying that pretty RV-6 that I reported on last time and he has a really nice picture to share taken by one of his buddies at Shelbyville.

Now for non-aviation news, if you have been following Nick's Facebook page, you know that Dana and Nick have a new son, Sven. There are a bunch of pictures, but I picked this one. I wonder how much of the day; he actually is this peaceful.



Sven on Dad's Lap



Neil Corella's Jet Finished and in Flight



AEAC Electric Lightning Motor Mount and Cowling



Jason Structurally Testing the Motor Mount



AEAC Airframe Complete



Nick's RV-6 – Break Off



Two Fast Jets

News From The Dealers

From Lightning Aircraft West:

As always, it was great getting to see Greg and Crystal Hobbs from [Lightning Aircraft West](#). They have been very busy at their place outside Marana, AZ. Crystal, who is also a substitute teacher, told the Freshman Football team that if they went undefeated for the season she'd make them a formal dinner. She ended up serving dinner to 160 people.

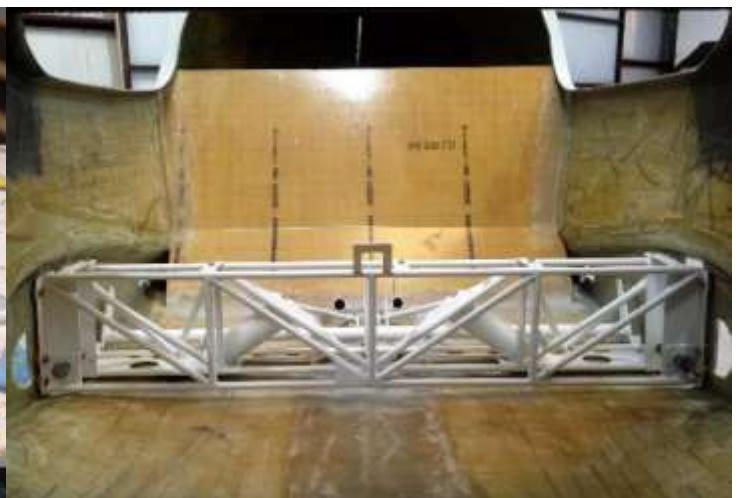


160 Folks for Dinner at the Hobbs' Hangar

There is a unique Jet being built at Lightning Aircraft West. It turns out that their latest customer is also a Virginia Tech fan, and I assume an alumnus. Why else would you paint an airplane with those really strange colors? Turns out, the paint job is awesome. Maybe I should have thought about a Gator paint scheme (Nope, but someone may do that eventually.) Here are some really nice pictures of the build of Jack's Jet.



Jack's Rudder and Brake Assembly



The Spar Box Installed



You Never Want to See This Again



Aligning the Gear



The Engine is Mounted



Painted Wing



Bottom Cowl



Top Cowl



Vertical Stab

Current Lightning Dealers or Representatives



Arion Lightning, LLC, contact Nick Otterback, Shelbyville, TN, 931-680-1781, www.flylightning.net



Southwest: Geronimo Experimental Aircraft, Greg Hobbs, 18750 West Avra Valley Rd, Marana, AZ 85635, 520-405-6868 www.lightningaircraftwest.net



Mid Atlantic: Green Landings Flight Center, Ryan Gross, 309 Takeoff Dr., Hedgesville WV 25427, 304-754-6010, www.greenlandings.com



Upper Midwest: H & S Aviation, Tom Hoffman, 3015 Shady Ln, Neenah, WI 54956-9509, (920)-585-9704



Midwest: Heart of America Aviation LLC, Jack Gonzenbach, 12906 W 122nd St, Overland Park KS, 66213, (913) 890-3052, jgonzenbach@flyhoaa.com



Russia and CIS, AVIA-NIANIA Ltd, Moscow, Russia, Phone: + 7495518-62-75, Mobile Phone: + 7925518-62-75, avianiania@mail.ru or avianiania@aol.com



Two Mustangs and a Lightning

News From Builders and Flyers

Did Gerd Fly Yet?



I have not heard anything from Gerd. I hope he gets his airworthiness certificate soon so we can get a report.

From the Matronics Lightning List:

Unfortunately, there has been no updates from Lightning owners on the Lightning list.



Lightning Homecoming 2014

Upcoming Events

58th Cactus Fly-In – Casa Grande, AZ March 04-05, 2016



[58th Annual Cactus Fly-IN](#)
Airport Identifier – KCGZ

Sun – N- Fun Fly-In–Lakeland, FL April 05-10, 2016



[Sun-N-Fun](#)
Airport Identifier - KLAL

Lightning of the Quarter and Pilot Spotlight

Guidelines and Question

The following questions are to be used for your submittals of the Lightning of the Quarter and Pilot Spotlight articles. Every single Lightning out there deserves to be in the Lightning of the Quarter. Every single pilot has a story to tell. I hope you take some time and used these questions and guidelines to tell your story for the rest of us. Although similar, the stories for a Lightning of the Quarter and the Pilot Spotlight are just a bit different.

Before publishing any story, I will likely make some edits for spelling, punctuation, and clarity. So, with these guidelines, I hope I get a lot of input for future issues of Hangar Talk.

Lightning of the Quarter Questions:

If you are interested in submitting your jet for the Lightning of the Quarter, just use the questions below and submit some nice pictures of your plane. A picture of the panel is also interesting, at least it is to me. Take a look at the prior Lightning of the Quarter articles and use them as guidelines when you put your story together. Your story will be great - they all are.

Questions for Lightning of the Quarter.

1. Do you have an online build log? If so, and would like to share it, provide the URL.
2. Where did you get your interest in aviation and what are your earliest memories of wanting to fly?
3. Does your spouse share your interest and does he/she fly as well?
4. What made you choose the Arion Lightning for your aircraft?
5. Did you build it or buy it?
6. Is it an S-LSA, E-LSA, or E-AB? If it is an experimental, does it meet Light Sport requirements?
7. If you built your plane did you build it at the factory, a dealer, or at home?
8. How was the build process?
9. What type of flying do you do with your jet?
10. Have you flown it to a major fly-in? Which ones?
11. Finally, include some (3 or 4) nice pictures of you and your plane and some captions for each picture.

Pilot Spotlight Questions:

If you would like to be highlighted in the magazine, we do that in a Pilot Spotlight article. Each of us have unique stories about our aviation interests, careers, and/or hobbies. Each story deserves telling and they are all interesting to me.

1. Where are you from? Hometown? Current residence?
2. How did you get started in aviation? When did you begin being interested in flying? Why did you want to become a pilot?
3. What were the circumstances for your first airplane ride? Explain in detail.
4. What was the first plane you flew / soloed?
5. What is your favorite aircraft to fly?
6. Did you have to pay for your flight lessons yourself? If so, how did you do that?
7. Tell about your education. If you have a college degree, where did you go to college? What did you study? Do you have any advanced degrees?
8. Did you work in the aviation industry? If so, what was your occupation? If not, what was your occupation?
9. Did you fly commercially? Explain who you flew for, what aircraft you flew, how long did you fly commercially?
10. Were you in the military? Which service, when, how long? Did you fly in the military?
11. When did you meet your spouse? Was she/he supportive of your flying?
12. Have you owned an airplane before the Lightning? How many? What models? How long have you owned them? Which ones did you like best and why? Worst?
13. Have you ever built an airplane? What model(s)? Why did you choose that / those model(s)?
14. What are your favorite aviation events?
15. Have you attended AirVenture or Sun-N-Fun? How many times?
16. What are your other hobbies? Tell about them in some detail.

Final Thoughts



I am always interested in the reasons people decide to become pilots, own or build their own airplane, and keep spending precious dollars on aviation. It is more than a status symbol or a career, it is a need, a passion, a deep seated desire to fly. When my kids were young, their friends used to tell them, "You guys are rich, you have an airplane!" My kids would answer, "No, we're broke, we have an airplane." Yes, most of us sacrifice to maintain our flying hobby – passion. We may not go on a wanted vacation, we may drive a 10-year-old car that has 250,000 miles on it, but we maintain our planes, buy expensive aviation fuel, and we fly. Unfortunately, this month, there were no submissions to the Lightning of the Quarter or Pilot Spotlight. So, we are all missing out on someone's love for their Jet or the reason another person is participating in this crazy thing we call General Aviation. Please take some time over the next couple of months and use the outline I have provided and send me one of these items. I guarantee that I am interested, and I am sure everyone else is also. If I don't get something for the next newsletter, you will likely see me in the spotlight. I want to put something there, so please send in your submissions.

The picture above is the latest look of the Lightning Kit. Greg and Crystal used parts of this very kit at the LSA Expo in Sebring to show people what a Lightning kit will look like when it is delivered. This picture will be a great change from the old grey gel coat kit in the literature. Thanks to Greg and Crystal for laying out the kit and taking such a nice picture.

Next stop is Sun-N-Fun. There will be a smaller display this year. The plans are for me to fly my Jet to Lakeland and it will be on display in booth N66 towards the flight line in front of Hangars A and B. Greg and Crystal Hobbs will be running the display. I will be helping out and anyone is welcome to come visit and talk to potential customers.

Blue Skies,
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