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AOPA ePilot Volume 2, Issue 36 September 8, 2000

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AOPA opposes warbird-destruction bill

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==> GA NEWS <==

ROBINSON BEATS TURBINES INTO SUBMISSION

Robinson Helicopter Company is having such a good year that its piston-engined aircraft are outselling turbine helicopters by two to one. Robinson officials said the trend has industry experts stumped. Forecasters had predicted an increase in the turbine market share and a decrease for piston manufacturers, but the opposite is true, according to recent statistics released by the Aerospace Industries Association. Piston helicopters now represent 70 percent of the production in North America. During the first half of the year, Robinson delivered 183 helicopters, more than the eight other North American manufacturers combined. For more information, see the Web site <http://www.robinsonheli.com/> .

OFFICIALS CELEBRATE AIR BASE TRANSFER

Pacific Jets Corporation celebrated last week the opening of its business jet service company in conjunction with the official passing of the guard of the former McClellan Air Force Base to civilian hands. Pacific Jets is one of the newest tenants of the McClellan Air Park, located in Sacramento, California. The company plans to tap into a need in booming Silicon Valley to the southwest for more corporate aircraft, hangar space, and jet management services. The company hasn't even completed its Web site; visit <http://www.pacjets.net> in three weeks.

GAMA RELEASES COCKPIT DESIGN REPORT

The General Aviation Manufacturers Association has released its newest publication to assist manufacturers in designing FAR Part 23 cockpits and flight decks. The publication brings together years of research on human factors to improve operational safety. To download a copy of GAMA

AIR FORCE ACADEMY OFFERS TRAINING CONTRACT

The U.S. Air Force Academy has formally put out for bid an \$18.5 million contract proposal for introductory flight training. The winning contractor will provide all aircraft, equipment, maintenance, and personnel to provide 50 hours of flight training for the civilian private pilot rating. The government proposal is available for viewing only on the Internet, but it isn't easy to find. First, go to the Web <http://www.eps.gov> and select "FBO for Vendors." Then select "USAF, Offices." On the next Web page, choose "Direct Reporting Units, Location." Then, choose "10ABW/LGC, USAF Academy, Posted Dates." Under "Sept. 01" you'll find the description of the contract. The contract is renewable for up to seven years.

For daily news updates, see AOPA Online <http://www.aopa.org/members> .

==> INSIDE AOPA <==

AOPA OPPOSES WARBIRD-DESTRUCTION BILL

AOPA has asked Congress to change legislation that might result in the destruction of historic military aircraft. And it now appears that Congress will make the change. A member of the House Armed Services Committee staff told AOPA that the committee chairman directed the legislation to either be fixed or deleted. At issue is Section 361 of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4205). That section would authorize the secretary of defense to require "demilitarization" of significant military equipment, including aircraft formerly owned by the Department of Defense. A House/Senate conference committee is currently considering the bill. In a letter to House Armed Services Committee Chairman Floyd Spence (R-S.C.), AOPA President Phil Boyer explained the problems that the section, as currently drafted, could cause. "If enacted, this section could destroy an important part of our nation's aviation history," Boyer wrote. "At a time when this nation faces a serious pilot shortage, predicted to last until the end of this decade, there is no better visibility given to aviation than the appearances many of these historical aircraft make at public airshows and airports around the country." For more information, see the Web site <http://www.aopa.org/whatsnew/newsitems/2000/00-3-076.html> .

STEKETEE TO TAKE CONTROLS OF BE A PILOT

AOPA was instrumental in getting the industry's Be A Pilot (then GA TEAM 2000) program off the ground in 1996. Now, Drew Steketee, AOPA senior vice president of communications for the past nine years, will lead general aviation's public education and outreach effort as president and chief executive. "Drew's career has been devoted to communicating why we fly and why more Americans should discover flying," said Russ Meyer, chairman of Cessna Aircraft Company and year 2000 chairman of Be A Pilot. "The industry's gain is AOPA's loss," added AOPA President Phil Boyer, "but this appointment signals a new era in a program crucial to general aviation's future." Be A Pilot was credited with boosting the U.S. pilot population by 3.3 percent last year. A 2,600-hour commercial pilot and a 1971 graduate of Brown University, Steketee will expand Be A Pilot beyond targeted cable TV ads and the Internet to reach more Americans who are interested in flying. He will begin the transition to Be A Pilot this month, and will be officially introduced in his new role on October 11 at the NBAA convention in New Orleans. More information will be available shortly on the Be A Pilot Web site <http://www.beapilot.com> .

AOPA'S BOYER ASKS FOR RESOLUTION ON MAC

In a September 5 letter to Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John McCain, AOPA President Phil Boyer asked once again for a resolution of his nomination to the FAA Management Advisory Council (MAC). Back in

July, when Boyer responded to a second set of questions from McCain (R-Ariz.), Boyer asked for a "timely disposition" of his nomination. McCain never responded. Meanwhile, McCain's committee sent the names of the rest of the MAC nominees to the full Senate, which has confirmed them all. In his latest letter to McCain, Boyer wrote, "I believe that the FAA is at a crossroads due largely to the management reforms granted by the Congress. These reforms, along with the historic funding levels provided through the passage of AIR-21, offer an unprecedented opportunity to continue the inroads that have been made toward a modern FAA. My broad background in aviation, management, union negotiations, work rules, and technology is tailor-made for this position and I am pleased to think that I may have the opportunity to serve my country in the field of my expertise. I look forward to learning the status of my nomination to the MAC now that Congress is back in session."

AOPA STAFFERS PARTICIPATE IN CAPSTONE OPEN HOUSE

AOPA staff members traveled to Alaska last week to attend an open house and to serve on a discussion panel on the FAA's Capstone program.

"Capstone demonstrates the value of multifunction displays coupled with datalink and represents a critical component in the advancement of our national airspace system and the administrator's Safer Skies initiative," Doug Helton, AOPA vice president of air traffic services and technology, told the audience. AOPA also met pilots and air taxi operators who, for the first time, are seeing METAR/TAF and Nexrad images in their cockpits. Response to the weather uplink was overwhelmingly positive. AOPA is interested in the datalink radio used in Capstone, the Universal Access Transceiver (UAT), because it can be manufactured inexpensively. Besides weather information, the UAT enables pilots to see transponder- and other UAT-equipped aircraft aloft. Look for a feature on the Capstone program in a "Future Flight" installment in the October issue of "AOPA Pilot."

==> ON CAPITOL HILL <==

SLATER URGES PRESIDENT TO VETO FAA FUNDING

Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater said he will recommend that President Clinton veto the fiscal 2001 transportation appropriations bill if House and Senate conferees will not remove language regarding the trucking industry. What does it have to do with aviation? The bill also contains the historic funding provisions made possible by the passage of the AIR-21 legislation earlier this year. The controversial provision was part of the Senate transportation bill, but was not included in the House version. The House and Senate began the required joint conference committee to resolve differences in their respective transportation bills earlier this year, but recessed for the August congressional break without reaching a final agreement and sending the bill to the president. However, the committee is expected to reach a conclusion in the coming days.

==> AIRPORT SUPPORT NETWORK <==

VOLUNTEER OF THE WEEK--RONALD J. WALKER

ASN volunteer Ronald J. Walker of Leesburg, Florida, has been actively involved in making sure comments from pilots and users at Leesburg Regional Airport (LEE) are incorporated into the proposed minimum standards document. Walker solicited AOPA's input along with recommendations from the users and recently submitted them to the airport board. Pleased with Walker's information, the board adopted the majority of the changes. And, acting on Walker's research, the board filed paperwork in order to make a radio frequency change.

To learn more about the Airport Support Network, visit <http://www.aopa.org/asn/> .

==> AOPA AIR SAFETY FOUNDATION NEWS <==

MEMBERSHIP SOARS IN ASF LIFE ASSOCIATE PROGRAM

The AOPA Air Safety Foundation's Life Associate program has welcomed more than 200 members in its first year, generating hundreds of thousands of dollars in personal endowment funds for the foundation's safety programs. Each \$2,500 gift creates a personal endowment fund that yields \$100 a year to ASF. Donors receive a one-time federal tax deduction of \$2,000, lifetime payment of AOPA membership dues, and recognition in ASF's annual report to donors. For more information, see the Web site http://www.aopa.org/asf/life_associate.html .

==> QUIZ ME! <==

Here's a question asked by an AOPA member last week of our AOPA technical specialists. Test your knowledge.

Q: I saw something on a National Ocean Service (NOS) chart that I've never seen before. I checked the legend and there was no definition. What does "MEA GAP" mean?

A: Minimum en route altitude (MEA) is the lowest altitude between radio fixes that guarantees obstruction clearance and adequate navigation signal reception. Although MEA is defined as providing acceptable navigational signal coverage, under certain circumstances MEA may have a gap in signal coverage of up to 65 miles. These gaps are noted on Jeppesen charts with a symbol (a heavy bar that looks broken in the middle), and with the words MEA GAP on NOS charts.

Got a technical question for AOPA specialists? Call 800/872-2672, or e-mail to <mailto:inforequest@aopa.org> . Send comments on our Quiz Me! questions to <mailto:epilot@aopa.org> .

==> COMING UP IN "AOPA PILOT" <==

Find out about the luxurious new Socata Trinidad GT, feel what it's like to land on an aircraft carrier at night, and experience a day in the life of an Alaskan air taxi operator in the October issue of "AOPA Pilot." It will be mailed September 16.

==> ON THE ROAD TO EXPO <==

Last chance to save on one, two, or three-day advance discount packages for AOPA Expo 2000 in Long Beach, California, October 20 through 22. Register by September 15. This is the only way to take advantage of the exciting package plans which include a variety of Expo events at a discount. Enjoy the convenience of having your Expo materials waiting for you at the front desk. You'll be the first to see more than 500 exhibits, 80 aircraft, and you won't miss a single seminar! Guarantee your seat at fun social events like the "Capitol Steps", a comedy troupe that will perform at the Sunday night banquet, sponsored by Audi of America. What a great way to spend a weekend! Check out the five advance registration options at <http://www.aopa.org/expo> or call 888/GO2/EXPO for full details.

==> ePilot CALENDAR <==

WEEKEND FLYING DESTINATIONS

EAGLE RIVER, WISCONSIN. The Wisconsin Seaplane Pilots Association hosts its annual fall floatplane fly-in today through September 10 at Mapleview Resort. Eagle River Union Airport (EGV), 715/479-7442, serves the area. Call 715/276-2217 for event information.

RENO, NEVADA. The Great Reno Balloon Race takes place today through September 10 in Rancho San Rafael Park. Reno/Stead Airport (4SD),

775/328-6370, serves the area. Call 775/826-1181 for event information.

SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA. The Red River Rally Balloon Festival and Airshow takes place today through September 10. Shreveport Downtown Airport (DTN), 318/673-5370, is the host airport. Call 800/227-2559 for event information.

UPCOMING AOPA EVENTS

AOPA Expo 2000 takes place in Long Beach, California, October 20 through 22. Visit the Web site <http://www.aopa.org/expo/> .

For more airport details, see AOPA's Airport Directory

<http://www.aopa.org/members/airports> .

For more events, see <http://www.aopa.org/pilot/calendar.html> .

ASF FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR REFRESHER CLINICS

(All clinics start at 7:30 a.m.)

The next AOPA Air Safety Foundation Flight Instructor Refresher Clinics are scheduled in Van Nuys, California; Boston, Massachusetts; and Des Moines, Iowa, September 9 and 10. Clinics are scheduled in Phoenix, Arizona; Richmond, Virginia; and Sacramento, California, September 16 and 17. For the Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic schedule, see

<http://www.aopa.org/asf/schedules/aboutfirc.html> .

ASF SAFETY SEMINARS

The next AOPA ASF Safety Seminars are scheduled in Pittsburgh

(West Mifflin), Pennsylvania, September 11; Harrisburg (New Cumberland), Pennsylvania, September 12; and Middletown, New Jersey, September 14.

The seminar topic is "GPS for VFR Operations." Familiarity with GPS is essential because it's the navigation system of the future. You will learn rules for survival in an electronic environment as well as advantages and disadvantages of using GPS; GPS capabilities; how to navigate using GPS; and traps and tricks of GPS navigation. Pilots of all skill levels and experience will benefit from this

thorough review of GPS in VFR conditions. For more information see

<http://www.aopa.org/asf/schedules/ssssite.html> .

ASF PINCH-HITTER GROUND-SCHOOL COURSES

(Pinch-Hitter courses start at 9:30 a.m.)

The next Pinch-Hitter(R) Ground School will take place September 24 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. For more Pinch-Hitter courses, see

<http://www.aopa.org/asf/schedules/pinch.html> .

AOPA PILOT TOWN MEETINGS

Featuring AOPA President Phil Boyer

(7:30 p.m.; admission is free)

The next Pilot Town Meetings are in Lansing, Michigan, September 11;

Houston, Texas, September 18; and Atlanta, Georgia, September 19.

For more information on Pilot Town Meetings, see

<http://www.aopa.org/prez/> .

==> YOUR WEEKEND WEATHER <==

See <http://www.aopa.org/members/wx/> .

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