

February 2025

# SQUAWK



## UFO President. From the Port Side

by Kenneth (Brownie) Brown



### ON HOPE

I've been thinking lately about the power of hope, and a phrase came to mind that I wanted to share with you: "Hope is a spring of never-ending water, to refresh the parched soul and bring new ideas <sup>(KB)</sup>."

Think about a spring, bubbling up from deep within the earth. It's a constant source, always flowing, always offering refreshment. Even in the driest of seasons, when the land around it is cracked and barren, the spring continues to give life. That's the kind of power hope holds within us.

Life, as we know, can sometimes feel like a parched landscape. We face challenges, setbacks, and moments of deep discouragement. These experiences can leave our spirits feeling dry and depleted, our minds struggling to find a path forward. It's in these very moments that hope becomes our lifeline, our spring of never-ending water.

When we hold onto hope, we tap into an inner reservoir of strength and resilience. It washes over our weary souls, revitalizing us and reminding us that even in the midst of hardship, possibility still exists. It quenches the thirst of despair and replaces it with a renewed sense of purpose.

But hope doesn't just offer comfort; it also ignites creativity. Just as fresh water nourishes the land and allows new life to flourish, hope nourishes our minds and allows new ideas to blossom. When we believe in the possibility of a better future, we open ourselves up to new ways of thinking, new solutions to problems, and new opportunities for growth. Hope empowers us to see beyond the present difficulties and envision a brighter tomorrow.

So, as you navigate the challenges and uncertainties that life inevitably brings, remember the image of that ever-flowing spring. Remember that hope is not a passive wish, but an active force within you, ready to refresh your soul and in-

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spire new ideas. Nurture the hope, cultivate it, and let it guide you forward. Know that you are capable of overcoming any obstacle, of finding light even in the darkest of times, and of creating a future filled with joy and fulfillment. Because within you lies a wellspring of never-ending hope, waiting to be tapped. This month's ask is for you to reflect on the future to determine what your part will be in the future of the UFOs. How will you make us better?

*Brownie*

*president@ufopilots.org*





by Egon Frech



I fly a high-wing airplane. John Frank, the gone-west founder of the Cessna Pilots Association used to say, "It's the way God intended. You never see a low-winged bird, do you?"

The design, intended by God or not, has certain advantages: Among others, it's a lot easier to get in and out of, and your head doesn't get wet when it's raining (especially appreciated by my wife, Roxanne, who willingly flies in the airplane, even in the rain, when it's going somewhere she wants to go).

But it also has at least one major disadvantage: You have to get up there when it's time to refuel the bird or even just to physically confirm how much go juice is left in the tanks. Clyde Cessna anticipated this problem and provided refueling steps and handles on his strut-equipped models to make the job possible, if not exactly easy. I almost always used those, giving a dismissive glance at the variety of ladders thoughtfully provided by FBOs that anticipated not only the Cessnas at their fuel pumps, but their aging pilots as well.

But lately, I've been using those ladders. When I realized this was happening (it kind of creeps up on you), I was surprised, but I shouldn't have been. The warning signs were there when I gave up racing the Laser single-handed sailboat after the summer of 2023. I put that down to age-related reduction of flexibility, which caused me to be trapped on the wrong side of the boom and to suffer the resultant capsizes once too often. But the real problem was that I couldn't right the boat any more after the capsizes and had to rely on help from the safety crew. It was, pure and simple, loss of muscle mass.

This is a normal occurrence as we age. The literature indicates it begins at about age 30 (that was a L-O-N-G time ago) with 3-8% loss per decade. It accelerates by age 60, with 5-13% per decade, and again by age 80, with 11-50% per decade. Total that up and, at age 85, I should normally have lost 29-88% of my muscle mass. At an average rate, I should have lost 58.5% by now. No wonder I'm having trouble using those refueling steps and handles.

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In 2016, the more severe occurrence of this phenomenon was designated a disease, labelled sarcopenia. It can lead to physical incapacitation. The good news is that for most of us, it can be delayed or even reversed. But don't hope that taking some magic dietary supplement is going to take care of the problem. There's no scientific evidence that those work. What does work is exercise, particularly the resistance type, and a diet with more protein – at least 50-60 grams per meal (about one egg's worth).

I never exercised just for the sake of exercising, and never once joined a gym. I got my exercise sailing, skiing, digging a big hole for a fish pond and trenches for a sprinkler irrigation system, building a garden shed, building a roof over and screening in a back deck, building a big retaining wall – that sort of thing. But I've slowed down, almost imperceptibly, as I aged. I spend a lot more time now sitting in front of a



*Your editor at a Laser Masters Regatta in 2010*

computer screen, current activity included. Last December, I realized I was getting even more flabby and started a daily regimen on the rowing machine I'd bought some years ago and hardly ever used. At first, I could do only 2 minutes before I had to stop and let the blood send more oxygen to my leg muscles. By now, I'm up to 25 minutes non-stop with one notch more resistance, and not even breathing hard. The limit now is how long I can stand to watch the morning's television news.

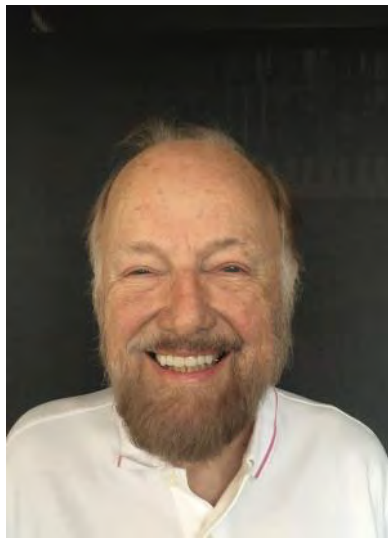
At the end of January, I spent 10 days skiing in Utah, something I don't think I could have done before the exercise regimen. I plan to ski again at Mammoth in California in March. This morning, I spent an hour shoveling the 4 inches of wet, heavy snow that had fallen on southern Maryland overnight, and it felt fine.

Unless you're into heavy aerobatics, flying your airplane isn't enough exercise to stop your muscles from wasting away with age. So, even if you're flying a low-wing airplane, get moving and get some exercise. Who knows when some muscle-challenged old geezer like me with a high-wing is going to need your help because there aren't any ladders around?

*Egon Frech, editor@ufopilots.org*



By Dr. Harry J. Wander



### MORE ON MENTAL HEALTH

In the August, 2024 issue I discussed some changes to the FAA policies on mental health issues. More information continues to come out.

Persons who have stopped taking medications less than 2 years ago and those who are currently taking an approved medication can apply and have their case deferred and reviewed by the FAA medical experts.

If a person appears to be qualified under the new protocol but had the examination before it was published and thus got deferred and is in the queue for review, the AME can ask for expedited review under the new guidelines.

AMEs can now issue a medical certificate to persons who used to be on medication for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) but have been off of it for four years and have no symptoms of other mental health conditions.

Dr. Susan Northrup, the new Federal Air Surgeon, is making numerous changes that benefit the pilot community. She is a retired Air Force Colonel and an active private pilot. She flies a T-6 Texan, which she and her husband own.

Harry Wander, MD  
Senior AME





By Ralph P Bennett

## COULD YOU PASS THE 1910 PRACTICAL FLIGHT TEST CERTIFICATE FOR INCLUSION IN THE ILLUSTRIOUS ROYAL AERO CLUB OF THE UNITED KINGDOM?

Originally founded in 1901 by Frank Hedges Butler, one of the earliest owners of a motor car in the UK, the Hon. Charles Rolls of Rolls Royce fame, and Frank's socialite daughter Vera, the Royal Aero Club (RAeC) was the first organization responsible for licensing and controlling flying at the dawn of the aviation era. The Royal Aero Club rapidly became the social and political center of the new sport. In 1909 the Club established its first flying ground at Muswell Manor on the Isle of Sheppey.

Initially the club was confined to balloons. When heavier than air flight arrived, the Club embraced it with alacrity. The influence of the Club on these early days of

aviation cannot be overemphasized. Founder pilot Charles Rolls received Club certificate #2 and Thomas Sopwith (Certificate # 31), became a household name after designing and building the Sop-



with Camel. The Wright brothers were the first to receive gold, silver and bronze medals from the Royal Aero Club of the United Kingdom. Members of the Club included (and trained) most military pilots until 1915, when military flight schools took over. By the end of the First World War, more than 6,300 military pilots had taken the RAeC Aviator's Certificate.

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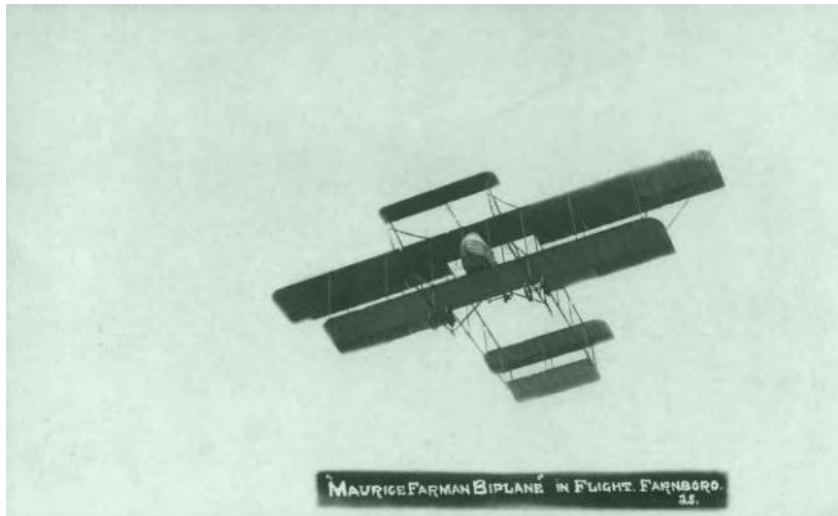


Now the PTS requirements (or Taking one's Ticket) for a Royal Aero Club Certificate in 1910:

- 1) Two distance flights of at least 5 km (3 miles) each in a closed circuit, the distance to be measured.
- 2) One altitude flight with a minimum of 50 meters (165 feet) which could also form part of the distances of the two distance flights.

The Rules declared that:

The course for the distance flights should be marked by two posts no more than 500 meters apart. After each turn round one of the



posts, the pilot must change the direction of the flight when going around the second post, so the circuit is an uninterrupted series of figures of eight.

The method of alighting (landing) for each of the flights should be with the motor stopped at, or before, touching the ground. The aeroplane must come to a rest within a distance of 50 meters from a point previously indicated by the candidate.

By passing this examination the pilot showed that he or she had gained control of the aeroplane efficiently and so could take part in all aerial contests and displays run by the Club.

*This Writer's note: The Club's equivalent of our Designated Pilot Examiner remained on the ground, did not charge exorbitant fees, and operated without a ridiculous waiting list for flight tests.*



Dear Egon,

Cyril Mosher here, Canadian representative for UFO.

I read with interest your latest article in SQUAWK magazine. I too trained as a private pilot in Canada in 1967. My training took place at the military base in Cold Lake, Alberta.

As I recall it my training was subsidized to the tune of \$500, which they told me was from the Queen. I never believed that shit for a minute, the money came from the Canadian taxpayers. I am not certain of the exact cost of my Private Pilot Training, but I have receipts for both my Private and Commercial combined which came to the princely sum of \$3.400.

I think I may have an explanation of why the cost of training now appears to be completely out of touch with reality. When I was a Chief Flying Instructor in Nova Scotia in 1975 I had a student who, after his training was complete, flew to Wichita and purchased a brand new Cessna 172 for \$25,000.

I just looked up the current price and it is now \$400.000 or more.

I also seem to recall that around that time there were a number of lawsuits against aircraft manufacturers which resulted in some major settlements. So you can also consider the costs of litigation. Too many lawyers perhaps?

Keep up the good work Egon, I always enjoy your articles.

Cyril Mosher

[sirearl@airpost.net](mailto:sirearl@airpost.net)

*Cyril,*

*Thanks for the comment. I had a similar experience. I bought a fully equipped two-year-old 172 in 1981 for \$19,000 US -- it had sold brand new in 1979 for \$35,000. No doubt the U.S. propensity to sue everyone, especially those with deep pockets, has added costs. A new 172 should be selling for \$152,000 today if you apply normal inflation to the 1979 price.*

*Egon*





There is an annual fly-in at Triple Tree airport in Woodruff, SC. The event is September 22-28 this year. I have attended several times. It is a hoot. Camping on site, great food and a lot of fellow aviators and neat airplanes. The airport features a 7,000 X 400-foot grass runway that is as smooth as a pool table. AOPA is very active there.

This would be a great spot for the UFO population in the SE US to unite. Take a look at their website for info.

Let me know what you think.

Don Abbott

*Sounds like a great idea, Don. I see we have about 5 dozen members from the Carolinas. Is anyone, or a group of you, willing to step up and take the lead? It should be possible to arrange some financial assistance from UFO HQ. Contact president Ken Brown at [president@ufopilots.org](mailto:president@ufopilots.org).*

*-Egon*

Looking forward to the Danbury CT meeting and lunch.

If a date and place has been selected and you can let me know, I will put it on my calendar.

Thanks,

David

Flying since 1960

CFI since 1965

CFI of the Year 1999

Built a biplane and an RV6

Fly a SAR helicopter for a police department

*David Faile*

*Friends Of Sikorsky Airport*

*David,*

*We'll publish the date in the Squawk as soon as it's set.*

*- Egon*



## Soar with Us! Support United Flying Octogenarians Keep Aviation Thriving

**United Flying Octogenarians** is a dedicated 501(c)3 non-profit organization, established to uphold the ideals outlined in our charter:

- **Promoting Longevity and Safety in Aviation:** We share knowledge and best practices to ensure a long and safe flying experience for all pilots.
- **Representing Senior Pilots Worldwide:** We advocate for the valuable experience and expertise of senior aviators within the industry.
- **Inspiring Youth to Fly:** We ignite the passion for aviation in young minds, fostering the next generation of skilled pilots.
- **Promoting Fellowship Among Senior Pilots:** We create a strong community where seasoned aviators can connect, share experiences, and mentor one another.

**Fulfilling this vital mission requires your support!**

We rely on generous donations to fund crucial initiatives like:

- **Informing pilots so we are not “the best kept secret in aviation.”**
- **Developing and disseminating aviation safety resources** for pilots of all ages and experience levels.
- **Lobbying for policies** that prioritize the safety and well-being of pilots and passengers.
- **Organizing educational programs and scholarships** for aspiring young flyers.
- **Hosting events and forums** that foster connections and knowledge sharing among senior aviators.

**Your contribution, no matter the size, will directly impact these efforts.** With your help, we can continue to:

- **Reduce aviation accidents and ensure safe skies for all.**
- **Guarantee the voices and experiences of senior pilots are heard.**
- **Spark a lifelong love of flying in future generations.**
- **Maintain a vibrant community that supports and celebrates seasoned aviators.**

**Donate Today and Make a Lasting Impact!**

Visit our website to make a secure donation at [www.ufopilots.org](http://www.ufopilots.org)  
or mail your check to :

UFO, P. O. Box 2230 Keller, TX, 76244

**Together, we can keep aviation soaring!**

**Sincerely,** The United Flying Octogenarians Team



## Carolina Fly-in

The first annual UFO Carolina Fly-in is scheduled for May 10, 2025 at the Cape Fear Jetport (KSUT) in Southport, NC. The fly-in is scheduled from 10 am to 2 pm (or as long as anyone would like to stay). We look forward to welcoming UFO pilots, Aux-UFO pilots, friends of the UFO, or anyone who has an interest in UFO and would like to find out more about it. Fly or drive in. We have access to a meeting room in the FBO and plan to provide food and drink. Come and enjoy some hangar talk. Please RSVP to Art Falk at phone: 908-403 9148 or email: artfalk1@gmail.com.

If you have any questions, use the same contact.

The Jetport has private jet traffic, but no commercial airlines. It is primarily GA traffic and non towered. Obviously announcing and listening are important. In addition there may be parachute jumping in the area. The FBO is on the west ramp (to the left when landing 5).



Pilots and aircraft owners looking for a fresh approach to safety education can tune in to The Schiff Show, an aviation safety variety show hosted by UFO member Captain Brian Schiff.

Premiered Thursday, Jan. 9, 2025, at 8 p.m. EST, this monthly program aims to make learning about operational safety engaging and practical, according to Schiff.

A seasoned aviator, Schiff will explore real-world scenarios, analyzing what went right, what went wrong, and how to handle similar situations. The show will feature guest experts sharing advice drawn from their own flying experiences.

Each episode is designed to help pilots enhance their decision-making skills and promote safer flying for everyone on board, he noted.

Key perks for viewers include FAA WINGS credit and a 5% discount on Avemco insurance. If you miss the live broadcast, episodes will be recorded for later viewing.

Mark your calendars for the second Thursday of every month and click [here](#) to watch the first two episodes.



## Potential Northeast Fly-in

UFO member Karl Doll, of Mechanicville, NY, is seriously thinking of organizing a regional fly-in at the Empire State Aerosciences Museum at Schenectady (KSCH) on Aug. 9, 2025.

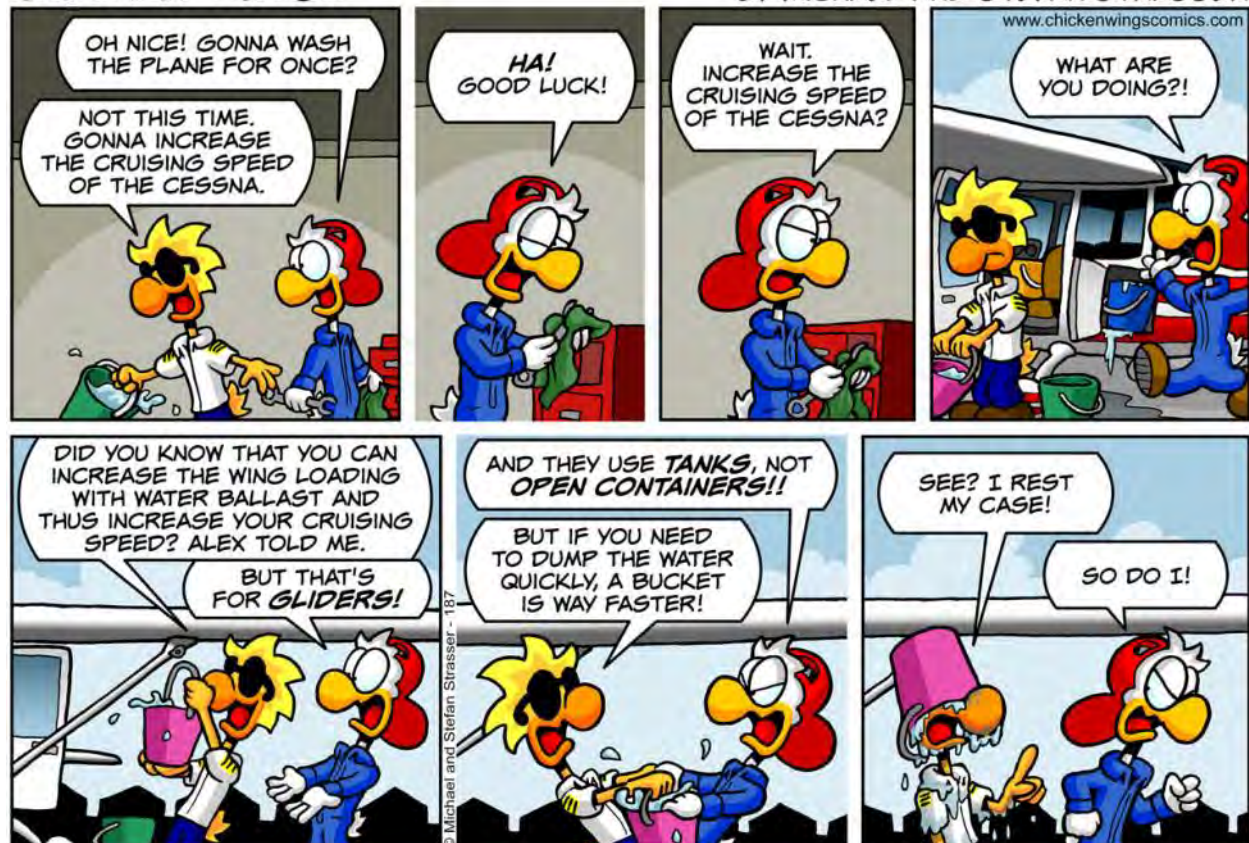
The museum is home to a 1/2-scale model of a Concorde that was previously atop a building in Times Square, as well as two C-130 Hercules aircraft that were outfitted with rockets to allow them to take off from a 120-yard soccer field in Iran as part of a hostage rescue operation.

KSCH is a dual-use facility and is home to an Air National Guard unit, so potential displays could include a ski-equipped C-130.

To help with the event, or express an interest in attending, contact Karl Doll at [karld@usairforce.vet](mailto:karld@usairforce.vet) or 518-414-6096.

## CHICKEN WINGS®

BY MICHAEL AND STEFAN STRASSER





## Words from Bob Barker, President Emeritus

There are two things the UFO has to offer a prospective member. They are RECOGNITION and FELLOWSHIP.

The Certificate of Achievement and the President's letter that goes with it (or President's Declaration, as I called it) provides the recognition. But we are falling short in developing the camaraderie.

UFO events, where we get together and enjoy each other's company, have fallen by the wayside. While this trend is slowly reversing this has been a serious loss and it needs to be rectified. Before COVID struck, 25 to 30 events were reported on the website every year. After the event, there was a brief report posted on the website along with a dozen of photographs. There were fly-ins, visits to museums, and gatherings at someone's hangar or at an airport restaurant. The meetings were and are very popular. A wonderful sense of camaraderie developed at these meetings. They were a major benefit of membership and were an important source for new members and friendships.

Currently, there is an open director position on the board for the **Office of Field Network**, whose purposes would be:

- Motivate members to host meetings and become local hosts**
- Coordinate support for meetings with banners, table flags, swag, and expenses**
- Give step-by-step assistance for their first meeting.**

If you have a desire to serve on the board and would like to tackle this opportunity, please contact us at [interested@ufopilots.org](mailto:interested@ufopilots.org)

One of the things UFOs and AWs have done in their life has been to promote aviation. This position is an extension of that lifelong passion, by bringing the history of aviation around a table and talking about it.

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### **Col. William S. Hartsell, USAF, Ret.**

Bill Hartsell earned his FAA private certificate in a Piper Colt in October, 1965 while in USAF ROTC training at The Citadel in Charleston, SC, where he graduated and was commissioned in May, 1966. He spent the next 28 years in the USAF as a Command Pilot, staff officer at national and international levels, and as a commander. His flying experiences included a tour as a forward air controller in Vietnam and as an Air Force-2 pilot for 5 years for President Bush (41) when he was vice-president, whom he was flying the day President Reagan was shot.

He flew numerous types of military aircraft and earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, 13 Air Medals, Pacific Air Force's Able Aeronaut Award, and numerous USAF, DOD and other nations' awards and decorations. He retired in January 1994 as a full colonel.

After retirement, he continued to fly with the Civil Air Patrol and with Angel Flight/Wings. In the fall of 1997, he accepted an invitation to become the chief executive pilot of the governor of Oklahoma and his family, the vice-governor, and state executives, flying a Super King Air 350. His aircraft was the only civilian flight in the air the days following 9-11-2001 as he transported the governor of Oklahoma to Washington and back again.

During his long career, Bill has amassed more than 13,000 hours in his logbook, of which 822 are in combat and more than 4,000 as an instructor or flight examiner. He qualified and was proficient in numerous models of domestic civilian aircraft and remains proficient in the Cessna 172 and 182 and Piper Saratoga. His ratings include commercial and ATP certificates with SEL and MEL CFII and AGII.

Bill continues to be involved in aviation as a Boy Scout aviation merit badge counselor, a member of the Oklahoma Pilots Association and the Engineers Flying Club, and an active member of the warbirds section of EAA. He received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award in 2018. His bucket list has flights and stick time in the B-17, B-25, PT-17/26, AT-6 and P-51. He's still waiting on a PT-19 flight. Then, there's the F-4U Corsair, maybe a seaplane rating, and *flying* Route 66.



## Brian Cilker

bcilker@pineconelumber.com

I received my private pilot license in 1979 and in 1992 became a part owner of a Cessna T210. In 2009, I purchased a Kodiak and began flying Part 135 operations for Centurion Flight Service, PAO. I am married with 5 grown children. Our longest flight was to the Virgin Islands. I hope to continue flying into my 80s. One of the biggest issues is insurance, I hope this club will enable me to learn more about how older people can handle this issue!



## John Hosler

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I soloed in 1967 in a Cessna 172 and now have 5,600 hours in my log book. I have a commercial license with an instrument rating. I have owned a Grumman Tiger since 1981. I still love flying, and do it every weekend, including for Angel Flight.





## Robert Ziegler

rjz@reagan.com

I first flew in a Piper Cub that landed in a soybean field next to our church when I was 8 years old. I have flown 98 types of aircraft with more than 12,000 hours total time, including 2,600 hours with seaplanes.

I am the national coordinator for the field directors of the Seaplane Pilots Association. I paid for all my flying hours, as I owned an industrial construction company working in 37 states. I own a private paved and lighted airstrip on a farm near Navoo, IL.



## CHICKEN WINGS

BY MICHAEL AND STEFAN STRASSER







## Final flight plan filed and completed

**Ralph Dace Kimberlin**, Ph.D. of Winter Haven, Florida, respected experimental test pilot, engineer, and graduate professor, passed away on November 28, 2024. He was 84.

Ralph discovered his passion at age seven, when a relative arranged a plane ride for him and his father. Taking off from an alfalfa field in a Piper PA-12, Ralph looked down at the houses in the countryside and knew that he wanted to fly airplanes for the rest of his life.

Ralph became an experimental test pilot and aerospace engineer. In his lifetime, he logged 9,300+ hours as a pilot across 250 types of aircraft, with 2,250 hours on certification projects that involved 25 “first flights.” Ralph worked during a flourishing period in aviation when new aircraft were being developed and built. As an FAA-designated test pilot and flight analyst, Ralph pioneered a large number of the general aviation aircraft in use today.



He graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1963 and was commissioned as an officer in the US Air Force. In 1964 at Eglin AFB, he was one of three officers testing weapons systems that included the [AC-47 Gunship](#). This work led Ralph to combat evaluations of the aircraft in Vietnam. He also helped design engineer the [AC-130 Gunship](#), recently used by the US in Iraq and Afghanistan. Ralph moved into civilian life in 1967, but he served in the US Air Force Reserves for more than thirty years, retiring in 2000 as a colonel.

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In his civilian career, Ralph worked for historic aircraft manufacturers including Cessna, Beech, Rockwell, and Piper. In 1974, Piper named him their chief of flight test and aerodynamics. In tandem, he earned a Master of Science in aerospace engineering from the University of Tennessee Space Institute (UTSI) and then in 1991 a PhD from the Technical University of Aachen, Germany.

He became a professor at UTSI in flight test engineering, establishing an academic program for a Master of Science in aviation systems.

In 2003, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics published Ralph's seminal book, [Flight Testing of Fixed-Wing Aircraft](#). The book covers performance, stability, and control for propeller-driven and jet aircraft. A final section covers "hazardous flight tests," including two tests that forced him to bail out of the aircraft.

In "retirement", some of his projects included the [Liberty XL2](#) development and certification flight tests; the [Cessna 208B with hellfire missiles and laser-guided rockets](#) for US Air Force Special Ops; and certification of the [Embraer Phenom 300's stabilized camera system](#) positioned under the nose of the aircraft. This system made it possible to film the dramatic flight scenes of the box office smash *Top Gun: Maverick*.

At 84, Ralph had an active lifestyle still flying his aircraft, mentoring his students, and supporting his friends and colleagues. He championed his alma mater, the US Naval Academy, and he treasured opportunities to gather with his classmates for Navy football games and reunions. He also voraciously consumed news on current events and politics, and he loved to ride his bicycle daily. After all, staying fit was how he continued to pass his annual flying physicals! At the end, Ralph was at work on a second edition of his flight testing book, and a dozen chapters into writing his memoir about his flying career.

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