

CPA FLIGHT LINES



Paul Gordon

One of the Six airworthy Starships makes her home in Colorado.



Brophy's Broadcast

By Marty Brophy, CPA President

CPA President's Message January 2021

Happy New Year 2021 to all CPA members! We got through a very odd year and it is looking like we will be slowly moving toward some kind of return to near-normal this year. Reading the newspaper accounts about the last year and prospects for the new year, it occurred to me that we are very much like pilots who just completed our run-up - we have nowhere to go but up! So, hang in there a little longer and don't put the gear up quite yet.

Solo or family flying has been a good respite for many of us during these times. And now into winter, we can do it without bug cleaning for 15 minutes after landing. So that's a good thing. I told myself that last week pre-flighting while it was 9 degrees outside... I hope everyone is getting up in the air and taking advantage of that dense cold air as a break from our pandemic isolation!

Just to remind everyone, we have resumed our CPA scholarships. Details for 2021 will be on the website soon. Please tell any student pilots or prospective CFI's you know about that. And we have plans to continue improving the value of CPA membership to our members. Read your e-mails for announcements about that and encourage your pilot and non-pilot friends to join us in the CPA!

CPA board meetings are done on Zoom on the first Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. until November. Those are open to all members so please join us if you would like to listen in or have items to bring up with the board. The link will be sent out for each a few days before each meeting.

The CPA exists for its members and is run by volunteer members. We are always looking for members to help! If you would like to get involved in the organization, contact me at president@coloradopilots.org and tell me what you might like to do, and we can discuss.

CAVU and tailwinds to you all for 2021!



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

Please contact president@coloradopilots.org to volunteer for any position or in any other way you can help.



Lunch Bunching into the New Year

By Bill Marvel, the RV-14A guy

I'll start by giving credit to CPA member Walt Bell, who has no idea that he is the instigator of what I have been doing lately out here on the western slope. For those of you not aware of it, Walt maintains an email list of interested CPA members who he contacts weekly with a fly-in destination for breakfast or lunch. People then attend or not at their option. Given the distances involved, I have only been to one of them to date, but will go more frequently in the future when better weather allows the group to head westward toward our part of the state.



Five airplanes arrived for breakfast at Nucla for one of our first events

To give some background, my wife and I have lived here in Grand Junction for 14 years now. And although there are several airports in the general area, I've noted that flying has been infrequent for a lot of airplanes and pilots. Taking a hint from Walt's idea, I opted to address this problem by starting the "Lunch Bunch". It has two specific purposes – first is giving pilots/owners a reason and an opportunity to fly more often and second is providing a means by which they can meet and get to know other aviators in the area. Those are simple and achievable goals which impose no obligation on anyone involved.

I began by resorting to a recommendation made by my late father-in-law. Fred would say, "when you don't know where to start, start anywhere." Good plan. I needed something short and simple which would allow me to contact aircraft owners and get their attention.

Below is the notice which was emailed to every airplane person I knew out here and that was also printed on card stock that was later cut into 3x5 sized cards.

Pilots and Aircraft Owners

I'm based at GJT and am creating a list of pilots who are interested in flying out to breakfast and lunch on weekends. There is no obligation as I'll just announce an airport and a time to meet there. You can go if you wish or stay home. If you want a reason to get your airplane into the air more often and meet other local pilots, this is your opportunity. Contact me at rv8tor@msn.com and I will put you on the notification list. Bill Marvel 970 241 4081.

That is how it began. I sent the email and then visited four different airports to place the cards on or in every hangar door and on the door latch or some similar location on every tied down aircraft. Some people (mostly email recipients) contacted me quickly to sign up while others dribbled in over the next three weeks. This time frame confirmed my suspicion that many owners did not visit their airplanes all that often. Notably, not a single complaint arrived as a result of my solicitation effort but I did get a lot of thanks. Soon 47 people were on the list, most of whom are aircraft owners. Others are just pilots who heard about it and want to attend in order



to be able to fly with someone.



The 124-year-old Meeker Hotel lobby is a must see next to the Meeker Cafe

Once interest stabilized, I created a group email list so that one email address reaches everyone. Then came a spreadsheet which includes participant names, email addresses, cell phone numbers, aircraft type, aircraft base and any instructor ratings members may have. This spreadsheet is kept current and sent to each group member every time it is updated. It allows aviation minded people to participate not only in the Lunch Bunch but also with each other for things like BFRs, IPCs, safety pilot requests, etc. Who knows what might result from this sharing of aircraft owner, pilot and instructor information which was previously non-existent?

With a group of interested people on hand, the next step was finding venues. Twenty-two different airports that are realistic candidates for our Lunch Bunch trips were identified on the chart. Most are in western CO but given our location, several are in UT. For each one I called the local FBO or airport manager and explained who I was and what I was doing. I sought information on courtesy cars or other available transportation and on the type of restaurants we were seeking, as well as their proximity to the airport. It is rare out here to find an airport with a restaurant on site. I personally like mom and pop owned, country style diners with no frills, old wooden tables and both breakfast and lunch menus in effect all day. It wasn't hard to get suggestions for one or two of these types of restaurants from my airport calls. Next was creating a page for each airport in a spiral note book, documenting the names of individuals I spoke with, contact information for them and for recommended restaurants, availability of courtesy cars (which can frequently be reserved for a group event, at least at smaller airports) and any other items of significance. And I also made it clear that we would leave their courtesy cars with more fuel in them than we found and would encourage our members to buy a few gallons of avgas for their airplanes. The hope is for the airports and restaurants we visit to say on our departure, "Wow, you guys are welcome back here any time!" You have only one opportunity to make a good first impression...



CPA (and Lunch Bunch) members Roy and Susan Erb at Rifle for our Lunch Bunch event at Shooter's Grill on a perfect weather day



Procedurally, each Tuesday I name a destination airport plus a day and time to meet the upcoming weekend. At one location (Price, UT), I have to set Friday due to FBO requirements but generally try to alternate weekend days to accommodate the various obligations our Lunch Bunch members have on weekends. Late each week the event is either confirmed or canceled based on weather so it is always clear to everyone if the trip is still on. In most cases, no head count is needed so people can attend or not as they choose.

We started out by going to the closest airports so as to allow participants with smaller, lower powered aircraft to attend. This gives more members a chance to fly and also lets them meet others who may have spare seats in a larger aircraft for future trips to more distant destinations. To date we've been to Nucla, Rifle, Craig, Meeker, Monument Valley (UT) and Vernal (UT). Next week is set for Moab. Having numerous destinations adds an extra bit of interest for each trip because most have not been to all of these airports. Attendance numbers have worked out well since not everyone is available every week due to different obligations and priorities. At least so far, we have not overwhelmed facilities with excessive attendance and continue to see some new faces each week. It would be nice if it stays that way but time will tell. I live every day with some version of Murphy's Law watching over me...

Now then, what does all this have to do with the Colorado Pilots Association? The answer is Nothing. And Everything.

Reality is that CPA has many members but a lot of them are widely scattered. Although Walt Bell, my mentor in this effort, can reach a reasonable number of CPA members on the front range for his events, that is not the case elsewhere. Because my Lunch Bunch group consists of local pilots in this area, most of whom are not CPA members, it is gradually creating a forum of aviation camaraderie that ultimately will bring about mention of the Association. For instance, one member has already asked if I had any plans to organize weekend trips. I said definitely not in the Lunch Bunch group but that CPA arranges several every year. Such is how the connection is gradually made.

Any of you can start this type of Lunch Bunch event at your own and nearby airports and then build upon it. It costs almost nothing and only takes a little bit of set up time. Small airports are everywhere and each has a nearby town with a restaurant that will work. By having local pilots fly to different airports for breakfast or lunch, you are taking steps to grow not only your own group of aviators but also to expand CPA membership. And in the process, you are getting pilots out flying their airplanes. Flying is not only the best thing they can do for their pilot skills and their aircraft's health but is also the least expensive part of owning one!

Start a Lunch Bunch. I'll be happy to email you the spreadsheet format and a copy of the overview letter sent to each new participant. From this article, you already have the text of the notice I used to solicit interest. Yes, you can do this and it works!

Colorado Pilots Association Apparel
Get you order in now and get set for Spring Flying!
Design your won CPA wardrobe and accessories.



Go to Lands' End today.



It's time for a new plane

By Brian Garrett

Posted on 1/1/2021 8:00 AM



It seems anymore most airplane builders are doing video blogs of their builds. At least I have spent a fair amount of my time watching these adventurous folks working on their future airplane. After flying certified general aviation aircraft for a little over 12 years it is time that I join the world of the experimental aircraft.

A little about myself. I recently finished up my commercial rating with my total time just north of 700 hours. During my flying time I started out with flying with a 4-way partnership in a TL Ultralight Sting, which was a very nimble Light Sport aircraft. (A note on partnerships; always make sure it's an odd-number in the group. An even number makes it difficult if not impossible to have consensus.) It was fun to fly and I do miss it on some levels, but what I don't miss is the barely 90kt airspeed here in the foothills of the rockies... and that's being generous.

After I finished up my private pilots license I moved onto a club which had a Piper Dakota, a Piper Saratoga and a Beechcraft Bonanza F33a - all of which were great planes to fly. I wrapped up my instrument rating in the Dakota. Hourly rates on the aircraft with fuel ran in the low \$100/hr to about \$145/hr depending upon the fuel burn. It was reasonably affordable to be part of the club, but scheduling made it challenging to get out in the airplanes frequently. Of all of my flying so far, this has been the longest group I've been a part of.

After leaving the club I had a short stint as a T210M owner and the costs proved to be a bit more than I was ready to absorb to stay proficient in the airplane as well as the capabilities of the airplane were well outside the scope of my day to day missions. Currently I am staying current tooling around the neighborhood in a club with a couple of 172's with the lowest cost per hour I've ever heard of at \$70/hr wet. They aren't fancy at all, but it's enough to meet the minimum requirements for instrument currency and a trip here and there.

The idea of each of these clubs and partnerships has been to help keep my flying habits within the affordable realm. I'm a fan of sharing the expenses where it makes sense, but it was slowly becoming clear that I was ready to head out on my own. While I certainly don't mind flying older aircraft I would like to fly something that was new.

Spending hours upon hours digging through Trade-A-Plane I had a budget of \$200,000 on the high end. A 4-seat aircraft is ideal as we do like to travel with folks from time to time to share in the travels. Obviously faster is better, but we all know what makes airplanes fly right? Money. And the faster you want to go, the more money it costs. My goal would be to have something north of 150kts if possible, but faster is always better.

Kicking the tires on airplanes for sale is fun, but I noticed a pretty clear trend after a while. Anything that would fit my mission and price was always going to need some extra TLC. The paint and interior may be perfect, but the engine is near TBO, or the instrument panel still had the LORAN installed along with all the other supporting equipment. Doing any sort of upgrades on the airplane would put me north of my budget.

Most everything that was affordable by ourself would be manufactured in the mid to late 1970's and nothing would be without a lot of maintenance issues. Let's face it - even a brand-new airplane has some maintenance issues, but the older stuff is, the harder it is to find the parts to repair it. And speaking of repairs, anything in the certified aircraft arena is going to require an A&P. And while I'm comfortable around doing the work I'm not an A&P, so working on a certified aircraft is out - meaning more money and shop time to a mechanic.



This is how I arrived at the conclusion that it was time for me to become part of the group of folks who have built (or are building) an airplane. I'm a reasonably handy guy. I can read instructions on an Ikea level and don't necessarily back down from a difficult and long job. After all, over the last 15 years I have finished three basements from scratch as well as completely remodeled our home without much outside assistance. Certainly a basement is no airplane, but they were big projects which took a lot of time and energy to complete.

In 2018 when I was at Oshkosh a buddy of mine I was attending with drug me over to look at this new airplane having been announced that year. It was nice. REALLY nice. But in 2018 I was still fully entrenched in the flying club and reasonably happy there. Building an airplane just wasn't on my agenda. We did however spend the better part of an hour asking a LOT of questions with the vendor and I left impressed.

Over the past couple of years I've gotten to know fellow Colorado Pilot Association (CPA) member Bill Marvel and his RV-14A that he seems to spend more time flying than actually on the ground. If you haven't seen it, it's a beautiful side-by-side RV. It's even his second RV. I know a few other folks in the CPA who also have RV's and they ALSO seem to be flying them all the time.

When working on the 210 purchase, I developed a spreadsheet to be able to plug basic airplane information into and kick out some reasonably close cost of ownership numbers. I started to apply some of the numbers I was using for building into this spreadsheet and was amazed at the considerably lower hourly costs of owning an Experimental. So I researched the situation more. Ultimately coming back around to the airplane I spent so much time looking at in Oshkosh 2018.

When Covid hit it started bugging me more than I could have been working on something productive, like building an airplane. Having finished up the sale of the 210 and completed my commercial rating, it was time. In September my wife, Laurie, and I did a very calculated and risky quick trip out to Torrance California to visit The Airplane Factory to test fly the SlingTsi. In fact this was the same one I had seen two years prior at Oshkosh.

The SlingTsi is a 4-place Rotax 915is Turbo aircraft with a constant speed prop and is part of the Sling family of 2 and 4 seaters manufactured in South Africa. The Airplane Factory (TAF) in Torrance is the North American distributor for the Sling platform. There's a lot to like about this airplane and it's most closest competitor in the market is the RV-10. In fact, it is the closest thing the RV-10 has in the experimental category to a competitor. I'm going to put together a video to go over the details on the differences between the two so watch for that posting here soon.

After our visit to TAF in September, we came home, wired out the deposit and got on the list. The one downside to the current experimental market is the demand for the kits is extremely high. The Sling kits are six months or more out for delivery. I have heard of other kits being more than a year. So I was quite surprised when we found out that our order got bumped up on the list due to another builder not being able to go forward with their purchase.

Where am I going to build it is probably the next most asked question. I didn't want to spend a lot of missed days not building because I had to drive to the airport. Since returning from CA I have been organizing and building supporting equipment in my 2 1/2 car garage at home. It might be a little crazy, but we're going to take it as far as we can right here.

One of the primary advantages of the Sling over the RV-10 is the Sling uses pop rivets instead of buck rivets.



This cuts down the build time quite a bit. Van’s website scopes out the RV-10 build at about 2000 hours for the normal build. The Sling is 1400hrs. I’m a little slow in most everything I do, so hopefully this 1400hrs will help me fly sooner.

Over the coming weeks and months of 2021 I’m going to be documenting the progress on the build in a variety of online places, including here at this blog site. As Bill pointed out to me, any time you spend working on something other than the build only delays the completion of the airplane. So the updates will be done in hopefully the most efficient of ways, but I will endeavor to keep everyone apprised of the progress.

The process seems overwhelming at times. It will definitely take me into new areas of learning about aviation and not just owning, but building and maintaining an airplane. I’ve certainly had my moments of “what the heck am I doing?”, but all I can do to find out if I’m up to the task is to start. After all, this journey begins with [The First Rivet](#).

**Looking to sell something?
What about an airplane partnership?**

How about you want that \$100 dollar hamburger and wondering where to go?

Go check out the [Discussion and Classifieds](#) section of your Colorado Pilots Association Website. Completely free for members. Just log in to the members section and find the link under the CPA member tools tab.

**Finally get rid of that extra oil filter you have laying around.
See if there’s a hangar for your trusty steed.
Or tell everyone about a fantastic place to grab a bit on an easy
Saturday afternoon flight.**

Visit your [Discussion and Classifieds](#) section of the Colorado Pilots Association Website.

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the latest and greatest with your association.**



New Year, New Resolution

by Max Power

Well, 2020 finally has closed out and here we are looking at the year new with all new hopes and dreams. It's also the tradition to make a New Year's Resolution of some kind. Might it's to lose those extra holiday pounds or visit your family more. Perhaps an aviation themed one is more appropriate.

A review of my logbook shows that for the first time in a very long time, there wasn't a crooked line in front of my total time for the year. After several years of averaging better than 500 hours a year, I just barely cracked the triple digits. But that's only part of the story. I flew 96 of those 101 hours in the first three months of the year. After Covid really hit, I only flew 5 hours for the last nine months. Some pilot I am. So here's my resolution, fly more. But once again, that's only part of the story. I feel like I can do better and I should. Not the number of hours, but I'm going to focus on improving my flying. I'll have to hunt down my favorite CFI and her and I will set about to do something I haven't done in a very long time, learn to fly again. I am pretty sure I can do it.

So I put it out to the crowd, what aviation resolution are you hoping to do? Get current on your IFR or maybe go get your instrument ticket. Master that crosswind landing or head for the mountains more. No matter what you decide, all the members of the CPA are behind you. Need a mentor or want someone to fly with you to share that \$100 dollar hamburger, just take a look around. There are literally 600+ members who love to share their flying experiences with others. Just reach out. Heck, after I learn to fly again, I'll fly with you if! Happy New Year!.

Have you got a resolution to share, I'd love to hear about. Send a message to newsletter@coloradopilots.org.



2002 Gulfstream G-V belonging to the National Science Foundation departing Grand Junction.





Texan taxis out for departure at Rocky Mountain Metro KBJC.

Don't forget to head over to the Colorado Department of Transportation - Division of Aeronautics website for information on Colorado Aeronautics. Click on the picture to visit.



The articles and columns in Flight Lines are for general information only and may or may not be accurate. Pilots and aircraft owners and operators must refer to FAA regulations and manufacturers' instructions and maintenance and operating handbooks for authoritative information. The writings present the opinions and advice of the authors only and do not reflect any opinion or position of the Colorado Pilots Association, Inc. or its officers or directors.

Colorado Pilots Association
PO Box 200911
Denver, Co 80220-0911
(303) 367-0670

