

CPA FLIGHT LINES



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Unusual Attitudes

By Marty Brophy, CPA President

April marked the beginning of new less onerous travel options for vaccinated Americans, and we jumped at the chance, visiting with family in Utah, Florida, and Nevada. Not air travel like we used to do it, you still need to wear a mask in planes and airports unless eating or drinking, but a step in the right direction! Very strange in some parts of Florida, you walk into a store with a mask on and are the only one in the place who is masked. Getting back to normal will take some getting used to!



We are preparing to put together our 2021 Membership Roster so this would be a great time to go online and check that your information is correct. There have been some privacy concerns voiced about the roster, so you will get information via e-mail and/or Flightlines on how you can remove any information that you don't want published or in the online database. The default is that your information online is published in the printed version. We will also be letting members who don't want a paper copy to let us know that so we can save some printing costs.

Thanks go out to all of you who participated in our virtual St. Patrick's Day fund raiser. And a big shout out to member Bev Sinclair who did all the work of getting this organized! Thanks to Bev, we will add a fifth \$2,500 scholarship this year, which will be dedicated to our member #1, the late Emily Howell Warner, who was the first woman to be a Captain at a US Airline. This scholarship will be targeted at pilots getting Instrument or Commercial ratings.

Finally, I want to remind our senior members that last year's new bylaws waive dues payment for any members over 90. If you qualify, call or e-mail our Membership Services Chair Terry Barbo and be free from paying dues forever!

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.

Warm days are back, so get out of the house and into the skies! Blue skies and tailwinds!



The High Cost of NOT Flying... and how to beat it

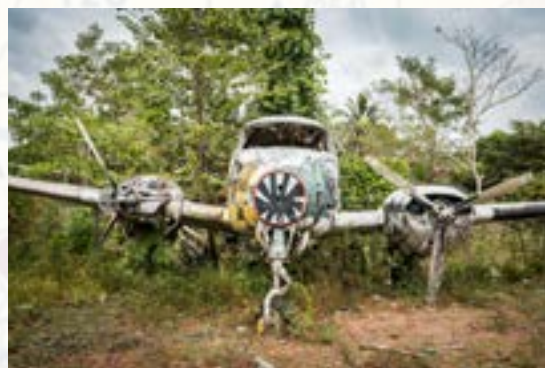
By Bill Marvel, the RV-14A guy

We've all seen it -- airplanes that rarely leave their tie down locations or their hangars. The same holds true for boats in marinas throughout the country for those involved in that pursuit. These are expensive assets, just sitting in one place and deteriorating because of disuse. Why?

If you are in a position where you fly by renting airplanes, the following does not apply to you as much as to those who own their own magic carpet. In the rental situation, the cost of not flying is less financial than practical. You gradually lose a skill set that you once paid to attain but which deteriorates with time. You may save money today by not renting to fly, but at the cost of losing the investment you initially made for training. And if that training involved getting any advanced ratings, the financial loss is just that much greater. But there are at least no current out of pocket expenses. In that case, it's your call whether to fly or not, based on personal circumstances.

But for those who own airplanes, it is a very different story. The cost to fly is spread throughout several areas -- buying the airplane, insurance, hangar or tie down, annual inspections, routine maintenance, and occasional needed items like ADS-B "out" and transponder checks. And yet all of these expenses combined do not yield even one minute of flying time! If you add in the unknown cost of that great airplane killer -- disuse of the engine/prop, airframe and avionics -- the financial toll becomes even greater.

I have no statistics to cite, but it is well known that airplanes and engines (and just about anything else people make) deteriorate more rapidly if not used. Mechanical devices are intended to operate to avoid corrosion, hardening of gaskets, loss of oil lubricity, drying of normally oiled interior components and the like. While some of this deterioration can be reversed if not allowed for too long, there comes a point where the value of the entire airplane decreases even with low flight time. You are doing your aircraft no favors by letting it sit idle. Every knowledgeable buyer knows this and reflects that knowledge in the offered price. The money you "save" by not flying is coming right out of the value of your airplane on resale.



What's an owner to do? Well, let's be candid. At one extreme, take a great photo of your airplane, frame the photo and hang it on the wall just before calling Barnstormers to place a For Sale ad. If the plane is not flying frequently and you have no reason to believe it will in the future, selling is the wise choice, especially now when the market is strong. A wonderful photo is much less expensive to own and maintain and it frees up capital for more productive uses.

At the other extreme is flying it. Consider an example. Let's say you buy a single engine aircraft. The price can vary all over the map but much of that will be recovered in a future sale so it is not relevant for this article. Renting a hangar will cost maybe \$500 a month, possibly more near larger cities. A tie down may be less expensive per month, but beware that takes its toll in sun, rain, wind, snow and hail exposure and painting



an aircraft is expensive. A hangar is worth every penny. Insurance is in the ballpark of \$2500 a year but that will be more or less based on your flying experience and where you store the airplane. Your annual inspection might run \$1000 or so if you have a certified aircraft and not many problems. Considering only the hypothetical annual expenses above, the total is \$9500. Your total capital tied up to own this airplane is the purchase price plus that \$9500 holding cost for the first year even if you don't fly it at all. And it will continue to cost \$9500 every year afterwards and likely more as expenses invariably increase over time. \$9500 is what I call the cost of not flying, because it is exactly that.

At this point you have spent a lot of money only to have a Picasso Painting hanging on the wall. It's nice to look at but provides no flight time, your goal in owning an airplane in the first place.

Continuing, my experience is that for the health of the airplane and your pilot skills, you should fly at least an hour a week. Doing so exposes your skills and the airplane to the varying wind and weather conditions of a full year. That's far better for both of you than clustering all of your annual flying on calm, summer days with no crosswinds and thus allowing the airplane to sit unused for weeks or months at a time. Just getting air circulated through it weekly helps avoid corrosion in inaccessible areas. So that's 52 hours a year, minimum, that I'll round to 50. For that minimum of 50 hours in your airplane, let's assume \$6.00 a gallon fuel and a 12 GPH average fuel burn. The cost is \$3600 for that 50 hours. Hmmm. You are paying \$9500 a year just to own the airplane without flying it. You receive exactly zero value for that \$9500 if you don't fly. Fifty hours costs you, in this example, about one third of your annual cost to own. In other words, flying the airplane is actually the least expensive part of owning it! Now double that flying time to a very meaningful 100 hours. You can really go places with that amount of time allotted. Your flying cost is now \$7200, still far less than what you pay to simply own the airplane for a year without it ever leaving the ground.

Some of you will point out that my estimates for the actual cost to fly -- fuel price, gallons per hour and total flight hours per year -- don't consider other expenses like reserve for engine and prop overhaul, paint, new avionics, etc., and you are correct. All of those things simply help prove the point of this article. Flying is the least expensive part of owning an airplane. The more you fly it, the lower the cost per flight hour. Zero hours in this example costs you \$9500, or an infinite amount per hour. 50 hours costs you an additional \$3600, and adding that to your \$9500 annual cost you pay to not fly is a total of \$13,100, or \$262 an hour. Doubling that to 100 hours a year costs \$9500 plus \$7200, or \$167 per hour. And the more you fly it, the lower is the cost of maintenance because fewer things go wrong when an aircraft is active. Additionally, its value will hold since a frequently flown airplane is a known quantity in the eyes of a buyer. You can recover a greater percentage of your purchase price at the time of sale if you have an airplane that is clearly not just a nicely polished hangar queen with probable interior engine corrosion.



Now, then, let's get into the hardest part of all. You bought the airplane and have planned to cover that \$9500 annual cost of not flying. But if you want to fly the 50-hour minimum I recommended, or better yet, 100 hours, you have to come up with additional money. How do you do that? It's now time to get personal about this, but not with you. With us.

Marti and I created an annual budget years ago. Yep, an actual written budget that covers everything, right down to \$25 magazine subscriptions. We update it every January and compare actual expenses with those projected. Because flying our airplane has always been an important part of our lives, a big reason for that budget is to make sure we can afford to fly. As retirees, we live on savings, investments and retirement funds and carefully control what we spend. I normally fly 150 hours a year but then again, we have a fast, efficient homebuilt that just doesn't cost all that much to operate.

In budgeting actual flying expenses, I use \$6.00 per gallon fuel, 10 GPH fuel consumption and 200 hours a



year. That is all intentionally on the high (conservative) side as we don't fly that much, have yet to pay \$6.00 for fuel and average less than 10 GPH fuel consumption. Because we built the airplane, most maintenance costs are negated because I do them myself. Things like oil and filters, brakes, tires and tubes I consider incidental routine maintenance that we cover separately from the three items mentioned above. As I wrote in a prior Flight Lines article, building your own airplane results in huge savings in operational costs. So, by the way, does doing all of the maintenance on a certified aircraft that you as an owner are allowed to do. And there is quite a bit of it, all of which keeps money in your pocket.

How then do we actually cut back on spending to afford this flying we have so carefully budgeted? For one, we've been married 45 years, have owned airplanes continually for 43 of them and have never bought a new car – not one. Used cars, particularly from rental car outlets, are much less costly, don't depreciate the next day and are very reliable these days. We drive each to about 100,000 miles before going to the next one. That savings is flying money. Marti loves to cook so we rarely go out to dinner. Breakfast and lunch now and then, sure, but not dinner. The difference in cost between cooking at home and eating out is dramatic and yet many people ignore it. That savings is flying money. She's also a dedicated coupon clipper and “finder of good deals” when shopping for just about anything including food and clothing. That savings is flying money. Our house is paid for but is no mansion. It is enough to meet our needs and no more. We don't replace furniture or carpet except maybe every 15 or more years and then don't buy top quality goods. American Furniture Warehouse suits us just fine. We do our own yard and house maintenance and I still climb a ladder to activate and deactivate the coolers on the roof. That savings is flying money. Vacations? Sure, several short ones a year, but we use the airplane for them so travel costs don't consume money that we can use for flying. That savings is flying money. And we don't need any more value from hotel rooms than we can get for about \$125 a night, so we shoot for that. That savings is flying money. We never borrow money for anything. If we want something, we save until we can pay cash for it. Debt is a wealth killer just like disuse is an airplane killer and we don't like either. That savings is flying money. And by the way, you can do all of the above too...

Where does this take us? I realize that everyone is in a different position in both life and interests and that employment problems in a year of Covid did not help. That's a given. I also realize that different people have various goals even though CPA members share a common interest in aviation. For Marti and me, aviation is a top priority and we treat it as such. For others, it may be well down the list. So be it. But for those who have aviation at the top of your list, owning an airplane is an expensive endeavor you can afford if you really want to. But the most important take away from this article is one sentence you should never forget. Flying your airplane is the least costly part of ownership and you should take advantage of that at every opportunity.

Are you Social?

The CPA is looking for folks to help with their online presence in the social media space. The purpose of this role (or if done individually) is to help further the online presence of the Colorado Pilots Association and provide a path of communication of what is going on within the CPA itself. Right now we need help with all of the social media aspects, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and if you're a budding videographer, we'd love to get into the YouTube space a bit more. These are volunteer positions helping to move aviation in Colorado forward.

So if you are savvy in one or more of these areas, please let us know at webmaster@coloradopilots.org and we'll be happy to chat with you.



Ask the CFI

by Tammy Raines

AWOS/ATIS often has the notation SLPxyz, which I know means “Sea Level Pressure = 10xy.z mbars”, but why is that there and how do I interpret it?

KBUR 151753Z 14007KT 9SM CLR 23/14 A2994

RMK AO2 SLP201 T02280144 10228 20167 50000 \$



SLP stands for sea-level pressure, with the pressure expressed in millibars. The reading is abbreviated. “SLP201” translates to 1,020.1 millibars. Below 1,000 millibars of pressure the first number will be a “9,” so 995.4 millibars, for example, will be posted as “SLP954.” Incidentally, because this pressure is corrected for sea level it can be used as an altimeter setting in altimeters equipped with Kollsman windows having values in millibars.

The sea-level pressure is “a pressure value obtained by the theoretical reduction of barometric pressure to sea level. Where the Earth’s surface is above sea level, it is assumed that the atmosphere extends to sea level below the station and that the properties of that hypothetical atmosphere are related to conditions observed at the station”. In more detail, “sea-level pressure shall be computed by adjusting the station pressure to compensate for the difference between the station elevation and sea-level. This adjustment shall be based on the station elevation and the 12-hour mean temperature at the station.” This is a value that might be more accurate for meteorological purposes and attempts to correct for non-standard temperatures.

Other uncommon METAR report examples and definitions

1-BKN014 V OVC

Most of us know that this means there’s a broken cloud layer at 1400 feet AGL. But what’s the ‘V’ mean? The ‘V’ here means that the cloud layer at 1400 feet is variable between broken and overcast. It’s a code that’s not that commonly seen.

2- CIG 002 RWY11

If you see the code above and there’s already a ceiling reported earlier in the METAR report, it means that there’s a second station on the field that’s also reporting visibility, and you’ll know this because the specific location will be included. This ceiling is only included if the ceiling at this second station is lower than otherwise reported in the METAR. Here, it means the ceiling is 200 feet at the ceilometer location near runway 11.

3-SNINCR 2/10

If the snowfall increases by one inch or more since the previous reported METAR, it’s indicated by ‘SNINCR’ followed by the amount. In the case above, the snow has increased by 2 inches in the past hour, and the total snowfall is 10 inches. This could be easily misinterpreted as a snow increase of 2/10 of an inch, so it’s worth remembering.

[Check out the \\$100 Fly In Restaurants on the Colorado Pilots Association website under the Fly-In Events link](#)





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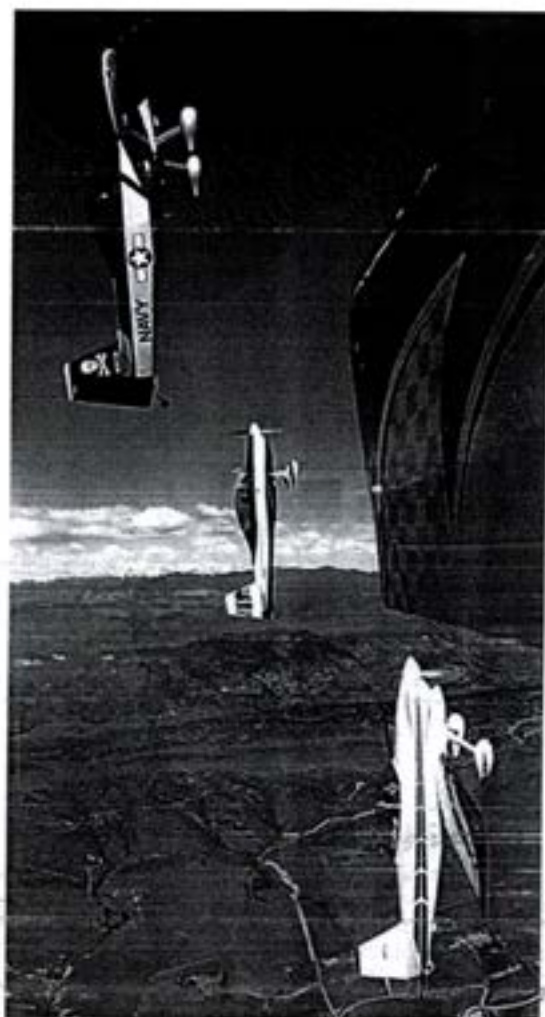
Saturday, June 19, 2021

7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Come Early - Free Pancake and Italian Sausage Breakfast



Hosted by JAA & RMMA Staff



Trophies will be awarded in the following classes:

CLASSIC
(Tube & Fabric/Metal)

WARBIRDS
WARBIRD TRAINERS

CONTEMPORARY **LIGHT SPORT**

ANTIQUES

HOMEBUILTS
(Plan Builts/Kit Built)

SPECIAL INTEREST

Trophy presentation to take place at 12Noon

**Contact Daril Cinquanta, JAA President, with
any questions at 303-423-9846.**



CONTACT:

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New Drone Sport Launches with Colorado Tournaments

Drone Soccer promises accessible learning and team play for students

Denver, CO – April 20, 2021 - This summer, Colorado will be home to the nation's first Drone Soccer tournaments hosted by U.S. Drone Soccer and in partnership with Wings Over the Rockies (Wings) and the Rocky Mountain State Games. Drone Soccer, a high-tech robotic sport played with flying quadcopters designed to collide in midair, teaches participants real-world career skills as they build, program and repair their drones ahead of the tournament.

On May 1, from 12 p.m.-4 p.m., Wings Over the Rockies Exploration of Flight, located at Centennial Airport, will host the first academic competition in North America for high school students from Coronado High School, Westminster High School and Wings Aerospace Pathways. [Advanced tickets required.](#)

Beginning June 1, [Drone Soccer Training Camps](#) will take place at Exploration of Flight for students (ages 12-17) who want to learn to build and fly drones as they prepare for the Rocky Mountain State Games (RMSG), Colorado's largest multi-sport festival for athletes of all ages and athletic abilities, including those with physical disabilities or visual impairment. New training sessions occur Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on specific weeks in June and July. Registrants may utilize Wings equipment or purchase discounted equipment.

“With Drone Soccer gaining incredible popularity and becoming one of the fast-growing innovative air sports, Wings is thrilled to host these competitions and be a part of educating today's youth on building and flying drones,” said Wings President and CEO, Maj Gen John Barry, USAF (Ret).

On July 31, the first Drone Soccer tournament in North America will take place in Colorado Springs at the Rocky Mountain State Games. RMSG is Colorado's largest multi-sport festival for athletes of all ages and athletic abilities, including those with physical disabilities or visual impairment. More information for youth and adult teams can be found at [Colorado Springs Sports Corp.](#)

About Wings Over the Rockies:

Wings Over the Rockies is a Colorado-based non-profit organization dedicated to educating and inspiring all people about aviation and space endeavors of the past, present and future. By utilizing the Air & Space Museum in Denver's historic Lowry neighborhood to preserve the past and the Exploration of Flight Center at Centennial Airport to focus on the present and future, Wings strives to encourage the future aerospace leaders of tomorrow. For more information, visit [WingsMuseum.org](#) or [ExplorationOfFlight.org](#).

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Laura Konersman

Dan and Mark heading out to have some fun at Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport

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