



# EAA Chapter 153

<http://www.eaa153.org>



The Leader In Recreational Aviation

## Preserving The Freedom of Flight


The Official Newsletter of Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 153 - April 2007

### Mike Leone Talks About Test flying

At the March 9 meeting of Chapter 153, Mike Leone, lead pilot of Northwest Aviation, told of his experiences test flying airplanes. He is also a pilot for North American Top Gun. The airplanes he has test flown include BD-4, RV-4, Volksplane, Barracouda, Mustang II, J-3 Cub, Decathlon, and Citabria.

Before making a first flight in a new or rebuilt airplane, he likes to talk at length to people who have flown the same model airplane and learn its flight characteristics, including any quirks in handling that it might have. For example, some airplanes such as the BD-4 should not be spun. He also does a thorough inspection of the airplane to be sure that is properly rigged, all essential bolts are in place and safety-wired as necessary, no slop or binding in the controls, and that none of the controls are reversed.

The first flight lasts long enough to determine that the engine will not overheat or lose oil and is conducted within gliding distance of the airport. Only gentle maneuvers (takeoff, turns, and landing) that are well within the expected control envelope of the airplane are attempted on the first flight. After the flight, the airplane is carefully inspected again for items that may have come loose or out of adjustment during the first flight. Any problems that are found must be fixed before the next flight.

The next two or three flights are also conducted within gliding distance from the airport and are aimed at ensuring correct engine operation and correct flight controls with only a slight expansion of the flight envelope. He says it takes about 10 hours to become comfortable with a new airplane. 



### April 13 Program - "Shoot Only At the Red Airplane"

The program title is taken from Bill Coons' much awaited book about World War II remote-control drone airplanes that were used for target practice. This is a program that you won't want to miss.

Chapter 153 meetings are held on the second Friday of each month at Schaumburg Airport (06C), Wright Boulevard at Irving Park Road in Schaumburg, IL. Meetings are at 7:30 pm in the lower-level meeting room of the terminal building.

## EAA's Case Against User Fees

EAA is continuing to work with other general aviation organizations to oppose the FAA's proposal for funding the nation's air traffic control system. The funding plan, which reflects the advocacy of the powerful big-airlines lobby, would implement user fees and sharply increase fuel taxes to replace the current, time-tested system of excise taxes on aviation fuel and airline passengers. EAA and the other general aviation groups view this as nothing but a ploy by the airlines to offload more of their costs onto general aviation while grabbing more control of the nation's airspace. Meanwhile, their proposals would require the establishment of a new and potentially costly bureaucracy.

In the past 10 years, the airline industry received a \$5 billion government bailout, a \$10 billion loan guarantee program, and a shift of some pension obligations to the U.S. taxpayer. Now, as many airlines are experiencing a recovery, they want to jettison even more costs by imposing user fees on general aviation.

The airlines, represented by the Air Transport Association (ATA), falsely claim they pay more than 90 percent of all aviation taxes but make up only two-thirds of the operational activity in the system. Yet in the 35 airline hubs that receive the vast majority of FAA funds and resources, general-aviation operations account for only 6% of the total. For example, when general aviation was prohibited from operating at Washington D.C.'s Reagan National Airport in the wake of 9/11, overall ATC costs there were not affected.

However, the cost of the user fee proposals to participants in general aviation, including the many EAA members who enjoy personal flight as a pastime, would be sizable. The FAA's proposal includes new fees to pay for the costs of numerous certification and registration activities, such as: registering an aircraft (\$130), replacing an aircraft registration (\$45), issuing an original dealer's aircraft certificate (\$130), issuing an additional aircraft certificate (\$105), issuing/renewing a special registration number (\$80/\$50), recording a security interest (\$130), recording a security interest in aircraft parts (\$130), issuing or replacing an airman certificate (\$50/\$25), issuing an airman medical certificate (\$42), and providing legal title opinions pertaining to aircraft transactions (\$100).

And, of course, there's the potentially devastating 3.5-fold fuel tax increase, from 19.4¢ to 70¢ per gallon, and a series of other user fees for access to the nation's busiest airports.

The FAA maintains that its plan is essential for funding the creation of the next generation air traffic control system. Adding insult to injury, the concepts and proposals for accomplishing this modernization entail greater restrictions and costs for general-aviation operations.

Meanwhile, projected revenue from a user fee system in 2008 would be approximately \$600 million less than the funds that would be raised by maintaining the current excise tax structure. The shortfall would persist, amounting to approximately \$900 million less funding from 2009 to 2012.


Another reason why general aviation opposes user fees can be found north of the border, in Canada: Ten years ago, when the ATC system was established as a government corporation (NavCanada), light general aviation was exempted from ATC and airport user fees. Now, despite an appeal to the Canadian Transportation Agency, general aviation light aircraft operators will pay charges for the use of seven important airports (including several reliever facilities) for the first time. According to the Canadian Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the airline community is viewing this as just the beginning of general aviation paying user fees in Canada.

Even more extreme examples of user fees harming or practically killing general aviation in numerous other countries add to the condemning evidence. Common sense indicates that any initial user fee scheme will eventually trickle down and be imposed on all flight-related operations.

The FAA's proposal would also transfer control of agency funding and oversight away from Congress and dramatically reduce public control of how the FAA exercises its discretionary spending.

"EAA remains categorically opposed to user fees," said Doug Macnair, EAA vice president of government relations. "Such a system will not enhance safety and it will not improve services. It will add barriers for thousands of recreational aviators while being a costly burden to the federal government."

How, then, do the big airlines and the FAA attempt to justify such an imbalanced, unfair, and flawed proposal? Their rhetoric asserts that "fat cats" in private jets should pay more for using the nation's ATC and other services. But it conveniently overlooks the oppressive effects their proposals ultimately would have on average aviation enthusiasts like the members of a thousand EAA chapters across the nation. Those chapters are made up of people who already make sacrifices to afford their enjoyment of personal flight. They should not have to underwrite big businesses' use of, and attempts to commandeer, the nation's airspace.

This is a good time to write a letter or fax to your senators and congressman to express your opposition to user fees. A sample letter is shown on the next page. Addresses of Illinois senators and congressmen are shown below. More information can be found at [www.eaa.org](http://www.eaa.org), which links to an action alert page with more information and instructions. 

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The Honorable Richard Durbin  
U.S. Senate  
309 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Janice Schakowsky  
United States House of Representatives  
1027 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1309

The Honorable Barack Obama  
U.S. Senate  
713 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mark S. Kirk  
United States House of Representatives  
1030 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1310

The Honorable Dan Lipinski  
United States House of Representatives  
1717 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1303

The Honorable Judy Biggert  
United States House of Representatives  
1034 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1313

The Honorable Rahm Emanuel  
United States House of Representatives  
1319 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1305

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert  
United States House of Representatives  
2304 House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1314

The Honorable Peter Roskam  
United States House of Representatives  
507 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1306

The Honorable Danny Davis  
United States House of Representatives  
2153 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1307

The Honorable Melissa Bean  
United States House of Representatives  
318 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1308

*[Insert inside address here]*

Dear *[Insert senator or congressman's title and name here]*:

I am writing to request that you strongly reject the terms calling for user fees contained in the Administration's proposed FAA reauthorization legislation entitled, "Next Generation Transportation System Financing Reform Act of 2007." *[Say what you think the result of the proposed user fees would mean to you — e.g., would cause you to sell your aircraft, would reduce the amount of flying you do, would prevent you from obtaining a private pilot certificate, etc. Try to keep the statement to one or two sentences.]*

*[State who you are and give some information on your aviation frame of reference. For example, "I am a private pilot and owner of a small homebuilt aircraft, which I fly for recreation." Another example could be, "I am a USAF-trained pilot with over 50 years' experience in the flying game and, although I very seldom write letters to elected officials, this problem has caught my attention."]*

The present funding system for the world's biggest, best, and safest Air Traffic Control System is NOT broken. The OMB agrees with this assessment as well. The Aviation Trust Fund revenues are at a record level and are projected to increase at a rate of approximately 6% annually for the next five years. The President's own FY 2008 budget estimates indicate there are adequate tax revenues to fully fund the Airport and Airway Trust Fund (AATF), if extended. Conversely, the user fee proposal would raise nearly \$1 billion LESS between 2008 and 2012 than would be raised under the current system.

*[Pick one or two of the following points to use in your letter.*

*User fees are a bad way to fund a new system, as projected collection costs would eat up much of the potential revenue.*

*FAA failed its accounting audit this year, indicating the agency still cannot identify an appropriate cost structure for services.*

*The current system of excise taxes and the method of collection are extremely efficient. A user fee system would be complex, bureaucratic, and expensive.*

*Congress plays a critical role in providing budget and management oversight of the FAA and must not be cut out of this oversight role.*

*The U.S. air transportation system is a national asset that benefits every citizen of this country. Accordingly, every taxpayer should help pay for it through a healthy general fund contribution to the FAA operations budget.*

*As a national asset, the U.S. air transportation system does not belong to any one set of users: military, airline, or general aviation. It is a shared asset and no one constituency should attempt to usurp control. There are no financial constraints on the FAA's ability to modernize the air traffic and national airspace systems. The agency need only develop a plan that is sound, accommodates the needs of all users, and contains appropriate cost accounting and controls, and then present it to the aviation community and Congress.*

*User fees have proven time and again to be expensive, inefficient, and damaging to general aviation in every country in which they have been introduced. Canada, Germany, Australia, the U.K., the Netherlands, the Philippines, Austria, Israel, and many other nations have implemented user fees in one form or another — all with disastrous results for their general aviation communities.]*


*[Closing paragraph: Thank your Senator for giving attention to this matter. Ask the Senator to remember and share your concerns in the debate on this issue.]*

Sincerely,

*[Your name, Address, and E-mail]*

# Raffle

At the March 9 meeting **Joe Lienau** won first prize, a cordless drill. **Bill Schertz** won second prize, a digital voltmeter. **Larry Mackowiak** won third prize, a set of screwdrivers.

The raffle will be done differently at the April 13 meeting. The first prize winner will be able to choose one of several first prizes and the second prize winner will be able to choose one of several second prizes. No third prize. One dollar buys one chance, and two dollars buys three chances to win. The die will roll until the prizes are taken. You must be present to win. At the March 28 Board of Directors meeting there was a lengthy discussion about possible changes to the raffle. Your ideas and suggestions will be solicited at the April 13 membership meeting. 

## 153 Calendar

- 2007-----2007-----2007-----2007-----2007-----2007-----2007**
- Apr 13 Chapter 153 membership meeting, 7:30 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C)**
  - Apr 17-23 Sun 'n Fun Fly-in at Lakeland, FL.
  - Apr 25 Chapter 153 Board Meeting, 7:00 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C).**
  - May 11 Chapter 153 membership meeting, 7:30 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C). Program: Bill Coons - "Shoot Only At the Red Airplane."**
  - May 23 Chapter 153 Board Meeting, 7:00 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C). Program: Bill Schertz - "Fiberglass Epoxy Techniques."**
  - Jun 8 Chapter 153 membership meeting, 7:30 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C)**
  - Jun 17 Chapter 153 annual Father's Day Pancake Breakfast and Fly-in at Schaumburg Airport (06C).**
  - Jul 6-8 Chapter 101 work party in preparation for AirVenture 2007. Contact Dolores Neunteufel 630-543-6743 .
  - Jun 27 Chapter 153 Board Meeting, 7:00 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C). Date is tentative.**
  - Jul 13 Chapter 153 membership meeting, 7:30 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C)**
  - Jul 14 EAA Chapter 153 Young Eagle Rally at Brookeridge Airport (LL22). Contact Joe Lienau 630-985-8244 for more information.**
  - Jul 18 Chapter 153 Board Meeting, 7:00 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C). Note that this is a week earlier than normal to avoid a conflict with AirVenture 2007.**
  - Jul 23-29 EAA AirVenture 2007 at Oshkosh, WI.
  - Aug 11 Annual Chapter 153 Picnic. Date is tentative.**
  - Aug 29 Chapter 153 Board Meeting, 7:00 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C).**
  - Sep 14 Chapter 153 membership meeting, 7:30 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C)**
  - Sep 26 Chapter 153 Board Meeting, 7:00 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C).**
  - Oct 12 Chapter 153 membership meeting, 7:30 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C)**
  - Oct 24 Chapter 153 Board Meeting, 7:00 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C).**
  - Nov 9 Chapter 153 membership meeting, 7:30 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C)**
  - Dec 14 Chapter 153 membership meeting, 7:30 pm at Schaumburg Airport (06C)**

**Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 153** exists to assist and support growth and innovation in general aviation, promotion of aviation safety, individual participation in amateur aviation, and transference of knowledge and skills of aircraft construction. Annual dues are \$20, payable at the beginning of each calendar year. All Chapter 153 members must be members of EAA.

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**Next EAA Chapter 153 Board Meeting will be April 25, 2007, at Schaumburg Airport (7:00 pm)**

EAA Chapter 153  
Roger Cole  
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