

19 Young Eagles Flown



May 2022



Home of the
"Panhandle Pelicans"

EAA 485

Squawk 485

Next Meeting Saturday, May 14th 1000
At Our Clubhouse
IMC/VMC Club Meets at 0830-0930

[Details](#)

President

Ralph Moser

Contact: [Ralph](#)

CHAPTER 485 ACHIEVES GOLD STATUS!

If you look at the top right of this opening page, something has changed...the Silver Chapter emblem is now Gold! This accomplishment actually occurred over a year ago, under John McKiernan's tenure. Due to COVID causing EAA to combine 2020 and 2021 for chapter award purposes, we were not notified of this until recently.

It is based on a point system of chapter activities (chapter build project, Young Eagles, Ray Scholarships, etc.). John took the online version of EAA chapter leadership training, which gave us the extra point to move from Silver to Gold Status. Only a small fraction of the 900+ EAA chapters achieve Gold Status. This is a real positive for our chapter, now and in the future. It reflects directly on you, the members, for your strong volunteerism and participation. Well done, everyone!

I've been to the mother ship! On April 22-24, I attended the EAA Chapter Leadership Academy in Oshkosh, WI. Since I have four brothers and two sisters living 20 miles south in Fond du Lac, it was a chance to visit kin as well. I'll give a short photo recap of some of the fun stuff we got to do at the May meeting.

We still await the chapter income details from the Tri-Motor event from EAA.

I thank those of you present at the April meeting who paid their 2022 chapter dues. These are due in May of each year. I remind the rest of you (minus honorary members and active duty military, who don't pay local dues) to please pay your 2022 local dues ASAP. For details on how, go to eaa485.org.

The May 14th meeting will be back on our normal schedule, second Saturday morning of the month. I again encourage all of you to attend the VMC/IMC Club meeting at 0830-0930. Donna and DeWitt Barker do a heck of a job to present this valuable training information. Lots of good discussion is generated.

Please consider supporting two events described in brochures attached to this newsletter: "Honor the WASP" is a local memorial ground event at Barrancas National Cemetery May 21st put on by the Women in Aviation International. "Rockin on the Runway" is a charity air show June 11th in Sunset, Louisiana, and comes highly recommended by Nick VanHouten, the Fairhope airport manager
Ralph



RAY AVIATION SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE [Craig Spoke](#), Chapter 485 Coordinator

Ray Scholarship Update 4/20/22

We have started taking applications for the next Ray Aviation Scholarship. We have 7 young people who expressed interest. 5 of these 7 have returned an application to me. I will be scheduling interviews for the first Saturday in May. (May 7th). Ralph Moser, Bill Diaz and myself will be conducting the interviews at the clubhouse.



Pensacola FL



Young Eagles Coordinator

[Tanner Matheny](#)

We had a very successful rally on Sunday, May 1st with 19 Young Eagles flown with 7 planes and over 15 ground volunteers! We had people from all around Pensacola and Alabama coming out to experience the thrill of flight. I am so glad we had such a huge turnout from the community and as always, thank you to our pilots and ground volunteers for your incredible enthusiasm and help throughout the day. None of this would be possible without you!

Looking forward we have multiple events coming up over the summer with a public rally being held sometime in the fall. On June 25th and July 16th we will be holding private rallies for the Chappie James Flight Academy camp graduates. This is their opportunity to put all the knowledge they have been learning during the aviation camp to good use! As the Young Eagles coordinator I am so happy we can be so engaged with the community in such a positive and passionate way. With the world the way it is, having aviation not only in our lives but the lives of the next generation is vitally important!

International Young Eagles Day is Saturday June 11th. This day will allow us to look back on the past 30 years of Young Eagles starting in 1992 with Young Eagle #1, Lesley Poberezny, which I am lucky to call a friend! We will honor this day with the Chappie James rally on June 25th. Remember, if you fly 30 Young Eagles between August 1st of this year and July 31st next year, you are eligible for the special Young Eagles polo!
Tanner

EAA Chapter 485 Minutes April, 2022

Meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance

Guest introduced themselves; Austin Jordan, Brian Dekamp, Ted Weiss, a retired Boeing engineer and Glen Horne, a Tecnam Eaglet pilot, who joined the chapter.

Officer updates

President Ralph Moser reminded everyone about the Barker's Fly-in at Shields Airport. Bring a covered dish and introduce yourself to Donna and Dewitt.

The Roy E Ray EAA Chapter Fly-in information is on Social Flight.

Ralph thanked everyone for their help with the Tri-motor event. He presented an award to Wes Jordan for his volunteer efforts. Duane Thiessen gave a wrap-up of the event and also thanked everyone for the good chapter involvement in the event.

Scott Swanson gave an update on our account balance and our expenses from the Tri-motor event. We have not received a report from the EAA of what we may get, if anything, for the event. Dues are due for this year on May 1st. Craig Spoke gave an update on the Ray Foundation Scholarship. William Kerr working to complete his written test. We were awarded another scholarship for this year. We will be accepting applications and selecting a candidate.

Tanner Matheny said there is a Young Eagles event sponsored by EAA chapter 1265 going on a Foley airport. We will have a Young Eagle rally on April 30th. Let him know if you can help. Information will be on the Young Eagles website also.

Member Projects

John McKiernan gave an update on the Thatcher. He brought in the fuel tank for show-n-tell and invited anyone to help out on Tuesday nights. Lou Toth said his Sonex is almost done. He had the wrong aileron push rods.

Leigh Jordan continued her presentations on eye health. This presentation was about Dry Eye Conditions.

The meeting ended and a light lunch was available. The next meeting will be May 14th.

During the VFC Club the discussion was about airport hot spots and a scenario where an Er-coupe had a power loss while flying over Lake Michigan coast near Chicago. The IFC Club discussion was a scenario where a FIKI (flight in known icing) equipped Mooney flew in icing but the system wasn't removing the ice from the aircraft.

Ralph Moser gave a presentation on the issues with the 5G roll out effect on radio altimeters in aircraft.

Scott Swanson Sec/Treasurer

Welcome New Member **Glen Horne** who joined our chapter at the last meeting.



Young Eagle Flights 1 May 2022



Drano Working the Crowd



DeWitt Barker putting a new toy to good use.



Mark Watson with Bob McGoun's L2 Taylorcraft



Mark Rogers VP with his gorgeous RV-14A



John McKiernan with Ron Lock's "borrowed" RV8A



Ralph Moser President Cherokee 140



Tanner Matheny our Young Eagles Coordinator with his very pretty Navion. Great Job Tanner!



Nick Hansen our very first Ray Scholarship awardee paying it forward!

Two of our ground volunteers (Antonio and Megan)



We had a great turnout of volunteers and a beautiful day. A big thank you to all of our members and friends for making this a very successful event. We may have missed some people in the following acknowledgement of volunteers.

Remember you all helped put smiles on all 19 Young Eagles and their parents and friends sending them home with great memories. Thank You to our very own Webmaster and photographer Doug Francisco for keeping up with everything.

Ground Volunteers

- Craig Spoke
- Bill Diaz
- Donna Barker
- Duane Thiessen
- Elisabeth Mass
- Tanner Matheny
- Valerie Matheny
- Wesley Jordan
- Antonio More
- Megan More
- Adam Harris
- Jaiden Harris
- Bob Rivera
- Brian De Camp
- Austin Jordan
- Randy Scheiwe
- Scott Swanson
- Mike Ricketts

Pilots

- Mark Rogers
- Mark Watson
- Ralph Moser
- Tanner Matheny
- Nick Hanssen
- DeWitt Barker
- John McKiernan

Thanks to Bob McGoun and Ron Lock for the use of their aircraft for the event.

Personal thanks to the ground crew help with the RV-8A

Our oldest Eagle Bill Miles take to the air with Mark Rogers in his RV-14A





Thatcher

We had a slight setback with the CX-4 fuel tank leaking a bit. We used tank sealant twice and have reduced it significantly. The process is time consuming and frustrating.

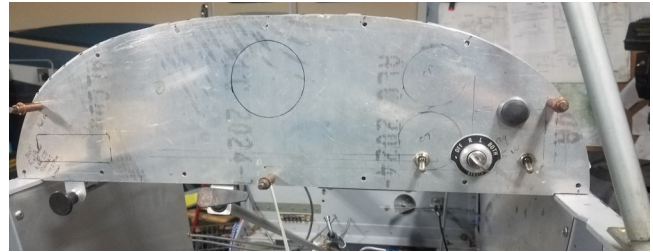
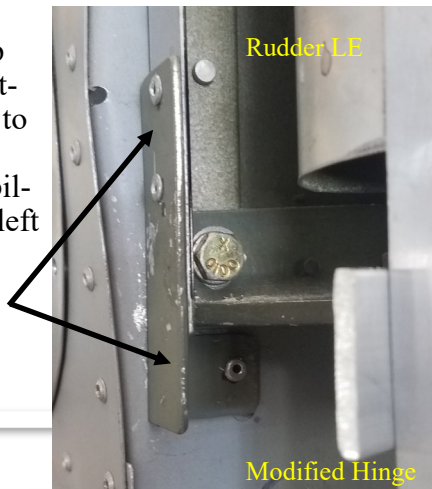
We have made some progress in other areas. There is no rudder stop in the plans and we found that the swing of the rudder needed to be limited since at the extremes the leading edge of the rudder was acting as a rudder stop. This took a few tries to get a stop installed onto the Vertical Stab spar, and also into the meat of the F12 bulkhead reinforcement. The rudder lower hinge was re-made to contact the stop. Once the rudder pedal cables are connected we'll be able to slightly adjust the rudder throw by filing the stop if necessary.

Keith Albee riveting the right side Rudder Stop



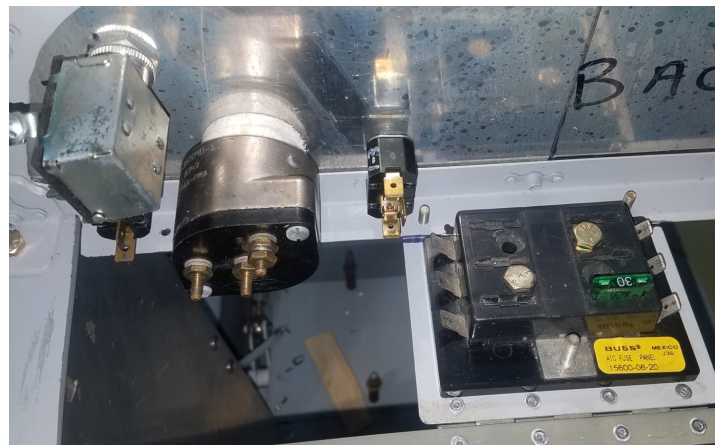
Here's a look at the left side stop pieces after riveting. It was tight to make this work leaving accessibility to the lower left attach bolt .

Rudder Stop



We stated populating the instrument panel. Early on we elected to replace the fixed panel with a removable one to gain access to the backside or for future upgrades. One of the most important things I've learned about working on and building is to try to think of access to performing maintenance. Courtesy of Mark Rogers donation of a goody bag we've installed an ignition switch and start button. I've got some slightly used toggle switches that will act as the "Master" electrical and an "On/On" that will give us a single switch for switching the dual leads from the stator alternator. We have an assortment of instruments but panel real estate is critical.

I also had a 6 fuse panel laying around the shop for distributing our electrons. The panel is hinged and the number 8x32 screws securing it to the instrument panel will be replaced with small knurled knobs making it tool free access.



I have a similar panel in my RV-7 which is much larger and contains all the electrical distribution for the entire aircraft. I'm not fond of replacing fuses or resetting a circuit breaker in flight. It's blown or tripped for a reason. This is more of a ground maintenance idea and saving space on the panel
John

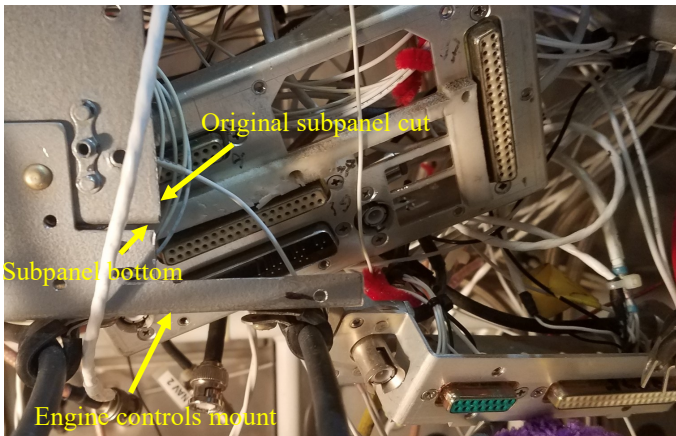


RV-7 Panel Update

I actually finished my last harness and fixed a big issue that I had with the subpanel. Lowering my radio stack to accommodate the Trio Pro-Pilot control head caused me to cut through my sub panel.

The sub-panel in the 7 is a number of panels and ribs that are assembled and riveted together. They also make up the canopy hinge in the tip-up canopy model which mine is. You hate cutting anything extra out of it but! The picture below shows the bottom of the radio stack cutout. My instrument panel cutout had ample material left after fitting the stack the 10 degree inclination of the panel lowers the cut in the subpanel opening in my case leaving a gaping hole. Today's remote control heads and separate radio "boxes" eliminate the big holes. On my son's RV-7 only the cutout for the GPS navigator will penetrate the sub panel.

I've seen Van's aircraft where the builder didn't take the angle of the instrument panel into account and the radio trays are canted slightly sometimes not mating all pins for good contact.

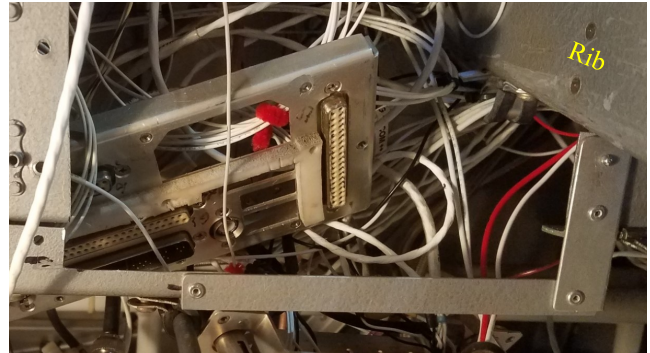


To make life a bit easier all the backs of my trays were removable leaving existing harnesses at the radios intact.

I needed to add some strength across the gap where there was nothing connecting the sub-panels. I found a short piece of 1/2" x 1/2" aluminum angle and an initial rudder stop that was too short for our chapter Thatcher project. I fitted the two pieces to get the job done. Originally I was going to squeeze the rivets, however, that would be extremely difficult so I used pull rivets. The

actual radio trays once installed will provide added rigidity to the area where they are fastened to the sub-panel and the bulk of it is up front on the .063" instrument panel. Obviously, the trays needed to be fitted before doing this "repair".

Here's the fix! 1/2" angle across the bottom into a notched 3/4" angle rivetted to the sub-



panel. It's strong and once the stack is in will gain some additional strength.

Now it's time to attach the backplates to the trays. It's difficult doing this with a very long screwdriver. The screws are small #4 x 3/8". Using a little fuel lube on the end of the screwdriver works well keeping the screws "glued" in place. Interestingly, the Garmin SL-30 and GNS 480W use slightly different flat head screws. The SL-30 uses normal 100 degree but the 480 uses an 85 degree. Both radios can have issues fully seating in the trays. A 100 degree screw in the 480 tray won't flush and stays proud. The trays are clecoed to the right rib checking the fit. They will be temporarily loaded with radios, powered up and tested before everything is secured.



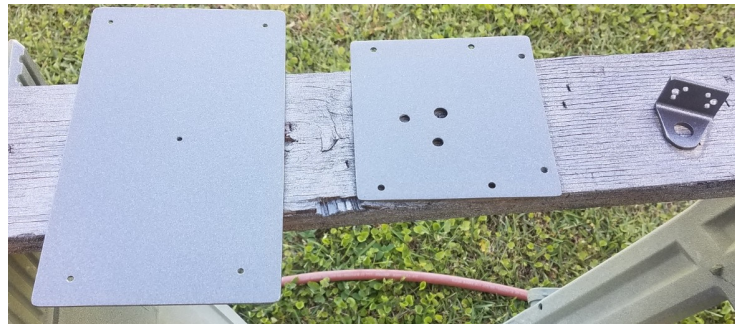


I had an issue with painting the panel. I used a Dark Metal Metallic rattle can but couldn't make it work. The issue was with the rattle can nozzle not having a consistent pattern. There was "mottling" that really looked horrible. After sanding down to original primer I brought out the old trusty Akzo-Nobel primer. Six ounces of catalyzed paint and the panel is ready once again for topcoat. I next went to a Gray Rustoleum ham-

and setup for a 5" fan. The paint is thin and dries rapidly. What a difference!



Here are a couple of other pieces. The flat panels



mered paint that I could spray with my paint gun. Once again the results weren't very good.

I decided to try the original Dark Metal Metallic but use my paint gun instead to the rattle can. OK, so how do you get the paint out of the rattle can. I did this about a year ago and made a mess. Here is the solution:

and bracket outside in the shade look like they were painted with two different paints. It's just the angle of light. The panels look much darker looking head on.

I used my oil filter cutter to slice the bottom of the can off. You have to go gently and slowly.

I'm debating whether to shoot a couple more quick coats of metallic or do a clear coat and then add labels.



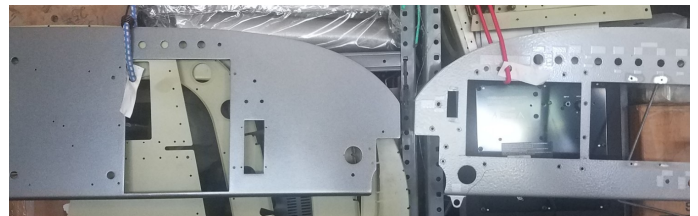
Label Testing



A close up of a clear label with white print. It was lightly placed on the panel using some window cleaner spray. The contrast is very good.

Once the can is punctured you need to wait till all pressure is released. I had already tested the paints friendliness with solvents and it played nicely with lacquer thinner. It takes a while for all the propellant to boil out of the paint and this process created a lot of cold temps requiring time to allow the paint to warm up enough to actually spray.

Old and new panels. It's easy to see the



washed out look of the old panel labels. They were locked in with clear coat which made them difficult to see clearly. Behind the new panel is my RV10 bulkhead panels waiting for tail cone installation. I'll wrap up the panel install next month.

John



The incredible story of POW Navy Pilot Dieter Dengler and his escape from a prison camp in Laos.



Dieter Dengler (May 22, 1938 – February 7, 2001) was a German-born United States Navy aviator during the Vietnam War and, following six months of imprisonment and torture, became the first captured U.S. airman to escape enemy captivity during the war.

Of seven prisoners of war who escaped together from a Pathet Lao prison camp in Laos, Dengler was one of two survivors (the other was Thailand citizen Phisit Intharathat). Dengler was rescued after 23 days on the run.

Dieter Dengler was born and raised in the small town of Wildberg, in the Black Forest region of the German state of Baden-Württemberg. He grew up not knowing his father, who had been drafted into the German army in 1939 and was killed during World War II on the Eastern Front during the winter of 1943/44. Dengler became very close to his mother and brothers. Dengler's maternal grandfather, Hermann Schnurle, claimed he refused to vote for Adolf Hitler in the 1934 elections. Subsequently he was paraded around town with a placard around his neck, was spat upon, and was then sent to labor in a rock mine for a year.

Dengler credited his grandfather's resolve as a major inspiration during his time in Laos. His grandfather's steadfastness despite the great risks was one reason Dengler refused a North Vietnamese demand that he sign a document condemning American aggression in Southeast Asia.

Dieter grew up in extreme poverty but always found ways to help his family survive. Dieter and his brothers would go into bombed-out buildings, tear off wallpaper, and bring it to their mother to boil for the nutrients in the wheat-based wallpaper paste. When members of the small group of Moroccans who lived in the area would slaughter sheep for their meals, Dieter would sneak over to their lodgings to take the scraps and leftovers they would not eat and his mother would make dinner from them. He also built a bicycle by scavenging from dumps. Dieter was apprenticed to a blacksmith at the age of 14. The blacksmith and the other boys, who worked six days a week building giant clocks and clock faces to repair German cathedrals, regularly beat him. Later in life Dieter thanked his former master "for his disciplined training and for helping Dieter become more capable, self-reliant and yes, 'tough enough to survive'".

After seeing an advertisement in an American magazine, expressing a need for pilots, he decided to go to the United States. Although a family friend agreed to sponsor him, he lacked money for passage and came up with a plan to independently salvage brass and other metals to sell.

In 1956, when he turned 18 and upon completion of his apprenticeship, Dengler hitchhiked to Hamburg and spent two weeks surviving on the streets before the ship set sail for New York City. While on the ship he saved fruit and sandwiches for the coming days and when going through customs the agent was astonished when the food tumbled out of his shirt.

He lived on the streets of Manhattan for just over a week and eventually found his way to an Air Force recruiter. He was assured that piloting aircraft was what the Air Force was all about so he enlisted in June 1957 and went to basic training at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas. After basic training, Dengler spent two years peel-



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ing potatoes and then transferred to a motor pool as a mechanic. His qualifications as a machinist led to an assignment as a gunsmith. He passed the test for aviation cadets but was told that only college graduates were selected to be pilots and his enlistment expired before he was selected for pilot training.

After his discharge Dengler joined his brother working in a bakery shop near San Francisco and enrolled in San Francisco City College, then transferred to the College of San Mateo, where he studied aeronautics. Upon completion of two years of college he applied for the US Navy aviation cadet program and was accepted.

Dengler would do whatever it took to become a pilot. In his inaugural flight at primary flight training, for example, the instructor told Dengler that if he became airsick and vomited in the cockpit that he would receive a "down" on his record. Students were only allowed three downs then they would wash out of flight training. The instructor took the plane through spins and loops causing Dengler to become dizzy and disoriented. Knowing he was about to vomit and not wanting to receive a "down", Dengler took off his boot, threw up into it and put it back on. At the end of the flight the instructor checked the cockpit and could smell the vomit, but couldn't find any evidence of it. He didn't get a "down".

After his completion of flight training Dengler went to the Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas for training as an attack pilot in the Douglas AD Skyraider. He joined VA-145 while the squadron was on shore duty at Naval Air Station Alameda, California. In 1965 the squadron joined the carrier USS Ranger. In December the carrier set sail for the coast of Vietnam. He was stationed initially at Dixie Station, off South Vietnam then moved north to Yankee Station for operations against North Vietnam.

On February 1, 1966, the day after the carrier began flying missions from Yankee Station, Lieutenant, Junior Grade Dengler launched from the Ranger with three other aircraft on an interdiction mission against a truck convoy that had been reported in North Vietnam. Thunderstorms forced the pilots to divert to their secondary target, a road intersection located west of the Mu

Gia Pass in Laos. At the time, U.S. air operations in Laos were classified "secret". Visibility was poor due to smoke from burning fields, and upon rolling in on the target, Dengler and the remainder of his flight lost sight of one another. Visibility was poor, and as Dengler rolled his Skyraider in on the target after flying for two-and-a-half hours into enemy territory, he was hit by anti-aircraft fire.

"There was a large explosion on my right side," he remembered when interviewed shortly before his death in 2001.

It was like lightning striking. The right wing was gone. The airplane seemed to cartwheel through the sky in slow motion. There were more explosions—boom, boom, boom—and I was still able to guide the plane into a clearing in Laos.

He said: "Many times, people have asked me if I was afraid. Just before dying, there is no more fear. I felt I was floating."

When his squadron mates realized that he had been downed, they remained confident that he would be rescued. Immediately after he was shot down, Dengler smashed his survival radio and hid most of his other survival equipment to keep Vietnamese or Lao search parties from finding it. The day after being shot down Dengler was apprehended by Pathet Lao troops, the Laotian equivalent of the Viet Cong.

He was marched through the jungle, was tied on the ground to four stakes spreadeagled in order to stop him escaping at night. In the morning his face would be swollen from mosquito bites and he was unable to see. After an early escape attempt he was recaptured while drinking from a spring. According to Dengler he was tortured in retaliation:

I had escaped from them, [and] they wanted to get even. He was hung upside down by his ankles with a nest of biting ants over his face until he lost consciousness, suspended in a freezing well at night so that if he fell asleep he might drown. On other occasions he was dragged through villages by a water buffalo, to the amusement of his guards, as they goaded the animal with a whip. He was asked by Pathet Lao officials to sign a document condemning the United States, but he refused and as a result he was tor-

Pensacola FL



tured as tiny wedges of bamboo were inserted under his fingernails and into incisions on his body which grew and festered.

"They were always thinking of something new to do to me." Dengler recalled. "One guy made a rope tourniquet around my upper arm. He inserted a piece of wood, and twisted and twisted until my nerves cut against the bone. The hand was completely unusable for six months."

After some weeks Dengler was handed over to the Vietnamese. As they marched him through a village, a man slipped Dengler's engagement ring from his finger. Dengler complained to his guards. They found the culprit, summarily chopped off his finger with a machete and handed the ring back to Dengler.

"I realized right there and then that you don't fool around with the Viet Cong", he said.

Dengler had trained in escaping and survival at the Navy SERE survival school, where he had twice escaped from the mock-POW camp run by SERE instructors and Marine guards and was planning a third escape when the training ended. He had also set a record as the only student to gain weight (three pounds) during the SERE course; his childhood experiences had made him unafraid of eating whatever he could find and he had feasted on food the course instructors had thrown in the garbage.

Dengler was eventually brought to a prison camp near the village of Par Kung where he met other POWs. The other six prisoners were:

Phisit Intharathat (Thai)

Prasit Promsuwan (Thai)

Prasit Thanee (Thai)

Y.C. To (Chinese)

Eugene DeBruin (American)

Duane W. Martin (American)

Except for Martin, an Air Force helicopter pilot who had been shot down in North Vietnam nearly a year before, the other prisoners were civilians employed by Air America, a civilian airline owned by the Central Intelligence Agency. The civilians had been held by the Pathet Lao for over two and a half years when Dengler joined them.

"I had hoped to see other pilots. What I saw horrified me. The first one who came out was

carrying his intestines around in his hands. One had no teeth - plagued by awful infections, he had begged the others to knock them out with a rock and a rusty nail in order to release pus from his gums". "They had been there for two and a half years," said Dengler. "I looked at them and it was just awful. I realized that was how I would look in six months. I had to escape."

The day he arrived in the camp, Dengler advised the other prisoners that he intended to escape and invited them to join him. They advised that he wait until the monsoon season when there would be plenty of water. Shortly after Dengler arrived, the prisoners were moved to a new camp ten miles away at Hoi Het. After the move, a strong debate ensued among the prisoners with Dengler, Martin and Prasit arguing for escape which the other prisoners, particularly Phisit initially opposed.

As food began to run out, tension between the men grew: they were given just a single handful of rice to share while the guards would stalk deer, pulling the grass out of the animal's stomach for the prisoners to eat while they shared the meat. The prisoners' only "treats" were snakes they occasionally caught from the communal latrine or the rats that lived under their hut which they could spear with sharpened bamboo. At night the men were handcuffed together and shackled to wooden foot blocks. They suffered chronic dysentery and were made to lie in their excrement until morning.

After several months, one of the Thai prisoners overheard the guards talking about shooting them in the jungle and making it look like an escape attempt. They too, were starving and wanted to return to their villages. With that revelation, everyone agreed and a date to escape was set. Their plan was to take over the camp and signal a C-130 Hercules flare-ship that made nightly visits to the area. Dengler loosened logs under the hut that allowed the prisoners to squeeze through. The plan was for him to go out when the guards were eating and seize their weapons and pass them to Phisit Intharathat and Promsuwan while Martin and DeBruin procured others from other locations.

"I planned to capture the guards at



lunchtime, when they put down their rifles to get their food. There were two minutes and twenty seconds in the day when I could strike." In that time Dengler had to release all the men from their handcuffs.

Escape

On June 29, 1966 while the guards were eating, the group slipped out of their hand-cuffs and foot restraints and grabbed the guards' unattended weapons which included M1 rifles, Chinese automatic rifles, an American carbine and at least one sub-machine gun as well as an early version of the AK47 automatic rifle, which Dengler used during the escape from the POW camp.

Dengler went out first followed by Martin. He went to the guard hut and seized an M1 for himself and passed the American carbine to Martin. The guards realized the prisoners had escaped and five of them rushed toward Dengler, who shot at least three with the AK47. Phisit killed another guard as he reached for his rifle. Two others ran off, presumably to get help, although at least one had been wounded. The seven prisoners split into three groups. DeBruin was originally supposed to go with Dengler and Martin but decided to go with To, who was recovering from a fever and unable to keep up. They intended to get over the nearest ridge and wait for rescue. Dengler and Martin went off by themselves with the intention of heading for the Me-kong River to escape to Thailand, but they never got more than a few miles from the camp from which they had escaped.

"Seven of us escaped," said Dengler. "I was the only one who came out alive."

With the exception of Phisit, who was recaptured and later rescued by Laotian troops, none of the other prisoners were ever seen again. DeBruin was reportedly captured and placed in another camp, then disappeared in 1968.

Rescue

Escape proved to be hazardous. Soon, the two men's feet were white, mangled stumps from trekking through the dense jungle. They found the sole of an old tennis shoe, which they wore alternately, strapping it onto a foot with rattan for a few moments' respite. In this way they were able to make their way to a fast-flowing river.

"It was the highway to freedom," said Dengler, "We knew it would flow into the Me-kong River, which would take us over the border into Thailand and to safety."

The men built a raft and floated downstream on ferocious rapids, tying themselves to trees at night to stop themselves being washed away in the torrential water. By morning they would be covered in mud and hundreds of leeches. When they thought they were on their way to the Me-kong, they discovered that they had gone around in a circle. They had spotted several villages but had not been detected. They set up camp in an abandoned village where they found shelter from the nearly incessant rain. They had brought rice with them and found other food, but were still on the verge of starvation. Their intent had been to signal a C-130 but at first lacked the energy to build a fire using primitive methods of rubbing bamboo together.

Dengler finally managed to locate carbine cartridges that Martin had thrown away and used their powder to enhance the tinder and got a fire going. That night they lit torches and waved them in the shape of an S and O when a C-130 came over. The airplane circled and dropped a couple of flares and they were overjoyed, believing they had been spotted. They woke up the next morning to find the landscape covered by fog and drizzle, but when it lifted, no rescue force appeared.

Martin, who was weak from starvation and was suffering from malaria, wanted to approach a nearby Akha village to steal some food. Dengler knew it was not a good idea, but refused to let his friend go near the village alone. They saw a little boy playing with a dog and the child ran into the village calling out "American!" Within seconds a villager appeared and they knelt down on the trail in supplication, but the man swung his machete and struck Martin in the leg. With the next swipe, Martin's head came off. Dengler jumped to his feet and rushed toward the villager, who turned and ran into the village to get help.

I reached for the rubber sole from his foot, grabbed it and ran. From that moment on, all my motions became mechanical. I couldn't care less if I lived or died.

Dengler recalls, it was a wild animal who gave him the mental strength to continue.



"I was followed by this beautiful bear. He became like my pet dog and was the only friend I had."

These were his darkest hours. Little more than a walking skeleton after weeks on the run, he floated in and out of a hallucinatory state.

"I was just crawling along," he said. "Then I had a vision: these enormous doors opened up. Lots of horses came galloping out. They were not driven by death, but by angels. Death didn't want me."

Dengler managed to evade the searchers who went out after him and escaped back into the jungle. He returned to the abandoned village where the two had been spending their time and where he and Martin had signaled the C-130. That night when a C-130 flare-ship came, Dengler set fire to the huts and burned the village down. The C-130 crew spotted the fires and dropped flares, but even though the crew reported their sighting when they returned to Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base, the fires were not recognized by intelligence as having been a signal from a survivor.

Deatrick has long marveled at the fact that had he stuck to his original flight schedule on the morning of July 20, 1966, Dieter would not have been at the river to be sighted at that earlier hour. "If God put me on the earth for one reason," Deatrick says, "it was to find Dieter over there in the jungle." As it was, Deatrick describes it as "a million-in-one chance."

-Excerpt from Dengler biography regarding the role of pilot Eugene Deatrick

When a rescue force again failed to materialize, Dengler decided to find one of the parachutes from a flare for use as a possible signal. He found one on a bush and placed it in his rucksack. On July 20, 1966, after 23 days in the jungle, Dengler managed to signal an Air Force pilot with the parachute. A 2-ship flight of Air Force Skyraiders from the 1st Air Commando Squadron happened to fly up the river where Dengler was. Eugene Peyton Deatrick, the pilot of the lead plane and the squadron commander, spotted a flash of white while making a turn at the river's bend and came back and spotted a man waving something white. Deatrick and his wingman contacted rescue forces, but were told to ignore the

sighting, as no airmen were known to be down in the area. Deatrick persisted and eventually managed to convince the command and control center to dispatch a rescue force. Fearing that Dengler might be a Viet Cong soldier, the helicopter crew restrained him when he was brought aboard.

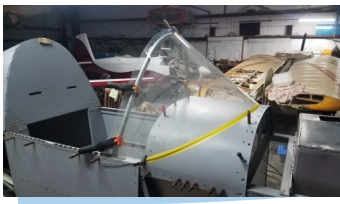
According to the documentary *Little Dieter Needs to Fly* Dengler said one of the flight crew who was holding him down pulled out a half eaten snake from underneath Dengler's clothing and was so surprised he nearly fell out of the helicopter. Dengler was stripped of his clothes to ensure he was not armed or in possession of a hand grenade. When questioned, Dengler told Air Force pararescue specialist Michael Leonard that he was a Navy Lieutenant JG who had escaped from a North Vietnamese prisoner of war camp two months earlier. Deatrick radioed the rescue helicopter crew to see if they could identify the person they had just hoisted up from the jungle. They reported that they had a man who claimed to be a downed Navy pilot who flew a Douglas A-1H Skyraider.

It wasn't until after he reached the hospital at Da Nang that Dengler's identity was confirmed. A conflict between the Air Force and the Navy developed over who should control his debriefing and recovery. In an apparent attempt to prevent the Air Force from embarrassing them in some way, the Navy sent a team of SEALs into the hospital to steal Dengler. He was brought out of the hospital in a covered gurney and rushed to the air field, where he was placed aboard a Navy carrier delivery transport Grumman C-2A from VR-21 and flown to the Ranger where a welcoming party had been prepared. At night, however, he was tormented by awful terrors, and had to be tied to his bed. In the end, his friends put him to sleep in a cockpit, surrounded by pillows. "It was the only place I felt safe," he said.

Dengler's deprivation from malnutrition and parasites caused the Navy doctors to order that he be airlifted to the United States.

Later life and death

Dengler recovered physically, but never put his ordeal behind him. As Werner Herzog described it in his documentary about Dengler, "Men are often haunted by things that happen to



them in life, especially in war Their lives seem to be normal, but they are not."

He remained in the navy for a year, was promoted to Lieutenant, and was trained to fly jets. When his military obligation was satisfied, he resigned from the Navy and applied for a position as an airline pilot with Trans World Airlines (TWA). He continued flying and survived four subsequent crashes as a civilian test pilot.

In 1977, during a time when he was furloughed from TWA, Dengler returned to Laos and was greeted as a celebrity by the Pathet Lao. He was taken to the camp from which he had escaped and was surprised to discover that at one point he and Martin had been within a mile and a half of it.

His fascination with airplanes and aviation continued for the remainder of his life. He continued flying almost up until his death. He took an early-retirement as a pilot for TWA sometime prior to 1985, but continued flying his meticulously restored Cessna 195, putting it on static display at numerous California air shows.

In 2000, Dengler was inducted into the Gathering of Eagles program and told the story of his escape to groups of young military officers. Dengler was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, an incurable neurological disorder; on February 7, 2001, he rolled his wheelchair from his house down to the driveway of a fire station and shot himself.

He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery. A Navy honor guard was present at the burial as well as a fly-over by Navy F-14 Tomcats.

“Rescue Dawn”

2007 movie about Dieter Dengler’s remarkable story.

(Available through many streaming services)

John

Aviation Briefs

Red Bull at it again with FAA. The FAA denied a request from organizers to get an exemption from regulations that cover the safe operation of aircraft..

[Video: Red Bull midair 'plane swap' stunt ends in crash | American Military News](#)

Two events celebrating the service of the late [Gail Halvorsen](#), the US Air Force veteran who became known as the "Berlin Candy Bomber" after dropping candy from his airplane to children in Berlin during World War II, will take place at Utah's Provo Municipal Airport on May 20 and Spanish Fork Municipal Airport on May 21. A Spirit of Freedom candy drop, flyovers, displays and musical performances are among the activities planned during the programs, which are both organized by the Gail S. Halvorsen Foundation.

Dynon Avionics

Dynon has issued a Technical Service Bulletin for certain SkyView HDX displays equipped with Wi-Fi Adapters.

Some Experimental SkyView HDX displays - manufactured during or after March 2022 - can exhibit adverse behaviors when equipped with Wi-Fi Adapters (Dynon p/n 102405-000). These behaviors include display restarts or display freezing, which can result in the partial or complete loss of flight instrumentation without warning. For Bulletin click [HERE](#)

Easy Static System Check

If you’re going to have your transponder checked you can perform a test of your static system. I use small pieces of aluminum tape to cover my static ports. I find this much better than using black electrical tape. I use my alternate static line to pull a small vacuum with a plastic syringe to

1000’ above Field Elevation using aircraft gages or a test altimeter. Your leakage rate has to be less than 100’ in a minute. This is normally done initially by the shop and may save you some time and money troubleshooting your static system for a leak.

John





2022 Officers and Committee Chairmen

President [Ralph Moser](#) (847) 736-4603

Vice President: [Mark Rogers](#) (251) 228-0356

Tech Counselor

Flight Advisor:

Secretary/Treasurer: [Scott Swanson](#)
711 Marlinspike Dr
Pensacola, FL 32507
(309) 267-9710

Ray Scholarship Coordinator

[Craig Spoke](#) (251) 550-5795

Young Eagles Coordinator

[Tanner Matheny](#) (602) 315-2839

Tech Counselor [Doug Francisco](#) (850) 453-5501
Webmaster

VMC Club / [Donna and DeWitt Barker](#)
IMC Club (850) 572-0288

Newsletter/ [John McKiernan](#) (850) 291-4134
Tech Counselor
Flight Advisor

Normally meetings will be held at [Ferguson Airport \(82J\) \(Uni 122.8\)](#) on the **Second Saturday** of each month at 10:00 AM unless otherwise posted. **If flying in, check NAS Pensacola (KNPA) NOTAMS for possible TFRs and the [Ferguson Airport website](#) under the Arrivals tab for important arrival and departure information.**

Driving: From Hwy 98 go past the main airport entrance and take the next left. Go thru the gate and make a left on the gravel road. Make a right past the T hangars you'll see our building down on the left side. Anyone interested in sharing general aviation, aircraft building, maintaining and restoring is welcome.

For more info contact:
[John McKiernan](#) 850 291-4134

EAA and Local Chapter Sites

[EAA 485](#) [EAA 1265](#)
[EAA HDQTRS](#) [EAA 108](#)
[Lite Blue Angels EAA 105](#)

Interesting Links

[Blue Angel 360](#) Way cool
[Making the First Airbus 220 Time Lapse](#)
[Jetman Unleashed in Dubai](#)
[F-18 Low Level](#)

Miscellaneous

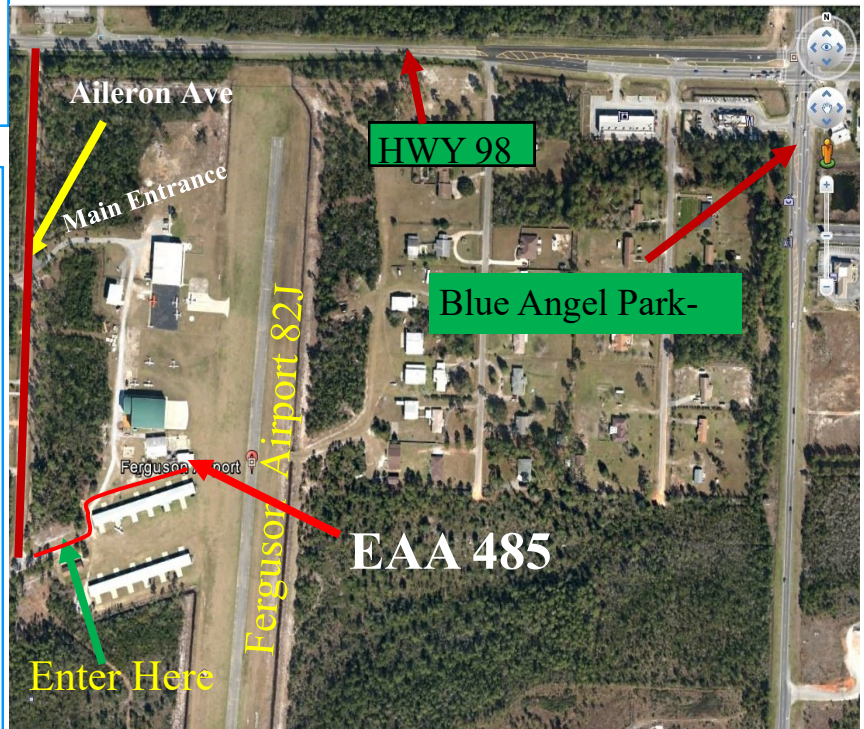
[FAA Notams](#)
[Thatcher Build Site](#)
[Barnstormers](#)
[Skyvector.com](#) Flight Planning, Charts
[AirNav.com](#) Airport info, Fuel Prices

Local Aviation Supplies

[Johnson Supply Company](#)

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Located on E street just south of Barrancas
Tell them your from EAA 485



Visit our website at eaa485.org



Home Of The PANHANDLE PELICANS

EAA 485 Pensacola, FL

Get Your Chapter Ballcap

We have ballcaps with chapter logo for sale for \$15. The next batch will be more expensive so don't wait.

Chapter Dues

Our dues are \$25 and we have a new Secretary/Treasurer, Scott Swanson. Please bring a check made out to EAA 485 or cash to the meeting. If you're bringing cash, please try to have exact change. If you can't attend the meeting send a check to Scott:

Scott Swanson
711 Marlinspike Dr
Pensacola, FL 32507
(309) 267-9710

Shop Tip

Keeping a hangar clean is a PITA. Years ago I got a great deal on a pair of 6hp Shop Vacs. I envisioned building a big time vacuuming system. I had enough trying to vacuum 3300 sq ft dragging a hose, cord around, sucking everything through a measly 14" attachment that got stuck to the floor.

I had a very old dolly for moving things that could also lay down with 2 fixed wheels and 2 casters. I spent less than \$5 for a 2" T and the rest was stuff lying around the hangar. Total time 2 hours to build. It uses a pair of 14" attachments. More next month. John



May 14th Events Calendar

VMC/IMC Club at 0830

General membership meeting at 1000

Agenda

- Pledge
- Guests
- Officer Updates: President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer
-Flight Safety Topic
-Craig Spoke, Ray Scholarship Update
-Tanner Matheny, Young Eagles Update
-Member Build Projects Update
-New Business
-Guest Speaker - Tanner "Dodo" Matheny: EA-18G Growler
-Adjourn

Light Lunch- Deli Roast Beef/Ham/Turkey Sandwich Tray / Chips / Soft Drinks / Coffee. \$5/person donation requested.

Future Meeting Dates:

June - 11th

July - 9th

August - 13th

September - 10th

October - 8th

November - 12th

December - No meeting. Chapter Christmas Party TBA

Fly Ins:

Rockin on the Runway, June 11th, 51LS, Sunset, LA

Oshkosh (KOSH) July 25 - July 31

Thomasville GA (TVI) Oct 14-16