



# EAA Chapter 919

(Est. July 2001)

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## MEETING NOTICE!

**October 2010**

EAA Chapter 919 Monthly Meeting. 10-15-2010 at 7:00 PM at The Winona Airport Terminal Bldg.

**Membership (single or family!)  
(\$15.00 annually)**

Rich Adank 2010  
Wes Anderson 2010  
Dan Bass 2010  
Enoch Bennett 2010  
Al & Patty Berg  
Russ & Denise Braatz 2010  
Bruce & Susan Bublitz 2010  
Bill & Cheryl Davidson  
Mike & Edith Davis 2010  
Al & Ruthie Farner 2010  
Lowell & Lori Finseth 2010  
Ren Foster  
Fred Gleiter 2010  
Fritz Husser 2010  
Helen Hermann & Theresa Villarreal 2010  
Mike Kearns 2010  
Walt Kelly 2010  
Diane Kohner 2010  
Bernie Kriesel 2010 & 2011  
Tom Lee 2010  
Russ & Helen Marsolek 2010  
Steve & Barb Marsolek 2010  
Marilyn Matson 2010  
Dave & Roxie McCorquodale 2010  
Larry & Sandy Nelson 2010  
Rob Ossell  
Tom & Marilyn Owen 2010  
Pdon & Glenda Pinkham 2010  
Gregg and Patti Reick 2010  
Chris & Susan Shoaff 2010  
Carl Swanson 2010 & 2011  
Max & Carol Tentis 2010  
Mike & Barb Thern 2010  
Allen & Laloni Thompson 2010 & 2011  
Daryl & PJ Thompson 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, & 2014  
Roy Thompson 2010  
Larry Ziemer 2010

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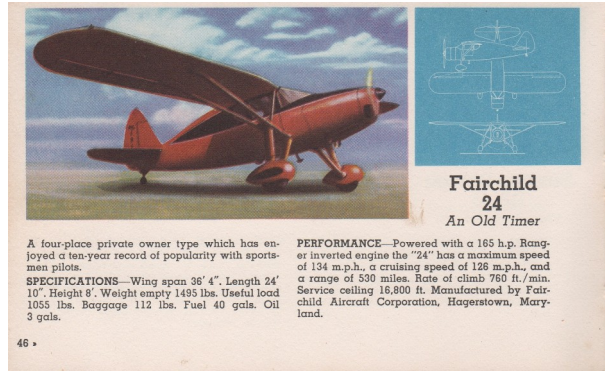
## FAA PRIVATE PILOT QUESTION OF THE MONTH....

Which V-Speed represents the maximum landing gear extended speed?

- 1>Vle
- 2>Vlo
- 3>Vfe

**What aircraft is this?**





**Meeting Notice!** The next meeting of EAA 919 is this Friday night (10-15-2010), at the Winona MN (ONA) Airport. 7:00 PM. Please be there if at all possible!

## **THE DUES ARE DUE!**

Yes, 2011 EAA 919 membership dues are due. Help this chapter continue to offer Young Eagles events, fly-ins, poker runs, and of course...this newsletter! Just \$15.00 per year is all that it takes to be a full member in EAA 919.

Thank you for your continued support!

The correct answer to the **QUESTION OF THE MONTH** is "#1"

## **Winona MN. Weather Almanac.**

**October average high temp is 61°. October average low is 37°. October average precipitation is 2.4".**



## **CONGRATULATIONS REN FOSTER!!!**

Ren is Winona's newest private pilot after passing his check-ride.

Expect to see a lot more of Ren in the air now with his red Cessna 150!

The following story is a **MUST READ STORY!**

Mike Thern submitted it and let me say three things. First, I am SO pleased that there is a happy ending to this story. Secondly...we can all learn from this story; and I hope that we do. And thirdly. Mike, thank you for being so candid with the facts of this story. It can help all of us be better pilots!

RLM  
EAA 919 President

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### **VISITING UNCLE SAM WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT**

Here is a tale of nocturnal angst that may be educational as well as entertaining to my fellow pilots.

The story begins with a planned trip to the area of New London, Wisconsin for a gathering of relatives on a beautiful September Sunday, 09/12/2010. My sister, Joy, who lives in rural Cash-ton, WI, and her visiting friend, Nancy, asked me to drive with them to the gathering at the old family farmstead on the northern outskirts of New London, and I suggested that in view of the gorgeous weather we fly over in the old Chrome Banana, my 1947 Fairchild 24. We could land at Shiocton, a nice little grass strip about 8 miles from the farm. Circle the farm for attention and someone will come to pick us up. Joy and Nancy agreed that this sounded great, so I departed Rushford 55Y at about 9:00 AM, picked up Joy and Nancy at Sparta/McCoy CMY at about 9:30, and enjoyed a nice tailwind at 5500 ft to the Shiocton W34 airport, about an hour and a half total airborne time enroute from Rushford. Sure beats driving.

Here are some facts that play significantly into events on our return trip:

1 – The F-24 has a 30 gallon tank in the inboard portion of each wing, 60 gallons total fuel on board.

2 – Fuel control valves on the left and right side walls have ON and OFF positions for their respective tank, and the “housings” for both valves are clearly embossed “CAUTION Operate On One Tank Only.” That’s it for fuel control. It’s worth noting right now that the ON – OFF valve for the right tank is very stiff and requires real strong fingers, stronger than mine, or pliers for assistance. I keep pliers for this purpose in the pouch under the pilot’s seat. I have dis-cussed this “one tank only” admonition with other F-24 owners, and the consensus seems to be that operating on both tanks simultaneously is not uncommon and probably OK until at least

one of the tanks is known to be “quite low.” Therefore, in the six plus years that I have owned and flown the Fairchild it has been my practice to operate routinely with both fuel valves in the ON position, and so far I have never operated with less than about 25 gallons on board, assumed to be somewhat evenly divided between the two tanks.

3 – During the run-up for initial departure from 55Y I thought “Hey, I’m going to operate on one tank at a time today,” and I selected the OFF position for the left tank (end of conscious thought process). Now I’m operating on the right tank alone, the one with the stiff valve. This is the **FIRST TIME** I have decided to do this in the six years that I have flown the airplane, and the stage is set for a classic style aviation blooper.

4 – I have recently installed a JPI Fuel Totalizer, and the “Fuel Used” as reported by the JPI has been in very good agreement with the fuel required to replenish at the gas pump.

So, let’s continue this tale of befuddled airmanship.

The weather during the visit continued to be so cherry that I decided a night flight back would be enjoyable, with the possible advantage of lighter headwinds. Therefore, we departed Shioc-ton soon after sunset and flew into the fading red sky. The hope of diminished headwinds didn’t pan out, and I chose 4500 ft msl as the least painful headwind with some decent altitude insurance for a night flight. After about an hour it was totally dark with a starry sky and a sliver moon on the horizon, and we could identify Petenwell Lake glowing weakly against the dark ground, with Necedah just beyond. Doing nicely, right on course. I had been watching the right fuel quantity gauge crawl down to near zippo, but that was pretty normal – in fact it had done that exact thing on a recent trip to Antique Airfield near Blakesburg, IA, after which I had refilled the right tank with 19 gallons (11 gallons remaining) while the left tank had required 17 gallons for refill. At the same time, the totalizer was nearing 30 gallons used. So, I was calmly thinking I had about half fuel remaining in each tank, having blithely forgotten about my **NON-STANDARD** act of turning the left tank OFF at the beginning of the day. Can you see what’s coming?

Yup, just as we were several minutes past Necedah, with the Tomah and possibly the Sparta/McCoy airport beacons beckoning in the western distance, and I-90/94, my target for navigating around the approaching restricted area creeping into view, the engine bucked and sputtered as though it was running out of fuel and then quit completely. This event was occurring right on schedule but I was still in la-la land. With a windmilling prop the Fairchild settles almost automatically into an 80 mph glide, so that part was easy. Now I’m thinking “Glory be! So that’s why the “One Tank At A Time” directive! The right tank must have just gone dry, and the engine is just getting air from that tank! All I need to do is get that tank shut off and we’ll be going again!!” I was also conscious enough to push the mixture full rich and click the magneto switch through its positions, but that is the **GRAND TOTAL** of my troubleshooting thought process. I thrust my hand into the pouch under my seat to retrieve those important little pliers, but succeeded only in knocking it way back where I could only retrieve it if I had several more joints in my arm and wrist. After some considerable wrestling with my weak fingers on the right tank fuel valve, with some help from my plucky and loveable sister, I got the right tank switched OFF, but the engine insisted on doing nothing more than continue to wind mill – no

throttle response, no nothing! Did you catch what's missing here? Uh-huh, I'm now gliding along with 30 gallons of unused fuel in the left tank which is controlled by a little valve which for the first time in MY life is in the OFF position in flight! But I'm too excited for that fact to re-clarify itself to me. I have now shifted to the thought mode of ***"Let's get this thing over a decent place to land!"***

We were west bound, and I-90/94 was angling up in a northwesterly direction on our left in the medium distance. The Interstate appeared to be reachable so I turned to a perpendicular intercept course and punched up 121.5 which was already tuned on the inactive side of my radio. What would you say? Here is what I chirped in the coolest and most professional voice I could muster at the moment: ***"MAYDAY, MAYDAY, November 77661 is about 10 or 15 east of Tomah, engine out, heading for the Interstate."*** Glory Be – a calm female voice came back immediately and asked for clarification of my position and intentions. We had a few more short exchanges which I can't remember very clearly, then she seemed to go silent, to be followed immediately by a cheerful male voice identifying himself as ***"Hello, November 661, this is Sky West overhead, we have you loud and clear. We'll follow you down verbally."***

All alone none of this would be any fun, but with friends on the line it almost seems reasonable to continue life as a pilot. I told Sky West that I thought I had Oakdale coming up on my left, but I felt confused because the area of lights sure looked bigger than Oakdale should have been. A little further and I started to think "Holy smokes, look at the size of that parking lot! What's a parking lot that size doing in Oakdale?" Then the geography clarified itself and I transmitted to Sky West, ***"Hey, we're not passing Oakdale, We're coming up on Camp Douglas, um, I mean Volk, that military place, Volk Field. We're gonna land at Volk!!!"*** Sky West acknowledged, and I can't remember much about any subsequent exchanges with him. Thanks tons, gal and guy, wherever you are. It sure helped to be in touch with calm-talking people on the way down.

As I glided down over that big "parking lot," now east bound, I could make out the unlighted runway reflecting the starlight to my left. I couldn't see the ends but knew it was about 2 miles long so should be hunky-dory. I felt this overpowering need to land to the west, so still needed to do a left 180 down to the runway, and altitude demanded that I do that 180 at about mid lot, um, ramp, right over the only F-16 in residence on the entire thing. Don't ask me why I chose the unlighted runway rather than the ramp which was lighted up like a – well, a parking lot, but that's what runways are for, isn't it? While making that last 180, I thought, ***"Boy, this is gonna stir something up. But, hey, this is why we pay taxes."***

I dropped the airplane the last five or ten feet – should've used the bright ramp – but ***"Thank you, Fairchild, for putting nine inches of travel in the shocks."*** We coasted through a u-turn on the runway back to an exit ramp and stopped just a small ways short of turning off the "active." Now the aftermath began. As I shut everything down my eye caught the left fuel valve handle sticking straight up in the OFF position. ***"Woo-Hoo,"*** I thought, ***"now I won't need to repair or overhaul my engine."*** That was the extent of my emotion. Once safely on the ground, I found that emotions tend to become mush.

Other than the distant ramp being brightly lit, the place was quiet and deserted. We pushed the

Do next. *“Hey, Mick,”* Joy suggested, *“Why don’t you try 911 on your cell phone?”* Beautiful idea, and it immediately brought another kind female voice. Turned out she was located in Mauston, close at hand, and she might understand the strange geography of our plight. I explained the unusual circumstances and she said she would make a few phone calls trying to let the proper people know about us interlopers.

After about ten minutes, two emergency vehicles appeared on the far side of the ramp, searched the dark east end of the runway first, and then worked their way west to discover us. I never thought to turn on some aircraft lights to help them out – duh! The first vehicle that reached us, a squad car type pickup with a topper, stopped about 25 yards away with the headlights flooding the whole scene. A lone officer emerged with his hand on his side-arm and cautiously approached me. Once he had determined that I was merely daft and not dangerous, he became more congenial and began conferring with the next arrivals on how to get us on our way as expediently as possible. Very shortly word came from some higher authority that we were free to leave as long as we were certain that our airplane was safe and operable. Without revealing any more of my incompetence and stupidity than necessary, I assured them that we were indeed fit, capable and ready to depart. To their questionable credit, my sister Joy and her friend, Nancy, even climbed aboard willingly with their idiot pilot.

After firing up with all of the fuel valves in the proper position and testing all systems thoroughly, I assessed my own wits and determined that further flight was indeed reasonable, so, off we went. The remaining short flight to Sparta/McCoy was flown meticulously for the sake of my own confidence and pride. Joy and Nancy reverted to the terrors of the road when we parted company at Sparta/McCoy, and I flew the last leg to home base at Rushford alone and pensive. I felt chagrined but there was awakening in me a sense of having grown and learned a bit. Most of all I was thankful to God for His protection, to Joy and Nancy for their calm heads and prayers, and to all of the really competent people who are out there in the dark.

What is it that I learned? First and foremost, don’t quit checking until you’re done checking. I don’t care if a checklist is written or memorized, USE IT, use it THOROUGHLY. Had I done that, I very likely would have powered up perhaps around 3000 feet, and begun climbing back up, happy as a clam. Next, if you depart from a normal or long-standing procedure, write yourself a big note with a red magic marker and pin it to your nose.

30 gallons of fuel would not have flown us out of some of the dark areas that surround Volk Field. God and prayers, and not very much of me, played a big role in the outcome of this flight.

