

Building with Volunteers

by Barbara Eldredge

Almost 40% of our current Club members have joined us since we moved into the Flight Center in July 2003. That means that many people may not be aware of how indebted we are to Club member volunteer labor for every aspect of the Flight Center.

Club members designed the Flight Center, and we were fortunate to have a very knowledgeable and dedicated member to oversee all aspects of the construction.

Almost everything you see in the non-hangar portion of the building was either donated by members or bought with funds donated by members. Every cabinet, shelf or built-in desk area was installed by a Club member or through labor donated by a Club member.

Enjoy sitting in the front lobby? The furniture there was donated by one Club 1306 member, and professionally stripped and finished by another. Have you used a Club phone? All of the phone and networking equipment was installed by Club members. Checked weather at the Club? Club volunteers installed and positioned the satellite dish on the roof. Tied down an airplane? Club volunteers assembled the chains and attached them to the poles in the ground. Used a Club computer? Much of the equipment was donated and all of it was installed and is maintained by Club members. Scheduled an aircraft? A Club volunteer researched, installed and maintains MyFBO for us. Impressed by the state-of-the-art hand scanner? A Club member arranged to have his company, Ingersoll-Rand, donate that to the Club. Used our simulator? Over the years a number of people have contributed to the initial installation, software & maintenance upgrades, and current installation of the flight simulator. Enjoyed Club Second Saturdays? Members or friends of the Club donated the refrigerator, stove, cabinets, freezer and large screen TV. And of course, members donate all the labor for Second Saturday.

Club members treated the hangar floor in a laborious, multi-day process. They graded the outside of the building to deal with water problems, and did some initial landscaping. Some of our networking experts provided our wireless internet connection.

Most of us joined this Club because we wanted to fly. We soon found that what makes this a Club and not an FBO is the members. It is not often that one has the opportunity to meet so many talented and interesting people in one place. Make some time this year to become involved in some of the many volunteer efforts that make our Club run. You may be surprised at how much becoming involved enriches your Club experience.

Every 30 days...

Have you checked your VOR?

by Andy Liepins

Aviators who were minted in the WW-II era could tell some stories about how far aviation has come since the "good ol' days." Certainly navigation has made similar progress.

In today's general aviation cockpits, it's pretty common to see three radio navigation devices: ADF, VOR and GPS. Arguably, GPS is the latest and greatest of the nav tools in our armamentarium. That being said, a quick glance at any IFR enroute chart shows where the "state of the art" is, not necessarily the "cutting edge." Indeed, it's with VORs and the victor airways that they produce.

If you're a follower of Don Brown's articles on avweb.com as I am, it becomes remarkably clear that controllers feel a little less apprehensive when traffic follows established airways. As such, pilots are bound to follow assigned routes and to make sure that their equipment is capable of doing so with a certain degree of precision.

So here's the crux of the biscuit: when is the last time you performed a VOR check?

Granted, pilots flying under VFR have no obligation to make sure the needle is behaving appropriately. Instrument pilots, however, don't have it so easy. Quoting the FARs: "No person may operate a civil aircraft under IFR using the VOR ... unless the VOR ... has been operationally checked within the preceding 30 days, and was found to be within the limits of the permissible indicated bearing error..." [14 CFR 91.171(a)(2)]

Fortunately, we don't have to find someone special, much less pay them our well-earned avgas money, to make this quick check. As pilots, we have the skills. With some interpretive license, the rules say that the test must be performed within the last 30 days, it must be done by an approved method, and the test must be logged. It actually is that simple.

There are four "approved methods" for checking the VOR. These can be found in the handy AIM, section 1-1-4, appropriately named "VOR Receiver Check." Get out your

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New Ratings

Craig Thomas - Private
Ronney Moss

Ronney Moss – CFII
George Scheer

Recent Solos

Alan Porter
Norm Sayers

Welcome, New Members!

Ed Butler
Steve Delamar
Terry Cureton
Jim Morris
Mark Monturo
Tommy Byrd
Matt Lail
Gary O'Neill

Upcoming Regional Airshows

April 8

Charleston AFB Air Expo

Wings of Carolina NOTAMS and Notes

- Last month's member number hunt returned with no takers. This month's edition of *Flying News* brings three more numbers and another opportunity to win! Look for yours embedded in the newsletter (no, not in phone numbers or other "incidental" 616 places), then e-mail the editor at av8npa@earthlink.net by April 15 to claim \$10 off your next club dues. Remember, ya gotta find the digits on your own!

Lightly Loaded

Green is Not my Color

by Carl Dowdy

When I was in college in the late 1800's, or so it seems, I had the opportunity to become a member of the North Carolina State Soaring Club. It was there that I had my first real introduction to the Green Monster.

No, not Envy.

For anyone who has not ridden in a sailplane, imagine turning the steering wheel of your car to its full limit. Then drive in circles. From the back seat. For about an hour. Looking down. Yeah, I thought so.

Just like in a car, it's better if you are in control. Problem was, I had decided to ride along as my instructor went for his non-instructional flight. I thought I might learn something. We took off and were towed to 2000' by the club's Cessna 172. At that point we released and he quickly found lift. The flight was going exceptionally well.

In time, he thermalled us up to about 8000', which was a lesson in itself. There was an unwritten club rule that flights should be limited to an hour if anyone was waiting for a glider. So, when we approached an hour he said, "I guess we should get back."

What's the best way to lose altitude in a sailplane that wants to take its time gliding down? Why spins, of course.

In a power plane, there's too much noise to hear any control movements. In a glider, it gets *real* quiet right before you hear the rudder slam to its stop. Several turns to the left and recover. Several turns to the right and recover. Several turns to the left, several turns to the right. We had practiced spins before, so this wasn't a complete surprise.

As a matter of pride, I might brag a bit that I handled all this with great poise and composure. That is until we got out of the cool atmosphere of 8000' and were back in the pattern at 800'. There I found that the turns between downwind and base, and base to final, combined with the warm summer day, were a little less *appetizing*, you might say.

All I have at this point is a fading mental picture of the Ka7, sitting off in the grass with me standing, right hand on the wing and head hung low, sucking air. It was all I could do. Fortunately I was able to recover. That doesn't make me some sort of gastrointestinal hero. Why did I think I should be immune?

I have a good friend in Hickory, NC who has flown more hours in more planes than I ever expect to in my remaining years. He flies several times every week, year in and year out, and yet admits to having 1243 had nausea throughout those years. He recently told me that one flight

was so bad that there is now a fish in Lake Apopka, Florida that's wearing his sunglasses.

Gordon Baxter, who wrote the *Bax Seat* column for Flying magazine for so many years, once had the chance to fly an aerobatics routine with the legendary Bob Hoover in his Shrike Commander. Beforehand, Bob asked him tactfully if he tended to "get uneasy." Gordon answered that he "could do it for a time," but that it would eventually get to him. After the flight Gordon said Hoover let him off, "shirttail out, stained dark with sweat, hair plastered to my green face, dragging my camera in the grass."

So, if we've come to the conclusion that it's understandable and even acceptable to have problems with airsickness and still want to fly, then the only issue that remains for students and new pilots is to just have a plan in place and a discussion about it with our instructor.

I propose a simple approach to prepare for the possibility of airsickness, while protecting the dignity of us students and new pilots. Decide ahead of time on what we'll term code words or phrases. For instance, when feeling a little off center, simply suggest to your instructor that you "wish to practice Altitude and Attitude Hold". However, there may come a time when even an entire sentence is beyond your capabilities. In that case, simply fall back on something brief and to the point like "Chips Ahoy!"

If that doesn't get some attention, nothing will.

Carl Dowdy is a regular columnist for Flying News, when he's not designing new uses for Sick Sacs in club aircraft.



Carl Dowdy

The Green Monster, in black and white

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handy A/FD while you're at it (it is up to date, right?).

Perhaps the most straightforward method is to use a VOT, or VOR test facility. Problem is, these aren't everywhere. There are only two in North Carolina; one in Charlotte, the other in Hickory. They come in two basic flavors: ground-based and airborne. To use the ground based device, one must be at the facility where the VOT is based. Tune the NAV radio to the appropriate frequency (you're looking in that A/FD, right?), set the OBS to the 0 degree radial, and look at the needle and TO/FROM indicator. If it says "FROM" and the needle is within 4 degrees on either side, you're set. If you *have* to be different, you can set the OBS to 180 and assure the indicator reads "TO" and that the CDI is within the same tolerances. They both work. If you have an RMI, the needle will point to 180 degrees regardless of the OBS setting.

Airborne VOTs have specific altitudes at which they operate. Refer to the little green book for those numbers.

Let's say that heading toward Hickory or Charlotte for western NC barbecue doesn't suit you, so you'd rather stick around home or perhaps head east. You've got options.

The first of which is to land at a particular airport, taxi to a "designated point" and set your OBS to the indicated radial. Is the needle within 4 degrees and the TO/FROM behaving? At RDU, that point is the end of taxiway alpha at the approach end of runway 5R. Set the OBS to 244 and take a peek. If Fayetteville is more your style, taxi to the runup area for runway 4, set the OBS to 278 and measure. These sites are marked clearly on the airport surface with signage and a circle on the pavement. Taxi your aircraft there and perform your check.

But since you don't feel like stopping just 20 minutes from home, take a moment to fly over the dam at Jordan Lake. Tune your VOR to RDU, 117.2, set the OBS to 229 (yup, a Victor airway), make sure you're FROM and within 6 degrees, and you're golden. This is based on the provision that you can navigate along the centerline of an

established VOR airway at a reasonably low altitude, pick a distinct landmark that's along that airway and measure. You've just performed an airborne check that fulfills the requirement.

The above options assume that you have one VOR receiver on board. Sometimes, we have two. And that simplifies matters significantly if you need to do an airborne check. Set both NAV radios to the same VOR, find your way onto a radial, set both OBS to the same radial, and read the needles. They need to agree within four degrees.

Now that you've done the checks, it's time to log it. The club VOR checks should be logged in the forms in the plane's key and logsheet box. The FARs require logging the date, place of the check, bearing error and the tester's signature.

Those with money to burn can visit an "appropriately rated radio repair station" that possesses VOR test equipment and pay someone to test the receiver. The bearing transmitted and the date must be logged in this case.

Performing a VOR check is a courtesy to future IFR pilots, any one of whom may be grounded by a lack of a timely VOR check in the airplane. If I am departing on an IFR flight and the weather permits a VFR departure, I can do a VOR check prior to picking up my clearance, but if the weather requires an IFR clearance prior to departure, I have no means to perform a VOR check on the field and am therefore not legal to depart if a current VOR check is not logged in my aircraft. Although VOR checks are required only for IFR flight, they can be done by any pilot, instrument rated or not. The presence of two NAV radios in our Skyhawks makes VOR checks much easier. We all need to make an effort to check the VOR log and keep the VOR checks current.

Now that the check is done, the VOR is clear for another 30 days of buzzing through the soup – or brunswick stew for the barbecue fans.

Thanks to George Scheer and John Hunter for their contributions to this article.

Member Meetings

Membership meetings (Pizza Nights) are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every "even" month. Meetings begin at 6:30 PM and include free pizza, a business meeting, and a program of interest to pilots. The next meeting date is 4/12. In addition to club members, these meetings are open to local and prospective pilots who may have interest in the club – the more the merrier!

Board meetings routinely occur on the second Tuesday of each month from 6:30–9 PM. Board meetings are held in the Wings of Carolina Flight Center. All members are welcome and are encouraged to attend. Occasionally there will be a change in meeting date. Please keep an eye on your e-mail for any additional meetings

Second Saturday Cookouts occur at the hangar on the second Saturday of each month, 11:30 am–2:00 pm. Members and guests can buy lunch for \$5 for adults (>12) and \$3.00 for children (6 – 11).

If you know someone who may be interested in joining the club, please bring them along with you! It's a great opportunity for them to meet some of the members & learn more about the club.