



As **good** as it **gets**

BY DAVE HIRSCHMAN



Oh, the places we've been

THE AOPA 2009 SWEEPSTAKES Let's Go Flying SR22 is in its final form. The upgrades are installed and tested, and everything works as designed. The highest-performance, most technologically advanced, and highest-value aircraft AOPA has ever given away is ready to go to its new home when the winner is selected early in 2010.

One of the airplane's last stops on its journey to its eventual winner was at Air Graphics LLC in Middleton, Wisconsin, where it received its third and final set of exterior graphics this year. The magicians there quickly peeled off the GA Serves America and Let's Go Flying artwork from the airplane's distinctly different-looking left and right sides, and they replaced them with a gorgeous new symmetrical scheme of their own design.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS ROSE



The Let's Go Flying Cirrus SR22 (above, in Let's Go Flying livery over Tampa), has traveled across country in its year-long mission to help build the pilot population and demonstrate GA's utility and exciting possibilities. Next stop: delivery to the AOPA 2009 Sweepstakes winner in its final livery (previous pages). The panel is all glass with L-3 Communications' Trilogy electronic standby instrument (left) and airbags have been installed (above).

Special thanks to these generous contributors:

- L-3 Communications (Trilogy ESI-1000 electronic standby instrument)
- Air Graphics LLC (vinyl exterior graphics)
- AmSafe (seatbelt airbags)
- Avidyne (Release 7 WAAS upgrade)
- Cobham (406-MHz ELT and autopilot roll servo upgrade)
- Forward Vision (enhanced vision infrared camera system)
- Garmin (GNS430W WAAS GPS upgrade)
- Higher Plane Inc. (wall planning maps)
- Qref Quick Reference Media (SR22 and Entegra checklists)
- Reader Plates (electronic charts)

"The first two messages were loud, unmistakable, and in keeping with the airplane's mission of drawing attention to general aviation's exciting possibilities," said Eric Niswonger, president of Air Graphics, a company that designs and supplies graphics to Cirrus Aircraft and a growing variety of manufacturers, as well as performing custom jobs for fleets and owners. "Now, in anticipation of belonging to an individual owner, we created a new graphics scheme that's more subtle, but still unique and eye-catching."

The airplane retains its original N number, 130LH, in honor of J. Lloyd Huck, the veteran pilot and philanthropist who donated it to AOPA. And like previous AOPA Sweepstakes aircraft, the Let's Go Flying SR22 retains the tail logo that has become so familiar to *AOPA Pilot* magazine readers during the past 12 months.

The Let's Go Flying SR22 has stayed busy recently, and even after a full year of flying at AOPA, it's continuing to achieve some notable firsts. In September, for example, a planned visit to the Mountain Empire Airport open house in southwestern Virginia marked the first time that adverse weather kept the airplane from an event, even temporarily. The sky was clear throughout the Shenandoah Valley, but the narrow valley in which the airport is situated was fogged in with a ceiling of 100 feet and visibility at just one-quarter mile—far below the localizer approach minimums of 500 feet. We diverted to Roanoke, Virginia, for a couple hours while the fog lifted, then flew the localizer approach into the picturesque mountain airport.

The Let's Go Flying SR22 also flew to Washington's Dulles International Airport for a charity airplane pull on October 3 in support of the Special Olympics.

The recent trip home to Frederick from Wisconsin marked the airplane's fourth and probably the last crossing of Lake Michigan this year, and a booming tailwind made it an unbelievably quick trip. A tight low pressure system over western Pennsylvania was creating strong winds across the region. At altitude, those winds topped 70 knots. Leaving Madison, Wisconsin, air traffic controllers cleared the Let's Go Flying SR22 to 15,000 feet. In smooth air with the engine running lean of peak, fuel consumption was less than 11 gph while the building tailwind pushed

2010 SWEEPSTAKES: FUN TO FLY REMOS GX

Meet your new fun machine

No, you're not hallucinating. AOPA's next sweepstakes is a Light Sport Aircraft.

The theme of our 2010 giveaway is "Fun to Fly," and we think the Remos GX is a perfect example of the new breed of fun, uncomplicated LSAs. You're bound to feel the same way once you get a look at this sharp little aircraft. With its 100-horsepower Rotax 912ULS engine and three-blade ground-adjustable propeller, the Remos GX wants to fly—and you'll want to jump in and fly it.

The Remos GX is model year 2009—serial number 347, which makes it brand new. That means we won't be doing a top-to-bottom refurbishment to an older aircraft. We know that on the one hand many readers love to follow the month-by-month progress of our "project" airplanes and learn about the painstaking labor that is provided by our sponsors. On the other hand, many AOPA members have also told us that they'd be more than happy to be handed the keys to a sparkling new airplane.

But don't worry. Some enhancements to the 2010 F2F Remos GX are coming next year, and we'll tell you all about them as they happen. What kind of enhancements? Well, I don't want to give away all of our secrets. Let's just say that one addition will make the Remos more like what you may be used to flying, while another will come in handy on those very sunny days.

We kicked off the 2010 sweepstakes with the unveiling of the 2010 Fun to Fly Sweepstakes Remos at AOPA Summit in Tampa, Florida. Why so soon, you may ask, when we haven't even announced the winner of the 2009 Let's Go Flying Cirrus SR22? Just as we're going in a new direction by giving away an LSA, we're also revamping our sweepstakes. The eligibility period will close September 30, 2010—not December 31. In other words, you are automatically entered to win the 2010 Fun to Fly Remos GX as long as your AOPA membership is current as of September 30, 2010. You'll find complete rules on AOPA Online (www.aopa.org/sweeps/2010). AOPA President Craig Fuller will announce the winner of the 2010 Fun to Fly Sweepstakes at next year's AOPA Summit in Long Beach, California.

In the meantime, Senior Editor Alton Marsh and I can't wait to get to know your Fun to Fly Remos GX. The toughest part of this assignment will be watching Craig Fuller hand over the keys next November.

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E-mail the author at jill.tallman@aopa.org.

groundspeeds in excess of 220 knots. Over West Virginia, the tailwind reached a peak of 72 knots and groundspeeds in the long descent topped 250 knots.

Three hours after takeoff, the Let's Go Flying SR22 touched down at its home base in Maryland with the tanks still more than half full of avgas. The 620-nm trip was yet another indica-



tion of the tremendous utility this GA marvel offers—and we hope the winner is rewarded with the same kinds of blue skies and tailwinds we've enjoyed during an amazing year with this remarkable airplane.

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E-mail the author at dave.hirschman@aopa.org.