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Philanthropist J. Lloyd Huck (left)
hands over the keys to his 2005
Cirrus SR22 to AOPA Pilot Editor in
Chief Tom Haines.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS ROSE



2009 SWEEPSTAKES

LAUNCH OF AN ALL-NEW SWEEPSTAKES

The gift of flight

As pilots we understand the complex tapestry of emotions associated with guiding an airplane through the skies and safely back to a gentle landing—the romance, challenge, and utility of aviation. Over the past 15 years we've touched on them all with our annual sweepstakes project airplanes. Who doesn't understand the romance of skimming over the countryside on a warm summer evening in an open cockpit biplane, such as the pristinely restored 1940 Waco UPF-7 we gave away as part of our celebration of the 100th anniversary of



How one pilot's legacy can impact aviation for generations to come

BY THOMAS B. HAINES

flight in 2003? There's a challenge to flying such an airplane, too. Utility—well, not so much.

Romance snuck up on us—as romance tends to do—when in 1998 we began touring around in the perky 1958 Piper Tri-Pacer that became our Timeless Tri-Pacer. There's not a lot of glam in the ungainly little airplane, but it sparked a passion among many pilots who had their first flight in such an airplane. Oh, the nostalgic stories we heard from misty-eyed members who came over just to lay their hands on it.

We went for the bling with our 2001 project, a V-tail Bonanza with an all-glass cockpit, the first of its kind. But get beyond the bright lights and it was an airplane all about the romance of the legendary V-tail traveler and the utility afforded by a TKS anti-ice system and a turbonormalizer that could propel the speedy Bonanza well into the flight levels.

Some projects took the purely utilitarian theme to the max, such as 1999's Aero SUV project—an off-road theme pulled off with a rebuilt Cessna 206 com-

plete with sleeping platform and custom canopy for camping. You're not going fast, but oh, the fun along the way.

We love to talk about these joys among ourselves, hanging out by the hangar and retelling the tales of our GA accomplishments. Fun times, but not a great way to let others know about the wonders of GA flying—an especially important message at a time when the pilot population is dwindling and our avocation is under constant threat of onerous regulation and taxation. Can we change that? Maybe we can, at least by a little bit. And thus was born the theme of our 2009 sweepstakes project—Let's Go Flying!

What if we went beyond the usual pews of aviation out into the masses and let them know just how much fun it is to fly a GA airplane? What if we told the world about the utility you can get from a high-performance single-engine airplane? What if we could appeal to the computer generation with a gee-whiz airplane that looks cool and modern and that through big windows feeds our passion for seeing the world from a per-

spective possible only one way—from the left seat?

To this end, AOPA has launched the Let's Go Flying project. Through the Web site www.letsstoflying.com and other means of outreach, AOPA hopes to let those with an interest in flight know what general aviation is all about. The site doesn't try to sell anything other than the idea that general aviation is something that you should try. There's even a free DVD about what it's like to experience general aviation.

The 2009 sweepstakes theme will also support this effort and remind pilots everywhere about the wonders of GA. And we have the perfect airplane in which to do it: a 2005 Cirrus SR22. The SR22 is a terrific example of a modern GA airplane that's a joy to fly and that provides the sort of utility that will excite pilots and nonpilots alike. Throughout the year we will display the airplane and the Let's Go Flying theme not just at the usual large aviation events attended by pilots, but also at events attended by nonpilots, such as major airshows and golf, boat, car, and outdoor shows.

J. Lloyd Huck's 2005 Cirrus SR22 GTS comes fully loaded. The donated airplane will be making the rounds to aviation events this year before being awarded to a winner in AOPA's Let's Go Flying Sweepstakes in early 2010.



A lucky AOPA sweepstakes winner will be flying behind the Avidyne Entegra glass cockpit, S-Tec autopilot, and Garmin navigators. Leather seats, TKS anti-icing system, and a host of other options round out the capable airplane.



We'll host airport open houses in different regions to bring in local pilots and prospective pilots and make sure the airplane is seen at even smaller regional aviation events, such as pancake breakfasts, where pilots will be encouraged to bring nonpilot friends.

When the year is up, some lucky pilot will get to call this incredible airplane his or her own as we award it in our annual membership sweepstakes in early 2010.

Oh, what a ride

It's fitting that N130LH should be deployed on such an important mission because it has spent its short life bringing so much joy and utility to its owner, J. Lloyd Huck. Philanthropist Huck donated the \$315,000 airplane to The AOPA Foundation in the hopes that it could be used for the good of general aviation, something that has been a part of his life for 60 years. The World War II pilot turned 86 last summer and although he's still in good health, he felt it was time to slow down to a lighter airplane and maybe even dust off his commercial glider rating, unused in decades.

Huck was a senior at Penn State University when he quit school to join the Army Air Corps in 1943. He learned to fly in AT-6s in anticipation of being

a fighter pilot, but the AAC had other ideas. After instructing in AT-6s he was sent to bomber school and trained in B-17s and B-29s as the war in Europe wound down. After the war he stayed in the reserves, flying out of New Jersey and later Omaha. His commission expired just as the Korean peninsula was heating up. "I felt one war was enough," he said and he moved full time into civilian life.

With a PSU degree in chemistry, he spent a couple of years doing research for a pharmaceutical company before moving into sales. It was there that he discovered how useful a general aviation airplane can be. He rented airplanes for a while and belonged to a series of flying clubs. In the late 1960s he bought a 1963 Mooney for personal and business use. That was followed by a second Mooney and eventually a Piper Twin Comanche. Later he became a partner in a Piper Aztec and a Glasair.

Huck retired in 1986 as chairman of the giant pharmaceutical company Merck & Co. He later was involved in a start-up pharmaceutical company that eventually merged with a larger company, allowing him to fully retire and turn more of his time to flying. With that he owned a Piper Super Cub for a few years before buying one of the earliest Cirrus SR20s.

The SR20 served him well, but he was looking for a little more performance and purchased the SR22 new in 2005. "Overall, I really like the Cirrus," he said last September as he flew the airplane to Frederick Municipal Airport to hand the keys over to AOPA. "It's been a great airplane for me to fly and I particularly like the SR22 because of the performance."

In recent years, he and his wife have used the airplane to fly on many trips throughout the Northeast, reasonable stretches from their home in State College, Pennsylvania. But they've pushed

the airplane to farther destinations too with trips to Texas and to Florida, to see his beloved Nittany Lions compete in bowl games. The couple frequently used the airplane to get to their second home in Hilton Head, South Carolina.

As we walk around the pristine airplane, he proudly notes the airplane's ability to fly as fast as 180 knots true airspeed. At rich of peak exhaust gas temperature it burns about 18 gallons per hour. Lean of peak, the fuel flow drops to about 13.5 gph. The SR22 has most all the options available in 2005, including a TKS anti-ice system, and Avidyne's

CMax display of electronic approach plates on the multifunction display.

At age 82 Huck made the transition from decades of flying conventional instruments to the SR22 with its Avidyne Entegra glass cockpit. "It takes a while if you haven't had any experience with it," he observed. "There's so much information that you have to learn how to process it when you see it. The thing I like about it is when you are coming in on an instrument approach you know exactly where you are." As for the Cirrus's unique sidestick control, it's not an issue. "If you've been flying long enough it doesn't make any difference what's in your hand. You know where you want to put the airplane and you just maneuver it as you need to. I like the sidestick myself."

"PIC came to me for my instrument training back in '92. You may remember seeing me in their advertisements."

— Brad Wolansky

Fast forward 15 years, 700 flight hours, and three years since I sold my Skylane. I haven't done much flying. Now I'm ready to re-engage. My new-to-me fully restored



fullest potential for IFR flight. Yes, you can use a pc-based simulator training program; yes, you can study the manual. But quality time with someone on the ground and in

1963 Cessna 205 is about to be delivered to my home base in Vermont. N8433Z is loaded with new avionics including a Garmin 430 GPS and an MX20 multi-function display. No clue how to use them. Add to that some significant rust from disuse of my IFR skills and it's time to get a refresher.

Agenda was no less "intense" than the original: a) IFR refresher and checkout, b) Introduction to IFR GPS and moving map equipment, c) New aircraft checkout, and d) Biennial flight review. All of that – including a comprehensive ground school review – inside of three days. Intense.

Frank Loeffler was every bit the experienced, system-savvy teacher that Jim was. These guys aren't just passing the time – they have a passion that comes through in their approach, knowledge and experience.

In addition to being a great IFR instructor Frank knew the 430 inside and out. It's a sophisticated piece of equipment that is only partially used by most people. Frank's goal was to make sure I knew how to use it to its

the air gave me "actual" that beats the other methods hands down.

Three days, many approaches, and multi-sign-offs later, we accomplished our mission. I felt safe, ready to explore once again, and was impressed with the amount of progress I made in such a short time. A week later, I packed my wife, two girls, our black Lab (plus camping gear) into the Stationaire, filed for PKB, West Virginia, and we were off for a family reunion. All went well and I was safe and in the system in record time thanks to a great update with PIC.

Brad Wolansky, AOPA #7782429, is Vice President of E-commerce at The Orvis Company.

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"It's been a great airplane for me to fly and I particularly like the SR22 because of its performance."

In August of this year, Huck will celebrate 50 years as an AOPA member. How fitting that in such an anniversary year, N130LH will be used to educate other pilots and nonpilots about the wonder and utility of general aviation flying. For that, we are grateful for his gift to AOPA and the work it will allow us to do. While only one pilot will win the airplane, all of us who revere flying will benefit from the gift.

Look for regular updates in *AOPA Pilot*, on AOPA Online and its blogs, and on the Let's Go Flying Web site about the airplane's trips around the country and the interesting pilots we meet along the way.

AOPA

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INTERACTIVE ►

AOPA PILOT ONLINE



Meet J. Lloyd Huck and hear him talk about the Let's Go Flying Cirrus, his background, and see him present the keys to the SR22 to AOPA in this online video.
www.aopa.org/pilot/sweeps2009