

President's Report

by Will Fox



The monsoon season is in full force this year and it is really nice to get the moisture after the terrible wildfire season we have had. The mountains in Northern New Mexico have really greened up and are beautiful to fly over in the early morning hours. Come late morning and afternoon though the story changes as thunderstorms began to announce themselves with thunder, lightning, and downpours. That is why we decided to cancel the fly out to the Reserve airport and replace it with an update on the Electric Dragonfly Project.

The update, by yours truly, will be a quick look at the upcoming STEM activities we have planned for this year, followed by a technical talk on the aerodynamics of the Dragonfly and the propulsion systems being considered. The meeting will be held in the Los Alamos airport terminal building this Saturday August 20, 2022 with refreshments at 9:30am and the meeting starting at 10:00am. If you want to see what is going on with the Project and learn a little about aerodynamics and electric propulsion, come join us. After the presentation Dan's hangar will be open if you want to get a closer look at N107MB, the Dragonfly that Chris Trapp donated to the Chapter!



This past month, a lot of effort went into making room in the hangar and moving 7MB up to Los Alamos. First, we had to get the other two Dragonfly airframes out of the way, so up into the rafters they went. That gave us us enough room to assemble 7MB and squeeze it in as well. The hanger is starting look like a Dragonfly roost:-).

The move from Santa Fe to Los Alamos was honchoed by Dan Holden and began on a Monday when he and David Roe towed the airplane from its tiedown on the south ramp over to John Elling's humongous hanger over on the north side of the airport. A big thanks goes to John for letting us use his hanger for a few days so we could disassemble the airplane and load it on a trailer without having to worry about the weather. On Tuesday, Dan, David, and I began taking the plane apart in earnest and documenting the disassembly and any issues we ran across in the process. We saw some things that will need to be addressed to make the plane airworthy again. Water had been leaking into the cabin and fuselage for a few years and had done some damage as a result of the freeze and thaw cycles that winter in New Mexico brings. We also saw some corrosion on fittings and hardware used in the control system. We needed to hacksaw one control tube assembly apart because the coupling on it was so corroded that we couldn't disassemble it. That will be an easy fix though, since it is a fairly simple part to fabricate. We won't know the state of the engine until we borescope it. The plan right now is to check it out and then get it running again before we sell it to help fund the project. We also saw some water damage to the prop that resulted in some delamination so it is not airworthy anymore. A constant speed prop will replace it anyway because electric motors maintain their horsepower with altitude and are more efficient.

Most of the moving and loading happened on Wednesday and Thursday. We had plenty of help thanks to Skip, Walt, and David Young who joined the crew for the move. Thanks also to John George who loaned us his trailer to haul the plane. It took two days and two trips to move the plane up to Los Alamos. We had one casualty in the process when the tape holding the canopy closed gave up the ghost and the canopy tried to depart the plane and take flight all by itself. By the time we got stopped it was pretty well trashed. Never fear though we have a spare from one of the other Dragonfly's that looks like it just might work fine. The rest of the move went like clockwork thanks to Dan's planning and the dedicated team that helped make it happen. We finally got the bird back on its gear and in the hangar on Thursday afternoon. All in all it was a pretty successful move and we now have the plane in Los Alamos where it will become the Electric Dragonfly. That sure feels good :-).