

# \_\_EAA Chapter 327 Newsletter\_\_

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**This listing of Chapter officers is obviously not complete. The balance of officers and directors will be added by next month's newsletter. In the mean time, please feel free to contact any of the above with your questions or suggestions.**

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, January 17, 2008, at the U.D. Flight Center Building on the Dubuque Airport. This is the traditional observance of Nick's Great Chili Feed, the annual gastronomical assault signaling the beginning of a new year of Chapter 327 activities. There's no charge.

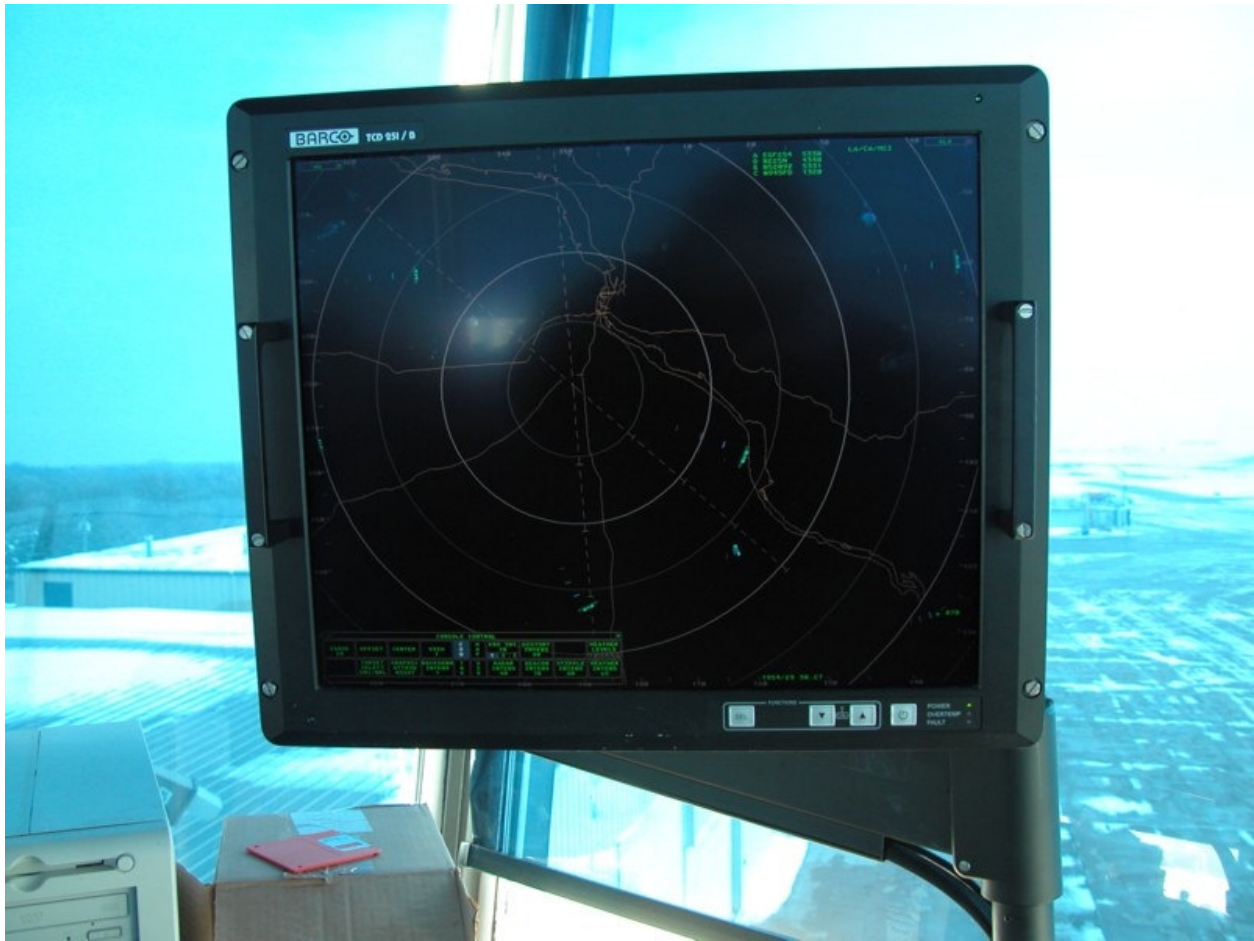
**What to Expect:** The new officers met with the out-going officers and discussed the status of the chapter's ongoing initiatives and obligations. A number of topics were discussed and some issues will be on the agenda for approval by the general membership at Thursday's meeting.

You'll note the newsletter has a different look. As in the past, the newsletters were sent in .pdf format and that will continue. That means that you need to inform the [Treasurer](#), Dennis Schares, of any changes in your e-mail address in addition to keeping your other contact information current.

**2008 Chapter Dues:** We're in the process of solidifying the chapter membership roster so if you have not paid your dues but intend to do so, please e-mail or otherwise contact Dennis Schares so we know you intend to continue your membership in the Chapter. Most of you know EAA National dues are billed separately. There is an incentive among the new officers to ensure all members have ample opportunity to get \$15.00 worth of benefit back from their annual dues. If you can't make the meeting, please mail your dues to Dennis Schares, 8912 Joyce Court, Dubuque, IA, 52003.

**The 2007 Christmas Party:** Dave Kramer took several pictures during the Christmas party. If you're interested, they're on the website, <http://www.eaa327.org/> and click the caption "2007 Christmas Party" along the left border of the home page.

**Hyperlinks.** Most of you already know this, but if you left click on any blue text here or on a web page, you'll automatically connect to the website or start an e-mail to the person referenced.



*The picture shows the recently installed radar display in the Dubuque tower. The screen is displaying the five and ten mile rings centered on the airport along with significant topographic features including the Mississippi river, major highways and bridges, the extended runway centerlines, and the East Dubuque antenna farm. Green text information along the lower border of the screen pertains to air traffic operating in the area.*

**What's New in the Tower:** Radar, in a manner of speaking. KDBQ has been and remains Class D airspace. Tower responsibility in Class D airspace can be thought of as keeping aircraft separated from each other on the ground, not in the air. In Class D, you'll never receive some of the ATC instructions issued by Class C or Class B controllers, such as "Turn left to heading 030°, maintain 3000". Why? Because a Class D facility does not have radar capability to maintain separation. They do not have an antenna or radar equipment on or near the field.

So, what is a radar display doing in Dubuque's Class D tower? It's a tool to assist us pilots so we avoid situations such as the one that led to the fatal mid-air collision a few years ago involving an aircraft carrying Chicago radio host Bob Collins, his passenger, and a student pilot in a separate airplane. It's not the controller's duty, remember, it's still Class D airspace, so

We've all seen countless movies showing sweep radar displays; "Sir, boogies closing, bearing 230°! We gotta send up Maverick!" Today the sweep is gone from center radar, replaced by a computer generated composite image consisting of information from different radar sites having coverage of the same area. A computer takes returns from the sites, evaluates the information, and then develops a display image from the best quality inputs available. This process results in

a refreshed image every second or so for the entire ATC Center coverage area. This does not apply to Class C or B facilities that have their own on-field approach radars.

The Dubuque tower controller can now view a portion of Chicago Center's radar composite image for the Dubuque airport vicinity. Instead of being a composite from several sites, however, the display image for the Dubuque airport originates from only one radar site near the far western edge of Chicago Center's coverage area. Because only one site is involved in generating the image and because radar technology is limited to line-of-sight coverage, the image available to Dubuque controllers has some limitations. Specifically, if you're approaching Dubuque from the northwest at pattern altitude, the controller will likely see the primary target return and secondary transponder return from your aircraft. However, if you're scud running in from the southeast at or below pattern altitude, the controller very likely will not see your plane. In short, keep in mind the antenna is not on the field and due to the source radar location from which the Dubuque tower receives its images, coverage is better to the northwest and compromised to the southeast. Approaching Dubuque at an altitude above pattern altitude from any direction increases your likelihood of being seen on the radar.

What does that mean to you and me as pilots? We might get a little more help from the people working the tower. We're still flying VFR in the same "see-and-be-seen" Class D environment we were operating in previously. If you were told a minute ago to look for traffic and you're starting to squirm because you still don't have that other plane in sight, you may get a helpful hint from the controller where to look for that other plane. In any Class D airspace, it is not the controller's responsibility to keep us separated from each other in the air. That goes for Dubuque today just as it did before the tower had the radar display. Please, don't ask for vectors; they couldn't give them to us before and they can't give them to us now. And, while they can't issue you a squawk code for enroute operations, they can issue a squawk code for operations limited to the Dubuque area, for example if you're doing practice IFR approaches.

I asked Gary O'Neill what we, as pilots, could do to make the controller's life easier and also take advantage of the new radar capability. His answer? "Listen better to the complete ATIS and keep your Mode C transponder calibration up to date."

**December Meeting Minutes:** No business affecting chapter policy or major issues transpired at the December meeting. No minutes were reported. Out-going president Bill Fitch recapped a number of accomplishments during his past two years in office, including operating concessions and parking during the NATA events, bringing the treasury back into positive territory, solidifying and refining the Young Eagles program, and several other endeavors. Nick Hirsch recited a litany of aviation-related one-liners to the pleasure and enjoyment of all present.

**Participation Opportunities:** The Chapter is entertaining the idea of possibly having a volunteer or two solicit door prizes from local businesses (oil changes, restaurant gift certificates, or similar products) that could be given away at regular meetings. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

**Plant Tour, Autolite / Slick Magneto Facility, Rockford.** Preliminary planning is underway to have a limited number of interested Chapter 327 member tour the Autolite facility in Rockford, IL. No definite date has been set and no transportation arrangements have been made. If you think you might be interested in joining the group, the plant does require a security screening so you will need to add your name to a tentative sign-up list. More details at the meeting.