

Texas Texas Sport



I have always wanted to build a plane. Even when I was building flying models as a boy, the thought of one day building a real plane was in the back of my mind. However, school, and later a career and raising a family, came first.

With my kids grown and living their own lives, the dream came back. I mentioned to my family in passing that I was thinking about building a plane next year. Their response surprised me: My wife said, "Go for it," and my boys said, "Why wait till next year?"

A Cub was a natural choice. I had learned to fly in a Cub and had a lot of fun flying them on wheels and skis before I went into the Air Force. The Texas Sport KwikBuild program was perfect for me. I was unwilling to sacrifice family time for the many months, or even years, required to build the average kit. A few weeks at a time I could handle, especially when I was able to schedule building around family plans. Working with the KwikBuild program at the American Legend Aircraft Company factory in Sulphur Springs, Texas, was one of the best decisions of my life and without a doubt the best way for me to build a plane.

Being able to fully concentrate on the project was invaluable. No constant interruptions, no calls, and none of the inevitable distractions that seem to occur when you start something. Having expert help available saves an amazing amount of time. They know all of the mistakes you can make from years of personal experience.

Building the airplane also was a wonderful opportunity to bond with my two sons. We had worked on cars together as they were growing up, but extended time together became rare after they left home. The days we spent together provided me with a lifetime of cherished memories. They came from both ends of the country to help me build a plane. I am so proud of them. While neither one is a pilot, both have started to work on their sport pilot certificate as a result of our experience. In fact, we are already planning to build another Cub next year.



It was fun being around the Texas Sport folks. They all love what they are doing and take tremendous pride in their work. Their enthusiasm is contagious. I can't say enough about the great support and encouragement we received from the entire staff. It was like friends helping friends learn new skills. There was a constant emphasis on safety and doing quality work.

Finally, there is no way to adequately describe the feeling of seeing all the pieces come together and start looking like a real plane. It was only exceeded by the sound of the first engine start and the joy felt on the first takeoff. Looking out the window at a plane you built as the sun starts to set is pure joy. Besides, how often do you get an opportunity to fly a brand new plane for the first time? Possibly never!

This was the experience of a lifetime. My feet still haven't touched the ground. The only downside was that my boys were not able to witness the first flight. We'll fix that next year!



Bob Declerck, EAA 860373; Austin, Texas
E-mail: rpdeclerck@yahoo.com