

CPA Member a Winner in Aspen PFD Giveaway

By Patricia Luebke

One Lucky CPA Member now says, “My glass cockpit has arrived!”

CPA Member Kurt Brend got the most out of his CPA dues this year. Without having to lift a finger, by merely being a CPA member, Kurt won an all-new Aspen Evolution PFD. Based in Newnan, Georgia, Kurt flies Bombardier Regional jets for Atlantic Southeast Airlines, and, that’s one of the things he loves about his new glass panel. Kurt says, “Now my 172 looks like the big aircraft I fly right now.”

Kurt owns a 1982 Cessna 172 with the original paint and the original interior. He’s owned this airplane for 15 years and uses it just for pleasure and personal travel. In addition to winning great membership awards like this, Kurt is a devotee of the CPA online forums. He says he sits back and reads everything that’s written, and says he tries to visit the forums daily.

But back to his prize. When Aspen Avionics and Cessna Pilots Association entered into the partnership to give one CPA member a PFD, the plan was to choose the name of a winner at CPA’s annual dinner at the outdoor terrace at the Hilton Garden Inn during EAA AirVenture. CPA Executive Director John Frank was chosen to pick the name of one member as the winner. You did not have to be present to win.

That’s a good thing, too, or else Kurt would have lost out. When CPA Executive Director John Frank pulled Kurt’s name and announced him as the winner, Kurt was not there. He had been with some friends that week at AirVenture; but, he says, “I left the day

of the drawing.” While at AirVenture, Kurt even visited the Aspen Avionics’ booth and joked with the Aspen sales rep that he wasn’t going to buy anything because he was sure he was going to win the PFD that night. Of course, he was joking, but says, “I read about it in the CPA Magazine, but I really didn’t expect to win.”

Later that day, John Frank had to place two calls to alert Kurt he was the winner. On the first call, Kurt, home again in Georgia, looked at his Caller ID, didn’t recognize the area code and didn’t answer it. The second call woke him out of a sleep, and so he automatically picked up the phone to hear he was the winner. “I was rather surprised,” adds Kurt.

In case you’ve been AWOL for the past few years and are unfamiliar with Aspen Avionics, the Evolution Flight Display system is an affordable glass cockpit solution for general aviation aircraft. The Evolution system is modular, expandable and upgradable; it’s easy to afford, easy to install and easy to own. With prices starting under \$6,000, the Evolution system breaks the price barrier and makes the safety benefits of the most advanced glass cockpit technologies finally accessible to the vast majority of the GA aircraft fleet.



Certification came in March 2008, and today more than 4,000 aircraft owners are flying with Aspen PFDs and MFDs installed. Flying magazine gave Aspen its Editors’ Choice Award in 2009, and Aero-News Network named it the Product of the Year. Recently, Rotor & Wing named Aspen Avionics

the Editor's Choice for 2010 for retrofit avionics for Aspen's rotary version. The aviation media has been uniformly positive about the Evolution Flight Display.

For a complete review of the Evolution Flight Display, look back to the January 2008 issue of Cessna Pilots Association magazine.

What about customers? Brad Hayden, Aspen's Vice President of Marketing, invites Cessna Pilots Association members to check out Aspen's Customer Gallery at its website (www.aspenavionics.com). Here, organized by make and model, Aspen customers display photos of their new glass panels and talk about their flying and share their installation stories and their experiences so far flying with Aspen.

"The fact that we have not changed or edited one single word our customers submit speaks to the reliability and ease of use of Aspen Evolution," says Brad. "Their enthusiastic comments about their flying experience are the best pilot-to-pilot testimonials we could have."

The Customer Gallery is a place where Aspen owners can show off their new panels, but more importantly, prospective customers can read about real-life installation experiences and see how pilots just like them have changed the way they fly. Kurt's story is there, too. Check it out under the 172s; then click on his N-number: N65197.

Kurt's panel upgrade was done in two steps. Back in January 2009, Flite Electronics of Addison, Texas, removed the original Cessna radios and replaced them with Garmin GNS430W, SL40 com, GTX330 Transponder, 696 GPS with AirGizmos mount, PMA8000B audio panel, and JPI EDM-700 engine and fuel monitor.



When he won the Aspen PFD, he had Precision Avionics in Griffin, George do the install. "It only took one week," Kurt recalls. "I brought my airplane in on a Friday and picked it up the following Saturday." During the install, Precision Avionics fabricated a custom metal panel and did away with the plastic overlays. "The panel looks great!" he says. Now that he has his "dream panel," Kurt says he is going to hold on to his airplane. He loves his panel and says, "There's a big wow factor when new people see it. This is the panel I've been dreaming of for a long time."

As for his flying, Kurt says, "With the amount of data displayed right in front of you, this makes flying safer and more enjoyable."

"We invite all CPA members to come talk to us at AirVenture and visit us in the North 40 Welcome Center. Aspen-equipped aircraft are on display and we'll be glad to walk you through our demo unit. The North 40 Welcome Center is a great place to relax and talk about your new panel."

For more information, visit www.aspenavionics.com.

