

## MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Richard Leroy Dant, born on September 16, 1964, in Indianapolis, Indiana, would remain there with his parents and big sister until his father's job would bring them to Rome, GA. Rick was a third-grader at the time, and the senior Leroy was already "into" airplanes, both on and off duty! Rick maintains he grew up "riding" in airplanes. An unfortunate divorce between Mom & Dad resulted in Rick's move with Mom (Phyllis) to the Augusta area, and he graduated from Richmond Academy. An ensuing



**Rick worked from just after sunrise to near sunset on the People Mover seats.**

marriage to a lovely young lady - Mary - would result in the production of "My Three Sons": Wes, who is now a nuclear technician at Plant Vogtle; Tanner, employed by Columbia County Sheriff's Department; and Blythe, 16-year-old winner of last year's Al Patton scholarship for aviation instruction. Subsequently, family responsibilities took precedence to airplanes and, although Rick logged 42 hours and actually soloed, he's yet to receive HIS license. For now it looks like son Blythe will beat him to the punch!

Rick's father, Leroy, was multi-engine (MEII) rated and somehow wound up in the local area also. He and his new bride Betty (also a pilot) would become members of EAA172. His death in December 2002 would not end the family line of aviation interests. A couple years ago, spurred on by step-mom Betty, Rick & Blythe became members of our chapter. Blythe continued to pursue his flying abilities, eventually soloing and now awaiting his next birthday to obtain his license.

Both Rick and Blythe have participated in work-day activities needed for the club. Rick's major support provided is the recent welding work he completed to replace seating on our People Movers trailer to be used in this month's Boshears Airshow. This was a



**Rick giving some welding tips to his son, Blythe.**

pretty major undertaking, and reports are that Rick spent many laborious, sweaty hours in completing the task. He was ably assisted by his son, Blythe. Rick used Al Patton's open hangar as a classroom so that Blythe could hone his skills as a welder. Many thanks to Rick for his welding expertise and willingness to work!

When Rick (and Blythe) aren't working, getting an education, or flying, they enjoy music! The family is actively involved in ministry at Kiokee Church. Rick handles the audio/sound there as well as for the St.

Bandit Band where Blythe is the drummer. Mary is also lead singer in the Appling Road Band. With all that talent, maybe we can one day get them to perform for us! They live in Harlem and hold joint ownership of Leroy Sr.'s 38-acre farm which, by the way, has a grass strip landing for that big bird in the air.

Thanks, Rick, for enabling John Magnan to get his People Movers trailer operable with Gerald-Ballard donated seating! Thanks, too, for your production, encouragement and support of Blythe in his aviation pursuits! You're a good DAD!