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Staff Writer

Simpkin's flying plans soar

at would you think of when asked to visualize a vehicle that could travel at 100 mph and still get 23 miles-per-gallon? A streamlined Jaguar with a super modified model airplane engine? Or maybe a bicycle with a charged nitro-methane burning Honda engine while some of the drug-oriented culture would envision a bicycle, a Colorado shaft and a bottle of nitrous oxide to provide any chance of fear or pain at the end of the aforementioned mine shaft.

Dave Simpkins, of the Adult Learning Center, decided that his answer to such a question would be a home built airplane, which just happens to have a little jewel in it that will soon have these capabilities. The plane is a metal and fiberglass Thorpe design, which has been entirely built by hand with the invaluable aid of a two foot high stack of plans. Power is provided by a surplus four cylinder "pancake" design engine that started life running somebody's electrical generator.

Simpkins rescued the old engine and re-engineered it into a higher form of life. Although the plane uses many parts from a Cessna, Simpkins apparently feels that the plane will be safe at any speed, as he only believes that "there are old fliers, there are bold fliers, but there are very old, bold fliers."

"I just don't go for that macho stuff anymore," said Simpkins. Although the little craft has a wingspan of over twenty feet and a net weight of 1200 lbs., it will still carry two people side-by-side with a semblance of comfort in its three seat wide cockpit; just right for getting to know a girl on that first date (although it might be inadvisable to try the running out gas routine).

By doing all the work himself, Simpkins has held costs to a minimum. The total investment will be about three thousand dollars with \$150 original cost on the engine, and \$700 for the radio. Almost all of his money has been spent on the parts of the plane that are in front of the pilot. If a crash is unavoidable, it would perhaps be advisable to hit tail first.

Having neither women or alcohol for motives, Simpkins feels that building an airplane is, for him, a justifiable hobby.

After all these years of work, all that is left is to finish work on the flaps and the engine cowl. As soon as the weather gets warm enough to make the fiberglass cowl, the plane will be completed.

Simpkins hopes to fly his plane by the end of this summer, but if he doesn't have it finished he really won't be upset. "It's my plane so I can take as long as I want to finish it," said Simpkins.

When the plane is completed he plans to go on a vacation that will take him to a "vacation" in Wisconsin where he intends to fly six times to the control tower, and spend three days kicking airplane tires. From there he will go to the Bahamas, via the Bermuda Triangle.



Dave Simpkins, Clackamas Community College GED instructor, shows off his home-built airplane which he began construction on in 1966. Simpkins plans to fly to various parts of the United States when the plane is finished.

Accident, tickets reported

Failure to yield the right-of-way caused a two-car smash-up near Orchard Center on Monday, said Stan Johnson, head of Campus Security. "A woman driving a Gremlin out of the Orchard parking lot failed to see a woman in a Volkswagon driving down Douglas Way, pulled out, and hit the Volkswagon in the right side."

There were no physical injuries. However, the Volkswagon's whole right side was smashed. The right front fender and headlight of the Gremlin were damaged.

There were 23 tickets given out in the

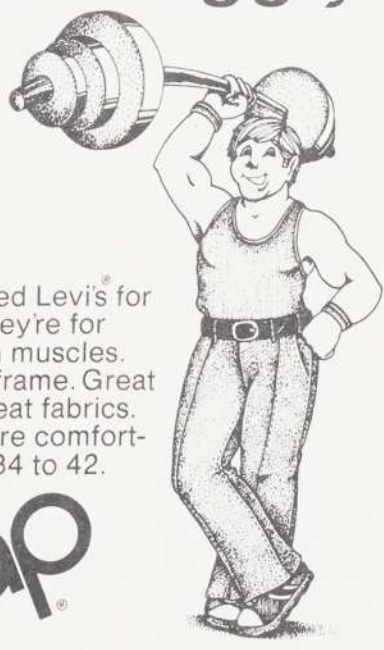
last week to traffic violators. They were mainly for parking in the handicapped area and in the visitors section of the Community Center parking lot.

"There's not a parking space problem," said Stan Johnson, "there's a distribution problem. Everyone wants to park in the Community Center lot."

There were two reports of womens' wallets being stolen from their purses last week. The money was taken and then the wallets were abandoned or turned into the lost and found.

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