

On the Cover: Beechcraft of the Month

# Realizing a Dream

1982 Bonanza V35B N6123X

By Paul M. Chetham



I am the proud owner of a 1982 Bonanza V35B, serial number D-10385, one of only 21 50th Anniversary Edition V35B models manufactured. Beechcraft discontinued manufacturing the V35B model after 1982. Only 17 V-tail Bonanzas rolled off of the Wichita assembly line after D-10385.



Flying and aviation are my passion. In high school I dreamed of becoming a pilot. My dream was not realized until September 23, 2000, three days after my oldest daughter's eleventh birthday. My flight training had to wait until after my extended formal education, post-graduate training, marriage, and children. When I began my flight training I was focused and committed. I earned my Private Pilot certificate and continued flight training to obtain an instrument rating and Commercial Pilot certificate.

In the Denver area there is no shortage of great flying days and great flying clubs. Access to phenomenal instructors and rental

aircraft is easy. Following my flight training I decided I would rather own a plane than rent one. In 2004 I bought a 2002 Cessna 172SP. It was a beautiful bird – the radios worked and it had an autopilot! In 2007 I wanted to move to a complex, high performance airplane. I considered many airplanes, ultimately deciding to narrow my search to a Bonanza. I found N6123X advertised for sale in Palo Alto, California (KPAO). It was a low-time airplane with 695 hours total time. The owner had bought it from Beech in 1982. He was transitioning out of flying and wanted to see his plane go to a “good home.” He had contracted Alberto

Rossi, owner of the Rossi Aircraft maintenance facility at KAPO, to broker the sale.

When I saw her I knew I wanted to buy her. She was an “unmolested” stock airplane without upgrades or modifications, a blank canvas for me to work with. I became the proud owner of a 1982 Bonanza V35B in April 2008, making the trip back to KAPO to pick up N6123X with my good friend, Tim McDonnell (CFII, ATP). Tim is a great teacher; he is a professional and sets high standards. He checked me out in the airplane and over the years has continued to challenge me and impart his pearls of aviation wisdom.

## EQUIPMENT LIST

IO-520BB

PS Engineering 8000 BT  
(five place ICS)

Avidyne DFC 90 autopilot

S-Tec Yaw damper

Avidyne IFD 540 GSP navigator

Garmin GNC 255A

Garmin GTX 327 transponder

Avidyne TAS 650

Aspen EFD-1000

Auracle CRM 2100 engine  
management system

GAMI tuned injectors

BDS engine baffles

Whelen LED beacon, landing, taxi,  
and ACL/position lights (Orion 650)

Dual yoke and brakes

Rosen visors

LP Aero windows/UV – Solar Gray

Sound EX insulation (S0-4 Deluxe kit)

Garmin 796 w/XM WX

Comant 120 G/S Nav-GS antenna

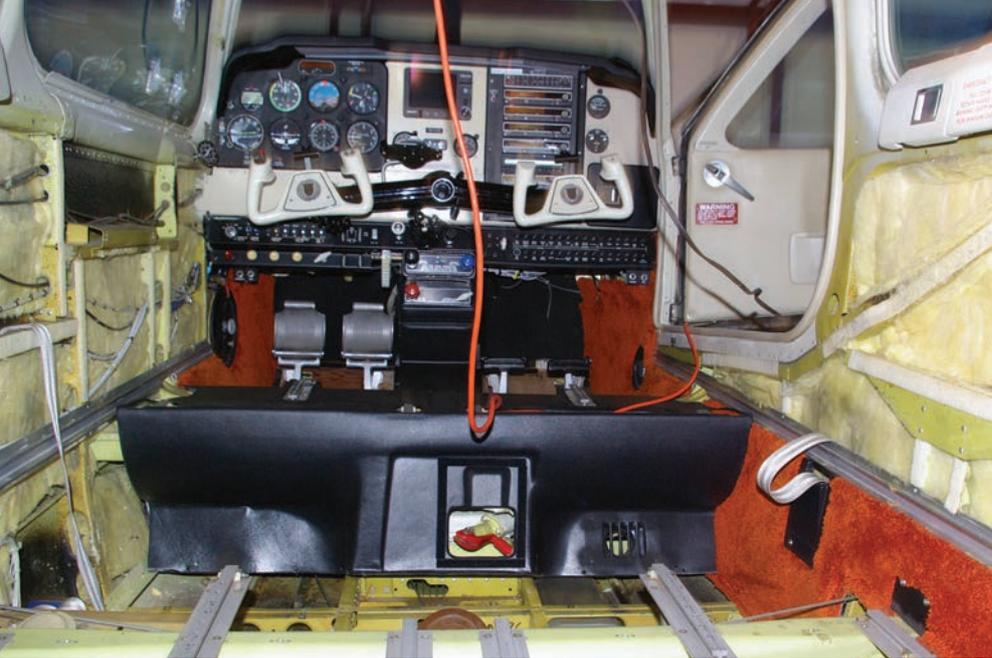
Concorde RG24 sealed battery

Radorax tray mounts

KN 63 DME with KD-572 display

ACK 406 MHz ELT





sales representative (Jared Butson) coordinated with his Aspen Avionics contacts to secure a “smoking” deal for an Aspen EFD-1000 and an Avidyne DFC-90 autopilot upgrade – I was creating a glass cockpit. Mark Colman (Depot Avionics, Alamosa, Colorado) with his CAD-driven panel cutter created a custom instrument panel and flush mounted the Aspen EFD-1000. It was a professional, clean installation. ADS-B is yet to come.

**M**y wife Michele and I have enjoyed numerous cross-country trips in N6123X and I also make the annual pilgrimage to Oshkosh (since 2009). In June 2014, I brought my bird home to Beech Field (KBEC) for the American Bonanza Society Homecoming. N6123X was one of several aircraft that received recognition by other Beechcraft owners and was awarded the "Owner's Envy Award" (ABS Magazine, August 2014) as the Beechcraft most pilots would want to own (besides their own). During the ABS Homecoming I also became an ABS Life Member.

Being part of the general aviation community has brought my family and me great pleasure and joy. Taking on an upgrade project was challenging, but in the process I learned a lot about myself and my airplane. I am proud to be a pilot and proud to live in a country where we enjoy the freedom to pursue our dreams and passions.



**N**6123X had been in a hangar since new and looked it. However, since it was a low-time “hangar queen” I knew there would be issues. I developed a plan to address immediate potential safety issues and a plan for a new interior, avionics modernization, and upgrades. The first order of business was to go through the engine. The fuel system was overhauled including new fuel lines, installation of GAMI injectors, and an engine management system – the Auracle CRM2100 by Ultra Electronics, Inc. Slowly but surely other accessories were replaced, overhauled, or repaired, including the governor, propeller, miscellaneous electrical components, and installation of D’Shannon baffles. I personally gutted the interior and two years later had a brand new interior; this is a great way to become familiar with every inch of your airplane, inside and out. All the old stuff came out including the fiberglass insulation. Soundex insulation was installed, new floor boards were fabricated, and a brand new interior was installed using Airtex installation kits (Fallsington, Pennsylvania). When the interior was out all new LP Aero windows were installed (a superb installation by Kirk Taylor of Pearce Aircraft, Peyton, Colorado).

Old radios were repaired then ultimately removed to make way for a modern GPS navigator and digital radios. A non-functioning Century I wing leveler was removed and an S-Tec 55X autopilot was installed (Jerry Stooksberry, Avionics Specialists). Next was a GNS 430W, Avidyne TAS 605 traffic system, and new PS Engineering 8000BT audio panel (Mark Colman, Depot Avionics, Alamosa, Colorado). The evolution of panel upgrades continued. I installed a Radiorax avionics rail system with the help of a friend (Mark Mercer). My IA inspected, signed it off, and submitted the FAA paperwork. I wanted to maintain the look of the original avionics overlay, and the avionics rail system made it easier to swap out the GNS430W for the new Avidyne IFD540 and Garmin GNC 255 nav/comm. My Avidyne

