



The CHAPTER 221 FLYER

Proudly Serving the Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 221 in Kalamazoo, Michigan

www.EAA221.org

July 2021

President's Message



Hello Everyone!

The long dry spell caused the grass runway to look a little rough early this spring but now it's looking better and in need of frequent mowing again. If it's not one thing it's another!

Thanks to our friends at WACO/Centennial Aircraft we had a great June meeting and enjoyed seeing all the new and exciting things that

are happening there. After what I hope will be a Happy 4th of July for all of us we will have our next meeting on July 7.

It will be at Newman's Field again, this time at the Hangar, Aeronca Aircraft restoration center, general services and fun hangout spot owned by Dale Edwards. Dales address is 173 S Skyview Dr, Kalamazoo, MI. 49009. Fly in or drive in starting at 6:00 pm.

Looking forward to seeing you all then. ✈

Bob Aardema, EAA Chapter 221 President

Next Event...

Dale Edwards' Hangar

Newman's Airport 4N0

Wednesday, July 7

Arrive after 6

Meeting at 7

173 Skyview Drive, Kalamazoo, MI 49009.



Young Eagles, Unique Aircraft and More.



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Map at www.EAA221.org

Ron Ryan

EAA 221 Newsletter Editor & Secretary

Unless otherwise specified, our chapter meetings are the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Airzoo Flight Center Classroom on the west side of the Kalamazoo-Battle Creek International Airport





An Ohio Misadventure

By Ron Ryan

Jeff Bishop and I happily flew Paul Dungey's Aeronca Champ, *Yuri*, to Middletown, Ohio for the National Aeronca Fly-In. Middletown is between Dayton and Cincinnati. With a warm summer breeze "blowing the stars around," we planned to camp on the field under wings in new tents that only weighed 5 lbs. each. Jeff and I agreed to limit our personal belongings to 11 lbs each, including our tents and sleeping bags. In the end we learned that if you ever want to make Mother Nature laugh, just tell her your plans.



We departed the grass strip in Climax with AC/DC's, *Thunderstruck* playing in our headsets oblivious to how real thunder was going to change our wonderful adventure.

The plan was to gas up in Auburn, Indiana, then gas up again in Darke County, Ohio and finally land in Middletown, Ohio at about 4 pm. Dinner was scheduled for 7 pm.

Now while *Thunderstruck* is a great song to start a road trip, it may not be the best to start an air camping trip in an Aeronca Champ through an airport called Darke County with rain in the forecast.

Absurdly equipped with all the latest aviation technology, including noise canceling headsets, music streaming from an iPhone connection to Spotify, ADSB-in, ForeFlight and a moving-map GPS, the Aeronca Champ will nevertheless humble your aviation soul.

After fueling up in Auburn, the wind really started to crank-up out of the south. With 35 miles to go to Darke County, I looked at our GPS ground speed—displayed in MPH—and we were doing 70 miles an hour. "Only 30 minutes to go!", I told Jeff. But that head wind was changing by the mile. With 30 miles to go we were zipping along at 60 mph. Then 50 mph with 25 miles to go. The leg turned into the longest 30 minutes of my life! It would have been fitting if Foghat's *Slow Ride* was playing on Spotify.

Apropos of its name, at the Darke County airport, dark clouds were forming in the west. We checked the radar images on our iPhones and recalled that it is always best not to first make a bad decision. *Yuri* needed to be tied



down, preferably with a roof over his head. The TV in the FBO was reporting tornados in that storm.

Jeff then found an empty hangar. Someone had not used this hangar for a while. There were cobwebs on the door latches. So the decision was made to slide *Yuri* in, wait out the storm in the FBO, and figure out what to do next. I

Darke County is 40 miles north of Middletown, OH. We were in touch with Dale Edwards at this point. Dale had driven his car to Middletown the day before and had camped under Zach Klomparen's wing. Dale offered to come and get us. The weather guy on the TV reported that the storms were going to stretch into the night. He was not wrong.



Upon arrival at Middletown, we enjoyed a beer, set up our tiny tents, and walked around the planes that had flown in from as far as the State of Washington. There were about 40 planes on the field. Pilots and families were gathered under a red and white big top tent in the distance.

The meal was delayed for a reason I do not know. We were supposed to eat at 7 pm, but we were served at about 8:50 pm. We were very hungry. Dale, Jeff and I were close to the end of the food line. The storm brewed in the west and the weather alarms on our phones started to go off. Not to be disturbed by the wailing storm sirens in the distance, Dale and I wanted some chicken. But the local girl serving us said she could no longer reach the tongs because she was having an anxiety attack. So Dale and I grabbed our own birds and then sat down. Upon swallowing the first bite of macaroni and cheese, the rain and wind came down hard. Someone declared it was a Tornado Warning. While trying to remember which was worse, a Warning or a Watch, Jeff then exclaimed, "There it goes!" and the big top tent came down on us.

Although its dark under a tent in a thunderstorm, it is also dry. We kept eating. We had to crawl out from underneath through the tables and chairs.

Naturally our super-light tents no longer weighed 5 lbs. each. Thankfully, none of the planes were damaged. While picking up the soaked tents a Champ owner wandered out of the darkness and told us that there were

rooms available at the local Hampton Inn. It was Dale's car to the rescue once again.

I wish I had a yarn to tell you about the trip home, but like the calm after the storm, the flight was uneventful, except for one story of extreme generosity that must be told. Zach Klomprens flew his Champ to Middletown with his son Reuben in the back seat. Zach's wife drove the family mini van to Ohio with the other two kids. They camped under the wing of their plane. When the storm hit they re-located to the house of one of the event organizer's. It was still raining morning after the storm. We heard that the big top tent was still down. Although it was Zach's wife's birthday, Zach graciously drove Jeff and I back to *Yuri* at Darke County. He told us of their plan to go to the Cincinnati Zoo. I hope they were able to go. Many thanks to Dale and to Zach and his family for driving Jeff and me around. ✦

