

09-Feb-2023

EAA Harbor Springs Chapter 1087 Update



A note from Pete:

Our new year is off to a flying start (pun intended) ! We have had unprecedented attendance at our January breakfast meetings and the IMC/VMC club meeting. It is exciting to see such high participation. Here's a couple pics of these events:



Our largest breakfast gathering Jan 14



VMC/IMC Jan 23

I personally haven't been flying much this winter with all our overcast weather lately. I hope many of you have been able to get up in the air. Perhaps we can keep our momentum going with a large number of events over the spring, summer and fall. Read on for more ideas – and please suggest any ideas you may have.

Upcoming Events

- Regular breakfast meeting Saturday, February 11th 8 am and every two weeks after that, Southwoods restaurant, Petoskey
- Our IMC/VMC Club Wednesday, February 15th at KMGH terminal

Potential Future Events – for discussion at our next breakfast meeting

- Young Eagles events:
 - June date TBD – KMGH Harbor Springs in combination with a Civil Air Patrol day and an Open House for the airport
 - July date TBD – N98 Boyne City
 - Aug/Sep date TBD – KPLN Pellston
 - Sep date TBD – Boy Scouts on Mackinac Island KMCD
- EAA Airventure July 25-31 – perhaps some of us can get together for a day trip
- Fly Out to Woolsey 5D5 – a picnic lunch as a follow up to our successful Bois Blanc trip last year
- Our annual summer picnic at Harbor Springs Terminal – date TBD
- Build an Adirondack chair – Pete’s woodshop - [EAA Chapter Adirondack Chair Program | EAA](#)
- Other ideas?

Member of the Month Feature- Gustavo (Gus) Serra

By Gus Serra



17-hour trip from SFO-DEL in B-787



Olivia, Victoria and Kathleen

I was born in Concepcion, Chile in 1961. Growing up during the early space-age, I was fascinated with the possibility of space flight. At age eight, I remember announcing to my parents that I wanted to become an astronaut. They were not very thrilled, and made no secret of their desire that I follow a “sensible career” becoming a doctor or a dentist (the family trade).

When I was nine, we immigrated to the United States and set up residence in Sunnyvale, California. I remember spending time in grade school dreaming up space-craft “builds” using stacked metal garbage cans as the body of the rocket that would launch me to space. I had several friends who shared my interest and we spent hours designing and talking about how we could achieve space flight... Today, I smile at the naivete of our goals, but those early years cemented my desire to break free of the earth’s surface.

After a nod to my Parent’s wishes, graduating with a degree in Biochemistry from UC Davis (Think Pre-Med), I proceeded to earn my Private Pilot License in 1983 prior to joining the Air Force. In 1984, I graduated from Pilot Training at Laughlin AFB, TX. I became a KC-135 co-pilot, aircraft-commander, and finally instructor-pilot.

We engaged in air-refueling missions all around the Globe. It was a fantastic opportunity for a “twenty-something” to manage a crew as we operated out of Alaska, Guam, England, Germany, Japan, Australia, North Africa and other unmentionable places and refueled US and Allied Military Aircraft. We also refueled experimental and developmental military aircraft at Edwards AFB as well as Presidential Support missions.

Refueling the 747 was quite interesting. That bulbous fuselage would push quite a bit of air, causing our Tanker to “surf” the bow-wave and requiring us to greatly reduce our thrust so as to not speed ahead. The 747 cockpit would ride along 20-30 feet below our tail as it pushed us along. As more, and more fuel was offloaded, we would get lighter and he would get heavier; making for a challenging, but finely choreographed dance requiring constant adjustments.

One of the early highlights of my military flying occurred as a result of the requirement for co-pilots to gain (PIC) command experience by flying a T-38 in addition to the KC-135. The T-38 is the Air Force supersonic trainer and it is an absolute blast to fly. The tiny, wafer-thin wings required the aircraft to fly over 300 KIAS below 10,000’ in order to maintain controllability. The aircraft has two afterburning GE-J85 engines, a ceiling of over 55,000’, max speed of about 750knots, a roll rate of 720 degrees per second, climb rate of 33,000 ft/min. Needless to say, flying this bird required the pilot to think fast to stay ahead of the airplane... a great trainer!!

I met my wife, Kathleen, at Castle AFB, CA. She was one of the early women Air Force Pilots. She has since retired and enjoys participating in more “earthly activities” but is entertaining the thought of returning to flying should I get an aircraft bigger than my C-150, which she refers to as a go-cart.



SFO-DEL, over North Pole

I left the Air Force in 1991. I was hired by United Airlines in 1992. I started my Commercial career as a 727 Flight engineer. Since then, I have flown almost every Boeing jet made. I am typed in B-707, B720, B747-4, B-757, B-767, B-777 and B-787. (Kathleen has the B-737 Type). United Airlines has allowed me to travel extensively and has given me a world-wide perspective that I would not have otherwise gained.

We moved to Northern Michigan the Summer of 2012 knowing that this would be our retirement place. Kathleen had deep ties to Michigan and I fell in love with the area at first sight. Summers in Good Hart and Winters at Birchwood..... The rest of the time in Arizona..... It just doesn’t get any better.



Summers in Good Hart



Winters at Birchwood

I see flying as an activity that adds great value to life. It trains the mind to plan and focus like few other activities. That training then spills over to other life endeavors. I am very supportive of programs that expose young people to flying. It is a great way to accelerate maturity, decision-making, self-confidence, discipline, judgement, organization, teamwork, etc. etc. I am very proud of our Chapter's involvement with Young Eagles as well as IMC/VMC club. I will support both in any way I can.



Best office (B-757) view in the World

I have met fantastic folks, and life-long friends through flying. I particularly enjoy the tight knit community of pilots in Northern Michigan. I was counseled a few years back to "Not retire FROM something, but retire TO something". I am happy to announce that I have found the "TO something" with all of You, and the many flying activities that are flourishing in the area.



Flying a DC-3 in HNL with a friend



Winston and I flying a C-172 in HNL

Soon after arriving in Harbor Springs, I was introduced to the Char-Em Aviation program at KPLN. Through that, I met pilots who were interested in starting a Civil Air Patrol Squadron at KMGH. At the same time, I was meeting pilots who were involved with EAA. I felt like the proverbial kid in a candy store.

It is fantastic to see such an active, and growing aviation community in the area. My wife is happy to know that it will keep me busy (and out of her hair) for years to come in retirement. My thanks to all of you pilots who through your friendship and flying activities are helping to maintain sanity in the Serra household, and saving me money on counseling.

IMC/VMC Club for our Chapter **– Rod Cortright (IMC/VMC Club Coordinator)**

Our IMC/VMC club meetings have been very successful. We have had 10-12 members attend each meeting. Each meeting has had one video scenario presented for VMC and IMC. The discussions that followed were very interesting. Seems like we never had consensus on a specific outcome but there were several possible directions one could take for each scenario.

The IMC/ VMC Club promotes visual and instrument flying, proficiency, and safety. We present two video scenarios at each meeting—one in VMC and the other in IMC. After each video, we discuss what you would do faced with a similar situation. The intent is to create a community of pilots willing to share information, provide recognition, foster communications, promote safety, and build proficiency in all aspects of flying.

We will be meeting on the third Wednesday of each month at the Harbor Springs Airport. Whether they are EAA members or not, all area pilots are welcome to attend.

2023 Chapter Dues

Please note that the 2023 dues will be collected in the Jan/Feb timeframe.

Please be prepared to give Rod your \$20 at the next available opportunity or send it to him at his home address: PO Box 435, Boyne City, MI 49712

Chapter 1087 Board Members:

- Peter Aiello, President
- Rod Cortright, Secretary/Treasurer and IMC/VMC Club Coordinator
- Bill Meyer, Young Eagles Coordinator