

Smoke Signals

The Official Newsletter of Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 175

February 2000

Vandenberg Airport Tampa

Pat Koetz Passes Away, Chapter 175 Loses a Close and Dear Friend

By Jerry Dean

Pat Koetz, an old and dear friend of this chapter passed away early Sunday morning, January 23, at her home from cancer. She was an early member of EAA Chapter 175 and had a great deal to do with the success of the chapter during the early part of the last decade.

Pat was instrumental in convincing HCAA and the chapter that we needed a hangar to call home. She almost single-handedly negotiated with the principles involved, and brought the key members of the chapter into the equation to make it happen. We had a beautiful hangar located at the end of what is now runway 23.

With Pat's guidance and counsel as president of the chapter, from early 1991 through 1993, the chapter grew to over a hundred members.

Pat also managed to win the Sandwiches for Volunteers program at Sun 'n Fun for Chapter 175. She served as the Chairman of that program for several years until her health began to fail and Pete Lansbery then began to carry the load.

In spite of Pat's poor health, she continued to serve as a delivery person with her little yellow VW bus to the volunteers at Sun 'n Fun through last year.

Pat had a way about her that exuded sunshine and blue skies wherever she went. She was upbeat and never failed to find the sunny side of any bad situation.

A wake was held at Vandenberg Airport in a hangar just the way Pat would have wanted it. There was a huge crowd attending the wake, including her entire family and the many friends from every corner of the state.

Pat Koetz will be sorely missed by everyone who knew her.



Pat Koetz, with her favorite hat, showing that huge glowing smile that everyone who knew her loved so much.

Fantasy of Flight Meeting a Great Success!

By Leslie Dupree

Fantasy of Flight is advertised as an "adventure for people of all ages; an experience like no other". On January 22, several Chapter 175 members decided to check it out, and see if adrenaline does indeed pump faster at the "world's premier aviation attraction".

We arrived approximately at 11:00 AM and met our tour guide, Ralph. The first area of our tour was the "History of Flight", which

**PLEASE NOTE!
The February Chapter Meeting will be held at hangar 100, Sunday, February 27th at 2:00 PM**

Hello Chapter 175 Members,

We really missed those who couldn't make it to the Fantasy of Flight meeting & tour. Everyone who did make it had a great time!

Kermit Week's "Fantasy of Flight" museum has an incredible 130 plus aircraft on display. Some of the nicest and rarest birds that can be found anywhere in the world. I fell in love with the F4U Corsair he has on display in the simulator room.

Speaking of simulators, most of us managed to "fly" the simulator at least two or three times in mock combat. The really neat part of that is that the main computer flies the Japanese aircraft while you and your buddies can actually fly together as a squadron.

Well, here we are another month closer to Sun 'n Fun and shortly after that, the Brandon Balloon Festival.

The Sun 'n Fun sandwich situation is a little different this year. They have a new kitchen that we will be working in this year. More on this when Pete gets the details for us.

Vandenberg will be hosting the Brandon Balloon festival this year and they have asked for our help and participation this April. This should be very good for us and will help bring us together with the other folks on the airport. Jerry has been working hard on this and is doing a great job.

You are going to see a lot of changes this year in the club. We have a lot of new ideas and with the help of the members, we will have a great new year.

Melissa Roe, who is the event coordinator for Gasparilla and will handle the Brandon Balloon Festival, and Marilyn Gauthier, HCAA Senior Operations and Maintenance Manager for General Aviation, will address our group at the February 27th meeting. We will be discussing the Balloon fest and Chapter 175's role in the affair. It's very exciting!

So, with all of the things that are happening, don't miss it! We hope to see you there.

Your president, Dan Holsapple



Dan Holsapple in front of his favorite aircraft at Fantasy of Flight, the F4U Corsair. Taken during the Chapter tour.

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Experimental Aircraft Association
Chapter 175
Vandenberg Airport, Florida

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Vice President
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took us back in time to Early Flight: the time machine of early aviation. We traveled from the Wright Brother's first flight, through World War I, and on to World War II aboard a B-17 "Flying Fortress". We were able to reenact a flight at "25,000 ft. over enemy territory while unloading 500-pound bombs amidst heavy anti-aircraft fire".

By this time, we were more than ready to experience "Fightertown" and the virtual reality simulators! Tour guide, Ralph, gave us a pre-flight briefing, including: "basic flying techniques, air combat techniques, low-level flying, take-offs and landings." And then; Somewhere in the Pacific, 1943. A Grumman Wildcat waiting on the deck of an aircraft carrier. The skies overhead crowded with enemy aircraft. . . Well, if you want to know the results of those missions, you have to talk to the "pilots". (Those who didn't crash and burn!)

Throughout the day, we were able to view Kermit Weeks ex-



From Top Left: Bill Johnston, Ken O'Kane, Eric Poole, Fred Watson, Second Row: Pam Johnston, David Mellor, Carmen O'Kane, Ted Storm, Dan Holsapple, Pete Lansbery, Woody Treon, Pam Hatley, Steele Olmstead, Joe Lee Olmstead. Not Pictured: Leslie Dupree, Jerry & Connie Dean

tensive private collection of vintage military and civilian planes. Some of these include, F4U Corsair, Ford Tri-Motor, B-24J Liberator, "Spirit of St. Louis", and Lockheed Vega. As Kermit says, "Every one of these aircraft shared in making aviation history."

Fantasy of Flight was definitely an experience we won't forget. And some of us may just have to go back again!

For those who are interested, eight aircraft simulators can be operational at the same time. Try it!

Treasury Report
Acct

1/31/00
Balance

Cash Flow Report 12/26/99 through 1/31/00
Category description

ASSETS

Cash and Bank Accounts	
CAP Evergreen Treasury	23,155.58
CD's	0.00
EAA Checking 98	0.00

Total Cash & Banking Accts. **23,155.58**

Investments	
CAP Mutual Funds	8,574.71

Total Investments **8,574.71**

Total Assets **31,730.29**

Liabilities	0.00
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Overall Total **31,730.29**

Inflows

Dues: Regular member	160.00	
Total Dues		160.00
Fundraising:		
Zephyrhills	100.00	
Total Fundraising		100.00
Advertising	100.00	
Hangar Rent	224.18	
Total Other Rev .		324.18
Interest		83.91

Outflows

Chapter Socials		73.00
Hangar rent		224.18
Newsletter—Jan	95.29	
Membership Exp.		
Insurance-Liability	100.00	
Total Outflows		<u>492.47</u>

Overall Total for Month **175.62**

A Surprise Phone Call, An Unforgettable Experience.

By Jerry Dean

The phone rang and on the other end was Lyle Flagg. He excitedly explained that if I could be at his house at 10:00 AM, I could get a free ride on the American Blimp Corporation's, "Monster.Com" which was located at Peter O'Knight Airport, and was being piloted by Don Wood's son, Steve Wood.

I literally jumped out of my skin at the opportunity to fly on a blimp, especially with Lyle and old friends, Lee Omernik, Ron Carpenter, Frank Halse, Bud Koetz, and Herb Johnson.

The experience was the most unusual that I personally have ever had in flight. But first, let me give you some statistics:

The blimp is a model A-150, it's 165 feet long, is 55 feet high, and 45 feet wide, and displaces 151,000 cubic feet. The gondola is 26 feet long, 5 feet wide and has 6 feet head room. The engines are IO-360-B1G6 Lycomings each swinging a shrouded five bladed, constant speed, reversible pitch propeller. The total empty weight is 7000 pounds, it carries 9 passengers max. plus one pilot.

What a huge beast it is.

The tiniest change in wind direction can move the aircraft



The "monster.com" waiting on seven excited passengers. *From Left:* Lee Omernik, Ron Carpenter, the author, Frank Halse, Bud Koetz, Lyle Flagg and Herb Johnson. (Notice that we are standing well away from the gondola while the picture was taken).

against any puny human effort to stop it, so everyone has to be prepared to quickly get out of it's way should it start to swing on the anchoring pylon.

After getting our briefing from Steve Wood, five of us very quickly boarded and found our seats.

There were six beefy guys holding the restraining lines, three on each side, when Steve gave it full throttle and we started moving over the grassy area of the field.

The angle of climb was breathtaking as we tilted upward at about a 30 degree angle and climbed to about 400 feet before leveling out slightly to achieve a more normal climb rate.

The feel was more like that of a large marine vessel than an airplane. It, well, it floated very slowly and when a turn was made the gondola would gently

swing to the outside of the turn. One could get sea sick rather than airsick at the motion.

We orbited over downtown Tampa several times. The view was spectacular because of the huge windows and the incredibly slow speed.

You had lots of time to find your bearings and locate different well known buildings, parking lots, and other landmark points in the awesome view below.

All too soon we began the decent into Peter O'Knight and returned at a steep angle that almost matched the angle at take off.

It was a once in a lifetime experience, if you ever get the chance to take a ride in a blimp, by all means do so. You'll never forget it, I promise you!

Notice to All members !!

EAA Chapter Leadership Workshop in Lakeland. Sat. March 11 at the Sun 'n Fun Grounds (FAA Building)

From 9:30 am - 5:00 pm

Topics to be Included:

- Chapter Fundraising
- Membership Recruitment
- Continuous Positive Renewal
- Creating a Mission, Vision, Goals and Objectives for your chapter
- IRS 501 © 3 Status
- Chapter leadership

We have reserved five spots in the above workshops scheduled for March 11 in Lakeland. The program is designed to strengthen the chapter's structure organizationally, and to reinforce the importance of the chapter members in a successful chapter.

If you are interested, please contact Jerry Dean and let him know to affirm our commitment to Oshkosh. We need to hear from you ASAP because the slots are filling up and we may not be able to increase the number of attendees if we don't move on it soon.

Aviation 2000 Held in Lakeland at Sun 'n Fun for Boy Scouts

Boy Scout Aviation 2000 was a big success with over 200 boys flown and most received their Aviation Merit badges.

EAA Chapter 175 had three pilots with their aircraft there to fly kids Saturday, January 29th.

There were approximately 350 adults and boys camped in the Sun 'n Fun campgrounds over the week-end.

The event was sponsored by the Orlando FSDO headed by Obie Young. The reports were very positive from the troop leaders who were involved. They anticipate many more Boy Scout Troops for the annual event next year.

John Moody Inducted in the EAA Hall of Fame.

John Moody received the recognition he has long deserved for being the first to foot launch an Ultralight off a flat surface in 1975.

John Moody is regarded as the "Father of the Modern Ultralight" says Dick Knapinski of EAA Oshkosh.

"I have a spot on aviation history. Maybe I can parlay that into something", was John's response.

John, an engineer with a quick wit and a love for flying completed the first Ultralight foot launch on March 15, 1975. He was the first to attach an en-

gine to an Ultralight.

John created a spectacular stunt at Oshkosh in 1976 which resulted in him being featured in **Popular Science** and **Popular Mechanics**. He has also written articles in **The Smithsonian** and **National Geographic**. He is currently building a vintage craft in his garage.

We would like to feature every chapter project in "Smoke Signal" during this year. Please call Jerry Dean, 813-653-3163 or e-mail at: jrdean601@aol.com I need your eyes. OK?

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**EAA Chapter 175 Board meeting February 22, 6:30 PM, conference
Room, Second floor, The new building at Vandenberg. Very Important!!**

The Kit Needs a Home!

Need a New Interesting and Challenging Project?

Volksplane Kit. Presently in the Chapter 175 hangar at Vandenberg Airport, Tampa, Florida. The kit is completed up to needing controls and fabric. It has a Volkswagon engine without the propeller. The engine is exactly as taken out of a car and would require modification to fit. Please call Jerry Dean at 653-3163 if interested.

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