



LAKE IN THE HILLS, ILLINOIS

EAA Chapter 790

Winds Aloft

Lake in the Hills, Illinois



790.eaachapter.org

Vol. 42, No. 1, January 2025

From Mike Monreal, Chapter 790 President

I went into the Navy in 1976 as an enlisted sailor, right from high school because of lack of money for college. In 1977, after bootcamp at NAS Great Lakes, I was assigned to [Aviation Boatswain's Mate](#) School in Lakehurst, NJ. I was a Catapult Specialist (ABE) on the USS Ranger (CV61), a "Green Shirt" in the "Top Gun" movie. Green Shirts hook up the planes to the catapult and run out of the way while they launch. One of the hangar deck officers had a plane in the port of San Diego and offered lessons to get a PPL. Ten of us took him up on it and 8 of us finished. So, we did the ground school at sea and flew his plane while in port.

After 3 years of active duty, I stayed in the Navy Reserves at NAS Glenview, flying as a Loadmaster and Crew Chief on the Navy C-9. I retired from the Navy after 22 years. After active service and while in the Reserves, I used the G.I. Bill to go to Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo for the flight program, where I also earned my A&P certificate in 1984.

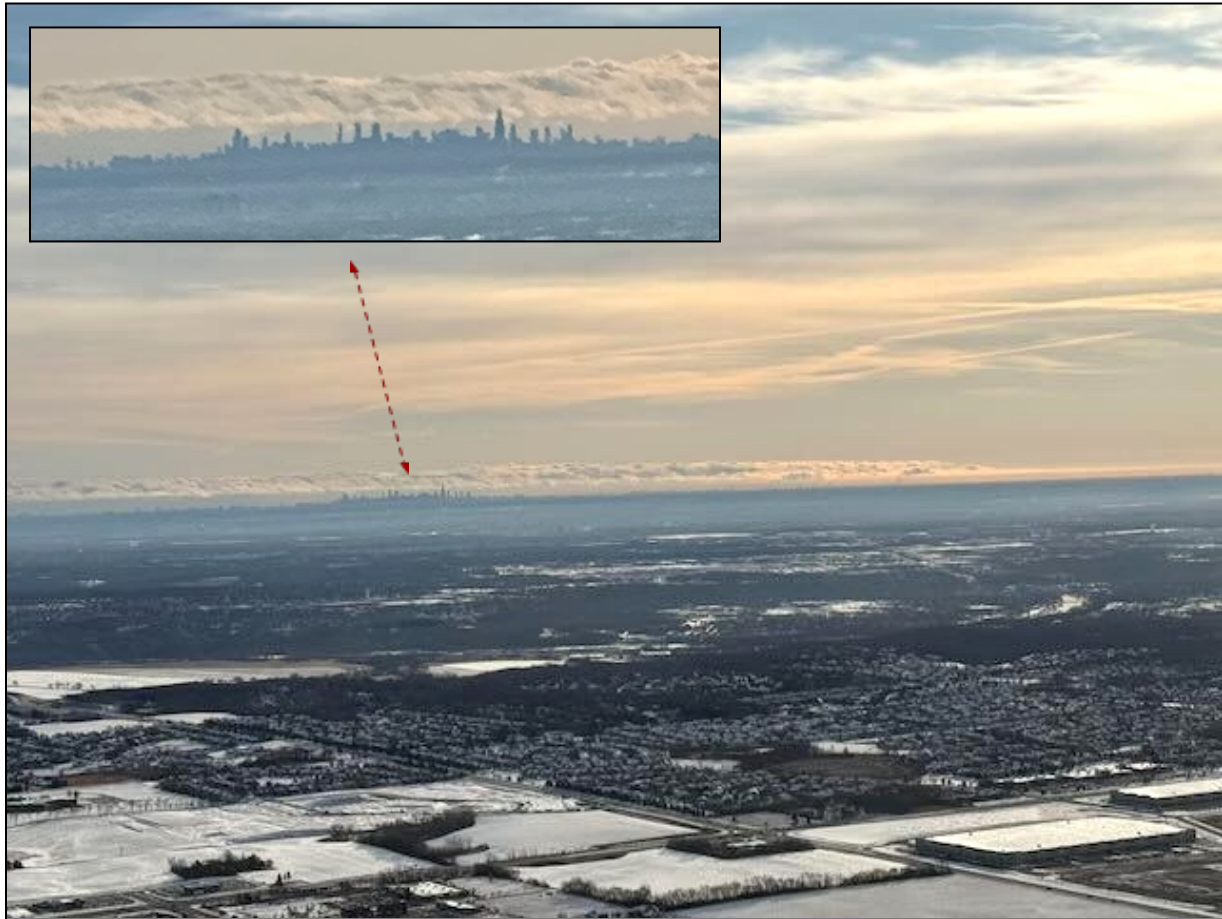
I became a CFI, and then flew charter, then got hired at American Eagle and Reno Air. Finally, I applied and was hired at United Airlines. After flying commercially for 34 years, I retired from United as a 787 captain in September, 2023.

All of my family members have their PPLs. My wife, Kim, also has her commercial certificate; multi-engine, instrument, and single-engine seaplane (SES) ratings; and tailwheel endorsement. We have two airplanes at 3CK – a J3 Cub and a Cherokee Six.

The other officers and I want to bring more activities to the chapter for the young and old. I would like to try and bring the Young Eagles program back to 3CK and maybe host a couple of pancake breakfasts at the hangar that the Cherokee resides in.

You have elected a talented and enthusiastic leadership team. We have many engaged volunteers who help us do more (and have more fun). Still, we need an additional Director, someone to lead our Youth in Aviation program, and a CFI to lead the IMC/VMC Club program. Could any of these be you? If "maybe", please contact me or attend the Board meeting on February 4.

December 21 Fly-Out Recap: Charlie's Restaurant – *Mike Monreal*



A beautiful morning flight to Clow (1C5) with downtown Chicago clearly visible 35 nm away.



We traveled by plane, helicopter, and car to sample the food at Charlie's Restaurant.

January 18 Fly-Out to Janesville (KJVL)



We'll meet at **Bessie's Diner** (bessiesdiner.com) in the **Janesville airport terminal on Saturday, January 18 at 09:30**. Watch for email from Paul Ranieri for details, and reply-all to say you are going, and to offer or request a ride.

January 25 Chicago Aviation Expo/Safety Seminar

This annual free event, presented by the [Chicago Area Chapter 99s](#), will be **Saturday, January 25, 08:00-16:00, at the Renaissance Chicago-Glenview Hotel, 1400 Milwaukee Ave, Glenview**. There will be IFR and VFR safety seminars with WINGS credit, a flying companion class, and a vendor expo. [More...](#)

January 28 Chapter Meeting with Lou Zaragoza

Join us on **Tuesday, January 28 at the 3CK LITH Airport office at 18:45**. We'll welcome and hear from the new members of the Board. Our guest speaker will be 3CK airport manager Luis "Lou" Zaragoza. He will discuss airport development plans, the Village's Transportation Improvement Plan, the new AWOS system, aircraft parking expansion, and facility improvements. Come learn and give your feedback. See you there!



Lou Zaragoza is a graduate of Southern Illinois University - Carbondale, where he earned a Master of Public Administration degree. A dedicated entrepreneur, Lou is the owner of successful Airbnb properties in Florida, showcasing his expertise in real estate and small business management.

Lou is most proud of his service as a combat veteran, having bravely fought for his country with the 1st Infantry Division in places like Fallujah and Ramadi, Iraq (2003-2004). His experience reflects a deep commitment to duty, resilience, and leadership. Currently, Lou is pursuing his passion for aviation, flying out of Blue Skies at 3CK.

Lon Danek's family has offered aviation-related items to Chapter members. You just might find a treasure.

Come early for socializing. There will be a door prize for everyone!

February 4 Board Meeting

Board meetings are held every two months on the first Tuesday. The next meeting will be **Tuesday, February 4th at 18:30 via Zoom**. All members are welcome to attend. Look for email with details.

February 22 Chapter Banquet with Laura Savino

Our annual banquet will be at **18:00 on Saturday, February 22nd** at the [Cary Country Club](#). We will enjoy cash bar, buffet, Chapter awards, and hear stories from our special guest speaker, Captain Laura Savino. Laura will discuss the Tenerife disaster that occurred on March 27, 1977, when two Boeing 747 passenger jets collided on the runway at Tenerife North airport, Canary Islands. She is friends with one of the surviving pilots, and shares his amazing perspective of the events that led up to the tragedy. Watch for email with more details.



Laura was a pilot on the B777, B767, B757, B747, B737, A319 and A320 with United Airlines. She flew for Eastern and Pan Am regionals before that. On her way to becoming a commercial airline pilot, she worked as an instrument flight instructor, charter pilot, freight pilot, aerial sightseeing tour pilot, ferry pilot, and aircraft repossessor. Laura is also an award-winning author and Chairman for the Old Dominion chapter of the Ninety-Nines International Organization of Women Pilots. She is an active member of the International Society of Women Airline Pilots (ISA+21), Women in Aviation International (WAI), and EAA. Laura is a mentor and international motivational speaker, and has presented at AirVenture. Visit laurasavino747.com.

Chapter 790 Membership Renewal

We are able to keep the dues unchanged this year because of all of the support we receive from our volunteers and partners. Thank you! Renewal is \$25 at chapters.eaa.org/ea790/join-our-chapter. Use PayPal or a credit/debit card. If your PayPal account does not contain your name, please include it in the message box. You may use the Notes section to provide or update your personal information.

NOTAM: It's (always) a good time to recruit new members. The first year is only \$10, and you can be a pay pal by gifting a membership! Provide the new member's information in the Notes section. Please direct any questions to Paul Ranieri (p.ranieri comcast.net or 847-997-0135).

Meet the Chapter Officers

President Mike Monreal, after a Navy career, flew commercially for 34 years and retired from United Airlines as a 787 captain in September, 2023. His wife Kim, daughter Brittney, and son Andrew all have their pilot’s licenses. The Monreals have two airplanes at 3CK – a J3 Cub and a Cherokee Six.

Vice-President Sid Levin joined Chapter 790 in January, 2024. “I volunteered as an officer because I expect to gain benefit from my association with Chapter 790, and feel it would only be reasonable and fair to contribute in kind. I think one of the main needs of the Chapter is to bring in younger members, and that one of the ways to achieve that goal is to create an environment to help support people interested in aviation to gain aircraft building skills and to actually remove obstacles to them building their dream aircraft.” Sid recalls his aviation career and introduces his current projects later in this issue.

Treasurer Paul Ranieri was reelected and continues to handle financial matters. Paul also manages Chapter membership and coordinates fly-outs and Young Eagles events.

Secretary Gregg Dubin is very excited to be the new Secretary of our EAA chapter. “Ever since I was a young kid, I have had a strong enthusiasm for aviation. I remember riding my bike, as a child, to ORD and sitting by runway 22R watching the planes land. Fast forward many years, and I continued my interest in aviation by working at United Airlines, starting in reservations, and today, 27 years later, a flight dispatch instructor for United. While I currently do not have a pilot’s license, it is my aspiration one day to have a plane and fly. I am excited to work with our EAA chapter to help grow the future of aviation, recruit the next generation of aviators, and help support and expand the EAA.” Many of you know Gregg from his excellent presentation on airline dispatch in September (recap and link to the presentation are in the [October 2024 issue of Winds Aloft](#)).



Mike Monreal



Sid Levin



Paul Ranieri



Gregg Dubin

Getting to Know Sid – Sid Levin

I am a gearhead sort of guy. For example, I overhauled the engine on the family '49 Chevy when I was 13 years old. I spent my youth as an airport "bum" at the local airport in Colorado. While in high school, I landed a summer job building/repairing experimental (tube & transistor) medical equipment at a research lab in Denver.

In 1962 while at the U of Colorado studying physics, I started flying lessons in a Cessna 140 with the U of Colorado Buff Flying Club. Following Graduation, I joined the Navy and went to NAS Pensacola for Preflight Training. I then flew the T-34B, T-2A Buckeye, TF-9J & AF-9J Cougars, and on earning my wings, was assigned to fly the F-4 Phantom with VF-102 aboard USS America. Along the way, I picked up a 1939 Luscombe 8A. Long deployments to the Mediterranean and then to WestPac/Tonkin Gulf proved interesting.



T-2A Buckeye



Pre-flighting a TF-9J Cougar, 1966

Following my tour with VF-102, I took a 1 year break from the Navy and overhauled the Luscombe, bought a Schweizer 1-26C glider, and welded up a trailer for the glider. I then went back in the Navy and was assigned to NWEF Albuquerque as the F-4 project pilot. I met my wife, Madeline, in Albuquerque, and we ended up in Jacksonville FL where I was assigned to USS Saratoga CV-60 as Cats & Arresting Gear Division Officer where I flew the C-1A & T-28 occasionally. While I was at sea, Madeline earned her Private Pilot rating. I was then assigned to Training Squadron 24 in Beeville, Texas as an Instructor in the TA-4J Skyhawk.



Sid and the Luscombe 8A, 1969



Schweizer 1-2C, 1970



Catapult hookup crew



“Yankee Air Pirates” – Sid is 2nd from right

We soon realized we were going to need a bigger airplane, and we traded the Luscombe for an early Cessna 210. I did a cylinder replacement AD on the engine and landing gear rotator cylinders and saddles AD on the main landing gear at the Refugio, TX airport where we were able to hangar the 210. Following the Training Squadron tour, we then moved to Virginia Beach, VA where I was assigned to an electronic warfare squadron flying EF-4B/J and EA-4F aircraft. The squadron was relocated to Key West due to work on the runway at NAS Norfolk and the balance of that tour was in Key West.

I was then assigned to Lakehurst, NJ as the director of the [Aviation Boatswain’s Mate](#) School where I flew the C-1A primarily for the Parachute Rigger students to jump their parachutes that they had packed. During a trip to Atlanta to visit Madeline's parents, our Cessna 210 was rammed (while parked) by the airport security policeman and was beyond economic repair. The 210 was eventually replaced by a newer 210K model which we used until 1993 when I sold it to put children through college.

Following the Lakehurst tour, we moved the family back to our house in Virginia Beach, while I spent a year in Guantanamo Bay Cuba with the Fleet Training Group & sailing my Sunfish sailboat. My final Navy tour was with CINCLANTFLT staff for a year, after which we moved to Buffalo Grove, IL in 1985 and I began working at my uncle's factory and learning about running various departments of the business. In 2003, I purchased a part of that business that manufactured recreational vehicle awnings, moved it to a building that I purchased on the SE side of Chicago, and ran that for 20 years, finally selling the building and shutting down the business in December 2023 and retiring. I am now working on getting my Class III medical, and trying to learn how flying has changed in the ~30 years I was doing other things.

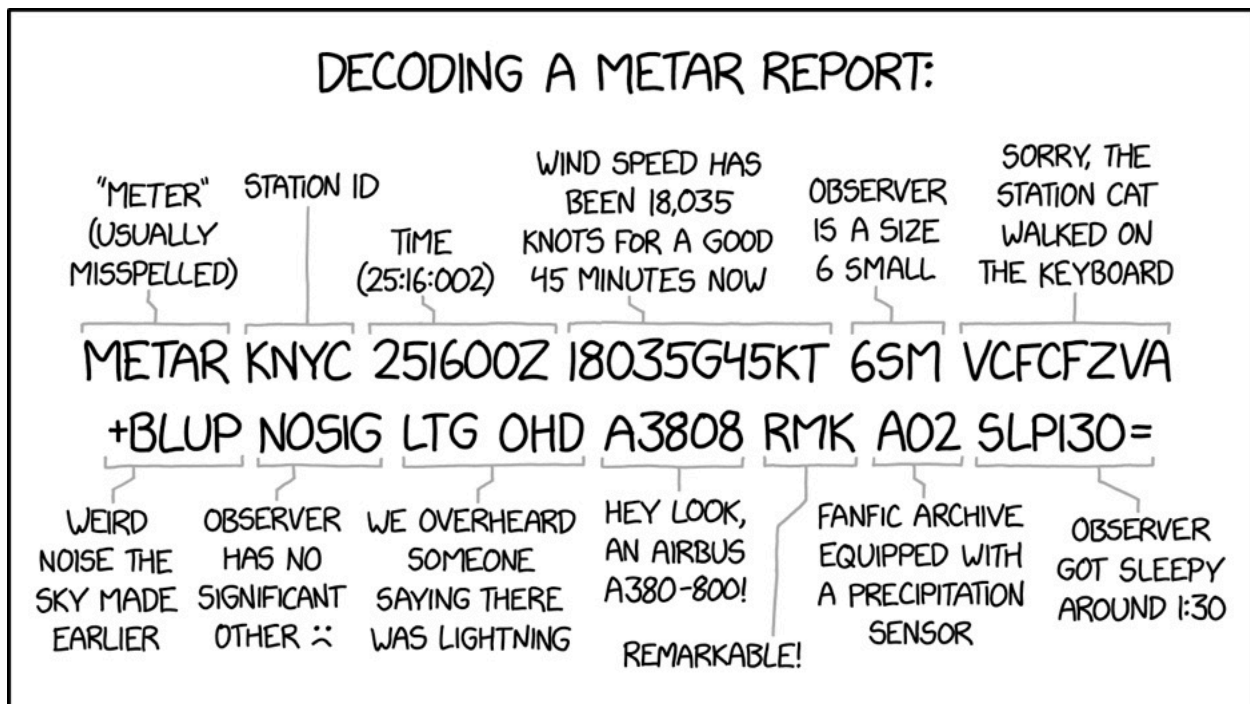
My projects are a Midget Mustang (variant) that will look more like the Polen Special when I get it flying, but it is presently in a storage locker except for all the system components that I have fabricated for it, and a Sonerai II project which I just obtained which is much closer to being a flying machine than the Midget Mustang.

Port-A-Port Hangar Insurance and Parts

An association has been established for the benefit of Port-A-Port hangar owners to obtain group insurance for their privately owned or rented Port-A-Port hangar. The group plan, with coverage renewing on February 1st (but can be joined on other dates), is run through Falcon Insurance Agency. More info, and a source of parts for the Port-A-Port Standard and Executive line of portable aircraft hangars, is at portaportparts.com. If you use another insurance plan, please share details with *Winds Aloft* editor John Kinyon ([jjk2005 gmail.com](mailto:jjk2005@gmail.com)).

Hangar Space at The Landings (82IS)

Heated space is available for a smaller plane for \$300/month. Contact Mike ([sedanflier gmail.com](mailto:sedanflier@gmail.com)).



In the aviation world, they don't use AM/PM times. Instead, all times are assumed to be AM unless they're labeled NOTAM. (xkcd.com/3024)



Chapter 790 Calendar

Sat, Jan 18	09:00	Breakfast fly-out to Bessies (KJVL)	Watch for emails
Tue Jan 28	18:45-21:00	Chapter meeting	3CK LITH Airport, office
Tue, Feb 4	18:30	Board meeting via Zoom	Watch for emails
Sat, Feb 15	09:00	Breakfast fly-out	Watch for emails
Sat, Feb 22	18:00	Banquet and speaker, Cary Country Club	Watch for emails
Sat, Mar 15	09:00	Breakfast fly-out	Watch for emails
Tue, Mar 25	18:45-21:00	Chapter meeting	3CK LITH Airport, office
Tue, Apr 1	18:30	Board meeting	3CK LITH Airport, office
Sat, Apr 19	09:00	Breakfast fly-out	Watch for emails
Tue, Apr 22	18:45-21:00	Chapter meeting	3CK LITH Airport, office
Sat, May 3		Young Eagles	Watch for emails
Sat, May 17	09:00	Breakfast fly-out	Watch for emails
Sat, May 17	All day	Chicago Area 99s' Aviation Day for Girls	3CK (more: chicagoarea99s.org)
Tue, May 27	18:00-21:00	Chapter BBQ and meeting	3CK LITH Airport, Hangar P60

EAA's calendar of events is at eaa.org/eaa/events. You can search by event categories and the distance from a location, a state, or a date range. Events you add to your itinerary are at eaa.org/eaa/myitinerary.

Chapter 790 meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of every month. The meetings are generally held at the Lake in the Hills Airport Office at 18:45. From May until October, the meetings begin with a cookout at 18:00 in hangar P-60. Mike will keep everyone posted via email of exact times, location, guest speakers, etc.

Fly-outs are a great way to enjoy a Saturday morning and some camaraderie. They are held the third Saturday of the month, usually at 09:00. If the weather isn't satisfactory, it will be rescheduled to the following Saturday. Paul Ranieri will keep everyone posted as to the destination and time via email. If you are going, have an extra seat, or are interested in going and need a seat, please respond to Paul's group email.

Young Eagle events are held the first Saturday of May, June, August, and October at either Schaumburg Airport or Lake in the Hills Airport. There is no better way for kids to get some flying experience. Before each event, chapter members will receive an email outlining the various volunteer opportunities. These consist of the registration area for kids and their parents, being on the ramp to park airplanes, and flying the kids of course!



Chapter 790 Contacts

BOARD MEMBERS

President	Mike Monreal	815-222-9228	sedanflyer gmail.com
Vice President	Sid Levin	847-769-0313	sidney.levin comcast.net
Treasurer	Paul Ranieri	847-997-0135	p.ranieri comcast.net
Secretary	Gregg Dubin	847-293-0395	wxfan1978 gmail.com
Director	Pat Crawford	847-370-8179	patc elginmedi.com
Director	Tom LeGates	847-462-1791	tlegates comcast.net
Director	<i>volunteer needed</i>		

VOLUNTEERS

Fly-Outs	Paul Ranieri	847-997-0135	p.ranieri comcast.net
IMC/VMC Club	<i>volunteer needed</i>		
Meeting Cookouts	Dave Stokes	224-567-2135	davidjanet comcast.net
Membership	Paul Ranieri	847-997-0135	p.ranieri comcast.net
Newsletter	John Kinyon	847-815-0582	jjk2005 gmail.com
Shop Visits	Pat Crawford	847-370-8179	patc elginmedi.com
Website	Tom LeGates	847-462-1791	tlegates comcast.net
Young Eagles	Paul Ranieri	847-561-0520	p.ranieri comcast.net
Youth in Aviation	<i>volunteer needed</i>		

TECHNICAL COUNSELORS AND FLIGHT ADVISORS

TC & FA	Ron Liebmann	847-997-0801	rliebmann comcast.net
TC & FA	Mike Perkins	217-725-0628	flybyewire454 protonmail.com
TC & FA	Ole Sindberg	847-826-1935	olesindberg935 gmail.com

Chapter 790 members are a group of aviation enthusiasts, aircraft builders, and pilots who get together with like minded people to share ideas, exchange information, encourage safety, serve the local aviation community and have a lot of fun doing so. Whether you fly, build, restore or simply enjoy airplanes and aviation, you are welcome to attend our events and join our Chapter. Recent newsletters: chapters.eaa.org/ea790/newsletters.

Every issue of *Winds Aloft* is a team effort. Many thanks to contributors, and please [contribute](#) your words or photos!