

CATFISH SQUADRON

EAA CHAPTER 797



Live Oak, Florida



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May 2020

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Chapter 797 Meeting

All Chapter Meetings

are suspended until further notice
The Pancake Breakfast is also suspended
Until further notice. See Below...



N5611B as I would get to know her.

Come on down to 24J
On May 23, 2020
For a social event
to get reacquainted.
10 AM on May 23.
Details >>>>

The Bottom Line

Well another month has gone by. If you look at the attached photo you can see what I saw last month the great activity of “watching the grass grow”.

I trust that you will accept our invitation to attend our re-re grand opening (with social distancing in effect) and enjoy the company of our brothers and sisters from our chapter and from other chapters (you are most welcome). We want to have a get together on **May 23, 2020 at 10:00AM**. I hope to have a picnic type atmosphere with many of us flying in and then lets us just talk airplane and flying. We could share our experiences of being ex-communicated and under simulated house arrest.

The chapter will provide sub sandwiches, chips and drinks for our celebratory occasion. We will set up outdoors with tables and chairs properly distanced. **Please note: this is all caveated with local authority input regarding crowd size.**

Also, I am revising our schedule for the remainder of the year to include more speakers, workshop demonstrations and “what not to do”. Our top priority however should be the rescheduling of Wings over Suwannee and plan for an even greater event.

Having been granted a tax exempt status from the IRS as as a 501c3 charitable organization, we should take advantage of this opportunity and start



to plan for chargeable introduction flights. Remember we can legally reimburse the pilots, some limitation will apply. The Chapter can use this as a fund raising mechanism. Hope to see you soon and we'll keep in touch.

*Chapter 797 President
Pete vanSpronsen*

PS: If you have not renewed your membership please do so: At \$1.25 a month, how can you go wrong?

News Wanted!

This is your newsletter. I am very happy to see that several people have stepped forward with their experiences to fill these pages. Let us know how your project is going or where you've been. It's your newsletter, let's make it about you.

Editor



Live Oak
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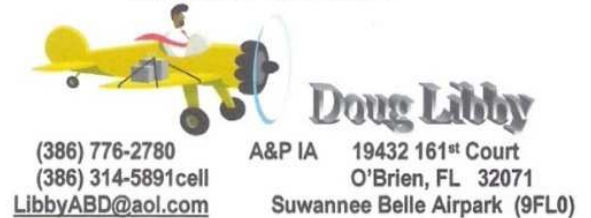
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Safe at Holmes

Like most of you, we have been home. Ronda and I are not quite as strict as we probably should be, but we have greatly altered our daily lives. I know some of you have followed the guidelines closely regarding leaving home and socializing. One thing about the stay at home order, it didn't mean you couldn't fly your airplane. I have kept training people. People I had already flown with prior to the pandemic.

The state is starting to open in phases. I don't know how they came up with liquor stores being essential and barbershops are not. I know most of us are tired of this routine but read what people went through in 1918 and 1919 – we are probably going into phase 1 of reopening the state a little early (though I am glad to see it reopen). Who knows when “normal” will return or how different “normal” is going to be. In the meantime, one of my internet acquaintances passed the following quarantine anecdotes:

I'm as bored as an Amish electrician.

~~~~~

*Ontario has banned groups larger than 5.*

*If you're a family of 6, you're all about to find out who's the least favorite!*

~~~~~



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VMC Club

The VMC club is meeting in conjunction with our regularly scheduled meeting times. You can earn wings perks by attendance.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic has meetings on hold. So, keep your ear to the ground (or the air..) for future meetings of the VMC Club.

Editor



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The longer this goes on, the harder it will be to return to a society where pants and bras are required!

~~~~~  
Happy hour is starting earlier and earlier.

~~~~~  
If this keeps up, I'll be pouring wine in my cereal!

~~~~~  
Today's Weather? Room temperature

~~~~~  
30 Days Hath September, June and November
All the rest have 31 ... except April which had 8000

~~~~~  
Smoking pot and skipping school had me in trouble constantly.

~~~~~  
Now weed's legal and schools closed ... kids are livin' the dream!

~~~~~  
This is stupid. I just tried to make my own hand sanitizer and it came out as a rum & coke!

~~~~~  
If you get an email with the subject "Knock Knock", don't open it.

~~~~~  
It's a Jehovah Witness working from home

~~~~~  
After a few days of not going out, I saw someone I knew walking by on the sidewalk outside.
I immediately ran to the window and started yelling to them.

~~~~~  
Now I understand dogs.

~~~~~  
Day 8 of social isolation and it's looking like Vegas in my house:

~~~~~  
We're losing money by the minute.  
Cocktails are acceptable at any hour.  
Nobody knows what time it is.

Dave Holmes

## Joe's Tri-Pacer

Member Joe Arbie's Tri-Pacer is still for sale.

Details:

(386) 984-5654



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## This and That from the Helo Guy

Take a look at the new chapter website at <https://chapters.eaa.org/EAA797>. Still a work in progress but getting there. The site is hosted by SiteCore and in line with the corporate EAA site. EAA HQ even has tutorials on how to edit, etc. Note the new site doesn't contain a chapter member listing by HQ design so if we want one we can discuss.

So my 182 is still at shop in Ocala waiting for pickup after the Appareo 3i ADSB-In receiver install. It's more of permanent ADSB -In setup as it gets power/info from the previously installed Stratus ESG transponder. No wires and should be hidden under glovebox. The unit is supposed to connect to my Android Tablet running Flight Plan Go (FltPlan Go at Google Play Store) but anxious for that first flight. I chose an Android solution because I'm too cheap and dumb for an I-Pad and the FltPlan Go is 100% free charts, IFR procedures, chart supps, etc.

Speaking of Apple/IOS, I have a portable ADSB receiver for sale/trade I got 2 SunNFun's ago. It's a Merlin ADSB Receiver by Seattle Avionics, I've only had out a box a few times. Let's trade for something and put it to use. You'll need an iPad of sorts to display the info. Larry Pesek (727) 859-6589, Larry.pesek@gmail.com

Larry Pesek  
Web Editor

## Suwannee Valley Flying Club

The Suwannee Valley Flying Club still has room for more members. We have six members and that includes Frank Ahern, the aircraft owner, Greg Boyette, Tommy Diedeman, Cameron Bunting, Brantley Stevens, and myself. We have some



potential members but could use more. Just having members that pay dues is good, but we need to have the airplane fly to stimulate the revenue.



SVFC's Beechcraft Musketeer

The airplane is hangered at Cannon Creek and access is very easy. So, if you are looking for an inexpensive way to fly, the Suwannee Valley Flying Club might be the ticket for you.

If anyone wants to join the Suwannee Valley Flying Club contact me at 817-308-9752

or: [oneyholmes@yahoo.com](mailto:oneyholmes@yahoo.com).

Dave Holmes

## Progress Report

A warm hello from the Land of Lincoln. After finishing my commercial multi-engine and getting help from Morris with a last-minute annual on my Mooney a few months ago, I left Florida for a job doing survey flying in a 172 up in Springfield, Illinois.

We do multi-spectral imaging for farmers, mainly monitoring corn crops. Using an array of cameras, each tuned to a different color wavelength (red/green/blue/infrared), information about the health of a plant can be determined, such as carbon monoxide intake, water intake, oxygen output, and nitrogen intake, as well as soil composition. Farmers can



Camera

download data about their crops less than 12 hours after we fly over and use the information to determine the health of each of their fields and maximize crop output. It also determines how much fertilizer they need. So we're kind of a spotter for crop dusters in a way, just another farm implement.

Some of these farmers sell directly to produce stores, some sell to refineries for production of ethanol, others are used as feed mill for animals in dairies.

Our camera ships are standard 1980 P-model 172 Skyhawks, fitted with extended tanks in the wingtips, giving us 88 gallons useable. With the powerflow exhaust and single-seat, these birds can loiter for up to 11 hours, although we only have enough sunlight for 8 hours of continuous flying. And for those wondering, the answer is a Gatorade bottle.



Tip Tank

I'll be up here until around October, but hope to be back in time for the fall Wings Over Suwannee! Everyone stay safe.

-Alex Melia

*I always suspected that you were looking down on me...*

*We're all very proud of you here, living the dream.* Editor

## Young Eagles Volunteers Needed

I have a YE rally scheduled for July 25th at 8 am for the Lowndes AFJROTC cadets and need a few pilot and ground volunteers.

This will be a small event of 15-20 kids that will be competing for scholarships for their private pilot rating. We will meet at the EAA Hangar at 24J. Of course, this will be contingent upon whatever rules we are operating under at that time. [hndccks3@aol.com](mailto:hndccks3@aol.com)

Thanks,

Phil Hancock

Chapter 797 YE Coordinator

## Tailwind

I'm sure that I missed something or someone and I welcome healthy criticism. You can send comments, questions, ideas or articles to:

[dave@davesflyin.com](mailto:dave@davesflyin.com)



## Pixie Dust

I have been a pilot for almost 50 years and a continuous member of EAA since 1976. Over the years I have experienced many acts of kindness from the aviation community. I think I have parked airplanes in most of the Southeastern states at one time or another for maintenance or weather issues. In my youth I did not think anything of flying my Luscombe 8A with no electrical or navigation from Florida to West Virginia or flying a Cessna 150 with only a portable radio to the Bahamas. Many times local aviators would come to my rescue when needed.

In the last newsletter I mentioned the Pober Pixie I had purchased. I wanted a set of plans for



maintenance and repair, but the owner that holds the plans has experienced a death in the family, planning a move to another state and is not selling plans at this time, etc, etc.

I went through the FAA's records and found 19 individuals whose names matched up with a Pixie. I wrote letters to all 19 and three have come back as undelivered. In a little over one week I had 8 owner / builders reach out to me. They are amazing and show the true spirit of aviation, EAA and our brotherhood. One builder had two sets of plans and only built one plane. He sent me the unused plans for free even though I offered to pay. Other owners have called, written letters, and emailed with pictures and their experiences and offered their plans. I have been totally blown away by their acts of kindness and support.

I truly hope this is still an "aviation thing" and not just a generational thing. Just going through this process has been a great experience and I now have some new friends that I was planning to meet in person at Oshkosh this year. Hopefully next

year. I believe the EAA will be the key factor in keeping the Spirit of Aviation alive in the future.

I know you cannot repay kindness, only pay it forward. I have tried to do that very thing and my new friends have definitely shown that they believe this. I know this is important for the survival of home building and aviation.

*Curtis & Traci McClung*

*What an excellent experience! I, too, have had wonderful people come out to help me in selfless ways. Thanks for sharing, God Bless Us All.*

*Editor*

## 1100 Miles @ 50 Mph.

I am on a few different focus groups on FaceBook for various reasons. I am on the Pietenpol group because I fly one at/for work. I am on the Ultravair group because I own an Ultralight and use Corvair engines in aircraft. I am in the EAA 797 group because that's my chapter. I am in both the Zenith Builder's group and the Zenith Flyers group because our company owns one and does builder's assistance, meaning I get to fly one. Focus groups can be a great source of information, encouragement and latest news on topics we are personally interested in.

Due to my employment I am frequently reading up on the Zenith groups and in the postings one day, fate reared its head. John Peterson posted a quick blub about joining the club (guys flying Zeniths) with a few pics of his new acquisition. He also lamented that he still needed to find a way to get it home. On a lark, I suggested that I could ferry it. I heard nothing for a while and Covid-19 reared its ugly head. Unknown to me, John had made ferry arrangements. The Covid-19 pandemic picked up steam and our business activity plummeted at work. With no money coming in and the gov't offering to guarantee payroll for small businesses deemed non-essential, we were all sent home for six weeks.

Once I was sitting at home working on small projects, I PM'd John with a message, "I'm off work for a month now...Free as a bird...Nothing to do..." in mid-march. I may have included a sad emoji. He took pity on me and gave me a project. We agreed on an expense account and return ticket home. Then the work began.

There were requirements to meet for insurance. The insurance was happy with me if I could get a couple hours of stick time with a CFI in our Zenith at work. I went to GA.

The battery was flat in our company Zenith 750. The person who built the plane had put the battery under the pilot's seat and the nuts attaching the seat were deep in the seat tracks. I lucked out. The nuts were so hard to get to, the person before me hadn't been able to truly tighten them down. (Yes, I now knew that I had been flying the plane with a seat that was less than secure..) I went out to get different bolts and put the seat back in in a way that is much easier to service. Along the way, I struggled with the battery. After nursing the battery for all day back to read 12 volts, it was flat come morning. I then pulled the battery out of the Pietenpol to use, but it was flat. (I should have checked it first, DOH!) So, in went the K-Mart gel cell and it was running! Two days of tinkering to get that two hours in.

Up I went for the obligatory two hours of CFI time notated in my logbook. It was a blustery day and the Zenith 750 was freshly propped with a new three blade DUC prop. The untested prop was not right for the plane/engine combo. So, I got two hours of bouncing around in a marginal aircraft in marginal conditions. Turns out, it was the experience I would need in the coming weeks. I learned more about flying in the experimental category through this ferry experience than all the years of reading, hangar flying and storytelling could ever impart to me.

What you aren't taught in day to day flying is the endless variations in opinion about what is safe and how to build a safe homebuilt. The guy that will never trust a pop-rivet will zip-tie the battery in place. The same guy that puts multiple valves in the fuel system will choose valves that jam when the fuel washes out the lubricant in a hardware store tapered seat shut off valve. When you strap into a homebuilt assembled by a complete stranger two owners ago, you have no idea what they considered to be "in tolerance". It's Pilot-Beware all the way.

With the legal hurdles behind me, EAA Chapter 797 member Edgar Conrad and I flew down in his Cessna 152 to Airport Manatee (48X) just south of Tampa inside the Mode-C veil. There was a recent annual Condition Inspection done by an A&P and John had paid an obscene amount to a pre-buy

inspector. Since the plane was flown infrequently, but flow regularly, I was led to expect a ready-to-ferry condition. I started with my own inspection. Butch (the seller) was friends of the builder and had flown over five hours in it himself since his purchase.

Here come the first hurdles. The builder's wife had personal stuff in the hangar. Because of this, she retained the hangar rent and all access now had to be coordinated with both her and Butch. There were no real tools in the hangar and the electrical service was a series of extension cords emanating from some invisible source branching to lights, more cords, power strips, etc. I had brought a tool kit with me just in case. Fortunately, we had good weather and plenty of light with comfortable temperatures.

When I took off the cowling, Butch commented that the inspector hadn't removed as much as I had already (Red Flag). There was "charging port" under the lower cowl. I will attempt to describe it. It was fashioned from a three foot section of jumper



cable. Two eyelets were attached to one end of the doubled #3 jumper cable and a 110 AC female power socket was somehow attached to the other end. There was literally a 110 style outlet hanging from the lower cowling. (Red Flag) There was a small bit of oil that was leaking from the #4 cylinder head valve cover. Just enough of a leak to make a spot on the exhaust that was oil wet. (Yellow Flag) There was a bucket positioned to catch fuel from a drain valve under the left tank that was persistently dripping, the bucket was empty. (Yellow Flag) I hopped in and fired up the avionics. The battery read at 12.7 volts. The battery was replaced just a month ago. (Green Flag) Everything appeared to power up. (Green Flag) The dual puck Matco brakes felt good. At a cursory glance, the controls appeared to operate the surfaces in the correct direction. (Green Flags) I stuck the tanks, they were both low. Oil level was good. I prepared to pull it out and taxi to the fuel island to top off the tanks for some taxi testing. As a matter of course, I made sure the brakes did more than feel good. I reached in and



depressed the brake pedal while I grabbed a strut and rocked the aircraft. The brakes held, but the landing gear rocked back and forth nearly six inches. (Big Red Flag) Closer inspection revealed that the soft rubbery blocks that should have clamped the main gear into place were worn out and some were missing entirely. There was a potential for the gear to rotate in the fixture and slam against



Missing clamping blocks allowing the gear to sit at an angle and rotate within the fixture

the stop when landing. If the bolts were to shear, the main gear assembly could rotate into a “retracted” position. The bolts are welded into the mounting brackets and I have no info on whether they are heat treated or compromised by welding when the bracket is manufactured. I declared the aircraft grounded and that I would have to come back, make repairs and get a few things within my tolerance before I could fly it out. It was time for a new plan. Ed Conrad and I flew home in his C-152.

All along, I stayed in contact with John. I was sending photos and keeping him abreast of each issue I was faced with. He was great. As disappointed as he was with what was found, he was realizing that he just may have chanced upon an honest guy that he could trust with the issues. We’ve all had bad experiences with strangers on the internet, our association was going to prove to be the exception. He began trying to figure out how he could help me from Texas as I reassured him that I had it under control. We worked well together.



Big air in brake line. The dual puck brakes should have the crossover underneath to allow full bleeding. Note the black zip-tie holding the cross-over from dragging on the tire....



The ELT was rolling around loose in the belly of the plane...

The new plan was: 1) find parts, 2) get parts, 3) drive back down with a car full of tools, 4) make repairs, 5) test fly, 6) fly it home to O’Brien in the next weather window to make further refinements...

To be continued: