

CATFISH SQUADRON

EAA CHAPTER 797

Live Oak, Florida



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Chapter 797 Meeting: The Monthly Meeting is Not Happening This Month



Dog Island Airport

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

From The Top

WOW, it is hard to believe that 2023 is almost gone already \,and this will be my last entry as your President. Even Though I didn't accomplish all that I set out to do, I wanted to thank you all for allowing me to be your president the last 2 years. I couldn't have done it without everyone's support.

To my board members, Support staff, Group Coordinators, kitchen crew, VMC presenters , Guest Speakers, Workshop demonstrators, to everyone who ever came to one of our monthly meetings, and especially all of you who always turned out to give your time and effort to any function that the 797 is involved in, plus my wife Bridgett's support, I wholeheartedly want to thank you. It's because of you that we have an active first class organization we all can be proud of. I look forward to see you at the Christmas party on the 16th

Tommy Diedeman, President

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**EAA 797 Annual Christmas
Party is at 11:30 AM
Is on December 16, 2023**

In lieu of breakfast and Meeting



VMC Club

Greg Boyette preceded the November monthly meeting with a safety filled VMC discussion.

This month in discussion was a mix of topics.

Entering the winter flying season brings Carburetor Ice and Engine warmers to the forefront. I recently saw an online survey asking when to apply carb heat and whether to leave it on through landing. Personally: if the POH recommends the use of carb heat, I carry it to the fence and knock it off before touchdown. It becomes one less thing to manage if I have to abort and go around.

Teledyne Continental has issued a Service Information Letter (SIL 03-1) that goes into exhaustive detail of cold weather operations and the advantages as well as dangers of engine warmers citing the importance of proper use. Excessive use can cause condensation and corrosion inside the engine, while non use can have consequences at start up.

Some of these manual's links (Lycoming also) can be found on this product page.

<https://www.tanisaircraft.com/preheating-aircraft-engines-and-preheat-products/>

Remember, what you are wearing at takeoff is what you will be wearing at the scene of your off field landing...

Editor

Christmas Shindig

The annual Christmas party is taking the place of our regular events on the third Saturday of the month @ 11:30 am. (12/16/23)

There will be the White Elephant Gift game for gifts from \$10 to \$20. There is always the chance you get something good, if you can hold onto it..

It's a semi-pot luck with members sharing their favorite deserts.

Editor

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Dog Days @ The Island

It was a little chilly for me when we took off, but the plane loved the 58 degree day. We flew west from (FL10) Little River Airpark, west over Perry-Folley airport (FPY). I remembered asking if you fly direct to Dog Island (FA43) over the water and our leader and Neighbor Rob Nixon saying "YES". Having flown there numerous times over the years, he had always flown direct. As I've been told by other pilots "the plane doesn't know if it's flying over a runway, trees or water, let alone if its day or night, just fly the plane."

We flew past the last part of marsh land and into the open gulf. It was only about 10 minutes when land began to come into sight. It was St. Teresa Island south of Tallahassee. We were almost there; Dog Island is only 7 miles long and not accessible by car, only by ferry from the mainland or by plane. Numerous car lines the dirt road off the airplane parking lot as we flew over the open bay alongside the runway, a 2700 ft grass strip. Easy to find 120 ft wide clearing as the 15/33 runway was easy to spot, it almost touches both sides of the island. We crossed over the center of the runway and entered the downwind leg, slowly turning base and then into final, the trees and brush was scarcely scattered

between the water and the runway. I touched down halfway down the runway and turned left onto a short taxiway into the parking area. After



finding the mailbox and placing our \$20 landing/parking fee in it. We grabbed our lunch and headed for the beach.

Lots of large shells were to be found as we walked up and down the sandy beach. It was a peaceful quiet remote place with the sound of gentle waves quietly shifting the sand as the sun warms the day. After some great conversation, and our picnic lunch with our friends, it was time to head back home. As my little 150 Cessna pulled us back into the sky and took a course for home. I was reminded of what simple pleasures and beauty can be seen through the eyes of a pilot, as I flew over the secluded remote sand beach's of Dog Island.



Ed Conrad

Change of Editor

After six years as editor of the Chapter 797 Newsletter, I have decided to pass on the white-out to another.

I have poked and prodded y'all to keep filling these pages with your activities and I have to say thank you to all those that have risen to share their experiences with us all.

Norma Bolyard will be taking on the role of your newsletter editor at the beginning of the New Year so remember to send her all your ideas and stories for the newsletter. (352-316-5759)

norma.bolyard@gmail.com

Once again, thank you all for the trust you have placed in me to record your adventures.

Editor

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Vic Johnston, a Teacher, a Pilot, and a Friend

I was just finishing my sophomore year at Rockford High School in Rockford, MI. in May of 1972. I had a teacher by the name of Vic Johnston. He was an Earth Science teacher who also flew airplanes. He was very well liked by the students and a good teacher. It took a number of years, but I was lucky enough to cross paths with him some 22 years later and thank him for sharing his love of flying with myself and several other students. On that cool and sunny spring day in May of 1972.

I can't remember exactly who came up with this idea, but it made a big impact on future events in my life. All of the students at the high school got to participate in a program called Soul Week. For one week we were able to forgo our regular studies. The students were allowed to choose three areas of interest they would like to participate in from a list put together by the high school staff and student council.

The list was compiled of at least twenty different areas of interest that included scuba diving, skydiving, flying and several other sports, or arts & crafts, leather working, sewing and cooking. This was an opportunity for students to get a chance to try something different other than the normal course studies offered.

Not only teachers, but other community members, such as parents and business owners shared their knowledge and skills in a particular interest with the students. This week was not intended to try to make anyone an expert or proficient in any of these sports, hobbies or new life experiences. Soul Week gave students a chance to learn and try something different.

The first time I got to see an airplane up close was when the new Kent County Airport was completed they had a big opening dedication and air show on June 6, 1964. I got invited to go to the air show with my neighbor friend, Mike Gard and his family. We saw the Navy flying team "The Blue Angels" and some other barn stormers. Afterwards, we got to walk up close to the planes. They looked so much bigger on the ground. I had no other opportunity to be around airplanes for the next eight years. Every time I would hear a plane fly over I would dream how cool it would be to be a pilot someday.

Here it was the beginning of Soul Week Monday May 14, 1972. I had signed up two weeks earlier for my three choices that included flying, skydiving and cooking. As I was growing up, my mother was not one to wait on me, so I knew my way around the kitchen. The only reason I signed up for cooking was because I liked a couple of the girl students who were helping out with the class. Skydiving class was not that much fun. Most of the time was spent in a class room learning about basic skydiving procedures such as equipment used, safety procedures, and rules and regulations from the Federal Aviation Administration. The only physical thing we did was jump off bleachers onto a gym mat to learn the proper way to land without getting hurt. Obviously, we were not going to learn skydiving by jumping from planes due to cost and all the professional training required.

Flying was the class I was most excited about. For the first three days we learned in the classroom about all the different components of an airplane like rudder, ailerons, flaps, vertical stabilizer and how to control them. It was very interesting to learn how a plane flies and what the different instruments do. After sitting through 3 days of classroom, the fourth and fifth days were spent going up with our teacher in his personal airplane. It was a 1940's era Aeronca Champ.

I can still remember it like yesterday. We all gathered in class at the beginning of the fourth day. There were about 12-15 students. We all wrote our names on a piece of paper and drew them from a can to see who would go first. Then we all piled into cars and drove about five miles north of Rockford to a small hay field. There waiting for us were two airplanes. Mr. Johnston's and his friends

airplane, who had offered to help out and give rides to us students.

This was a beautiful sunny spring morning. The sky was blue with just a few high clouds. There were about 6 people ahead of me as we watched the two planes take off and return about 15-20 minutes later ready to pick up two more nervous, but excited students. The planes were tail draggers they did not have a third wheel up front under the nose. The wheel was under the tail. The airplanes were both tandem seating, meaning you sit one in front of the other not side by side. The control stick extends two feet from the floor between your legs. After watching from our cars, which seemed like an eternity, it was finally my turn. As soon as I was instructed what not to touch and where to place my feet, I was buckled in and off we went!

As we gained take-off speed going down the grass runway, I was surprised how loud the motor sounded and how rough the field was, until we lifted off. All at once it was so smooth and then it was just the drone of the motor. The cool morning air and a slight smell of oil was just one of many of my senses that was overloading. Looking down from the plane was such a new and different perspective. I got lost in my thoughts seeing so many landmarks and streets that all began to fit together like a big puzzle.

I was sitting in the rear seat as we flew toward the little town of Rockford and leveled off at about 3,000' MSL (mean sea level). Mr. Johnston turned around and said "Take the controls" shouting over the noise of the engine. It was thrilling to be looking down at the big picture of Rockford, while briefly getting to feel the force needed to make control inputs with the stick. We had been flying about 10 minutes and Mr. Johnston could see I was enjoying the ride, so he said "Do you want to do some stalls"? I shook my head yes. I was ready for the thrill. He began by applying full power and pulling the stick back to go into a steep climb. When the airplane stopped flying, or stalled, it fell straight backward or down. WOW! What a feeling! My stomach was still 50' higher than the plane. He dropped the nose and the plane began to fly again. After doing a couple of those, we headed back to the grass strip for the next person's turn. The landing was smooth and uneventful - the best kind.

As the years passed, I had always dreamed of becoming a pilot. It seemed like there was always a reason keeping me from that goal. I graduated in 1974. The Vietnam War was finally coming to an end. There were so many military pilots returning to civilian life, that there were few flying jobs available. Next, a few years later, I was buying a house that took all the extra money I might have had to fly. Soon after that I got married and had a daughter a couple of years later. Then it was time for a bigger house. Then I got divorced in 1987. While I was working at Smiths Industries Aerospace, a family friend introduced me to Genny.

We started dating and got married about a year later in January, 1990. Genny was already a pilot. She had learned to fly in college while training to be a missionary bush pilot. After a couple of years, we were doing pretty well financially, so Genny said I should start taking flying lessons. She didn't have to say it twice. After checking out flying schools, I decided on Executive Air at Muskegon County Airport. About 7 months later, I earned my license.

After renting planes, we decided to buy our own airplane. We scoured airport bulletin boards, newspapers and Trade-A-Plane, until we found a 1966 Piper Cherokee 180 four place airplane. We got it repainted and fixed up to a very nice condition and flew to Florida and Tennessee a couple of times. It was a lot of fun to throw the golf clubs in the back and fly up to Drummond Island for the day.

Airplane people are always looking for a place to go, even if it is just a short hop flying someplace for breakfast. It was another beautiful sunny Sunday morning on Father's Day 1995. My wife Genny, daughter Lindsey and myself flew our plane from Riverview Airport in Jenison, MI, where we kept it hangared, to White Cloud, MI. The pilots at the local airport were putting on a Father's Day pancake breakfast fly-in. The place was packed. The 1950's hangar was neatly arranged with rows of tables and a long waiting line for the breakfast buffet. I was getting hungrier by the minute watching people walk by with heaping plates of eggs, pancakes and sausage. The bacon especially smelled good. The steady roar of all different kinds of airplanes arriving and departing, echoing through the large hangar doors added to the excitement of the day.

While waiting in line, I saw a familiar face I had not seen in years. It was Mr. Johnston. He was standing there in his baseball cap and aviator sun glasses. I got out of the buffet line and walked right over and greeted him. I introduced him to my family and reminded him of Soul Week and my first flight in 1972 in his Aeronca Champ. I could tell by the big grin, that Soul Week brought back some good memories.

After breakfast, I showed him our airplane and we talked about old times. I know he was proud of himself for planting that flying seed so many years ago and having the opportunity to see the pilot that grew from his efforts.

Frank Wing

In the accompanying email to this writing, Frank was quick to point out the parallel to our Young Eagles program and the effect it can have.

Editor

Fly-Ins: The Early Days



"Just think. ... Here we are, the afternoon sun beating down on us, a dead, bloated rhino underfoot, and good friends flying in from all over. ... I tell you, Frank, this is the best of times."

Flown West

Hello 797 family and friends

I just wanted to let you all know that yesterday morning I received some sad news. I was informed that we had lost another friend and member Mr. Frank Ahern. I had had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Frank for the last 8 or 9 years, You always saw him walking his dogs around the Cannon Creek AirPark and usually brought them wherever he went, including the meetings and events at 24J. Some of us who were involved in the Suwannee Valley Flying Club could tell you some stories both good and bad, when it came to flying his Beechcraft Musketeer that he let the club use after we lost the 150 we started out with. He was another great Individual that will truly be missed. Please keep his family in your thoughts and prayers

*Tommy Diedeman
President 797.*



Merry Christmas!

Tailwind

I'm sure that I missed something or someone and I welcome healthy criticism.

dave@davesflyin



WOS 2024

Christina Bedenbaugh is the primary Chairman of the 2024 WOS board. I say primary, because she wants a co-chair. She also needs us to get involved early this year

A successful event will need sub-chair people to tackle specific aspects of the event, breaking down the big job into smaller bites. We need to get the word out to vendors and we need to set a date.

I encourage y'all to discuss ideas and get the fires of creativity burning to help insure another successful community event.

Fly-In @ McAlpin

Saturday the 9th of Dec, McAlpin hosted a lunch and Fly-In.



Some unique and Fun aircraft showed up among the usual suspects. The first Mooney Cadet, is one example.



A couple of light Twins also arrived including this Baron.



There were too many planes to keep up with the pictures. As usual, if you weren't there, you missed it. The Circles were still in the grass from the Control-Line contest a few weeks earlier.

Editor

More Kiddie Rides

Also happening on Dec 9, was the annual gala at Heritage Park. A number of 797 members heeded the request of the Parks Dept and dragged our Kiddie Train out for another appearance.

These events Like "Touch a Truck" @ SVEC illustrate the community's recognition of Chapter 797's place in the community.

Editor

