

EAA CHAPTER 879 Newsletter

August 2023

Notice to Chapter Members

Our [website](https://eaa879.org) has a new look. Visit us online at <https://eaa879.org>

Notes from the President

Greetings,

For those of you who have been hiding from the heat for the last month, it is time to get brave and come to an exciting meeting in our air-conditioned meeting room. See you there.

NAMING RIGHTS-REVISITED

Here are the names and taglines we've chosen for our newsletter. Click to email the one you would like to vote for. We'll select a winner at our August 12th chapter meeting. Note: "Lake Ridge" will be inserted in the name.



| Name | Tagline | Your Vote |
|--|--|------------------------|
| <i>THE PROPELLER (LAKE RIDGE)</i> | A Mile of Highway will take you a mile, a Mile of Runway will take you anywhere | Vote 1 |
| <i>PROP WASH (THE LAKE RIDGE)</i> | A TOMATO(e) FLAMES GUMP CIGAR | Vote 2 |
| <i>WRIGHT RUDDER (THE LAKE RIDGE)</i> | TBD | Vote 3 |
| <i>THE OPPOSITE RUDDER (LAKE RIDGE)</i> | TBD | Vote 4 |
| <i>14-32 TRAFFIC REPORT (LAKE RIDGE)</i> | It's the journey; the destination ain't moving | Vote 5 |
| | | Vote 6 |

Note: There is another suggestion that was submitted by a member. I cannot located the email it came in. Apologies. --fw

EAA 879 MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

An Interview with Randy Smith (July 2023)

Listen to the entire interview in a YouTube Podcast [here: https://youtu.be/JiZUIqF2BEI](https://youtu.be/JiZUIqF2BEI)

Who or what inspired you to become a pilot or get interested in aviation?

When I was about 2, we moved near Castle Airforce Base in California, where airplanes and jets constantly flew over my house. That was back in 1949 when the military was still flying a lot of WWII-type airplanes. Jets were just starting to come in. They would fly over our house coming and going all the time, including the big B36 with ten engines. Had six R43-60, which were the largest radial engines built mounted on the rear of the wings, and two jet engines on both sides. I got really interested in the planes. There were also crop dusters nearby since there were these big farms around. I would try to get as close as I could, but the flagman would run me off. That's how I got interested in airplanes.



What was your non-commercial first flight like as a passenger?

I was about 7 or 8 we flew out to California to visit my grandmother. We flew in a Super-Constellation out of Raleigh-Durham to Chicago. The Captain walked to the back of the airplane to speak with the passengers. He saw that I was interested in airplanes, so he invited me to the cockpit, where I stayed until the planes started to descend. I was intrigued with all the instruments and flying the airplane. I knew then this was what I wanted to do. After we returned, I went to the airfield (where Odell's flying service existed), and Odell let me sit in the cockpit of his J3 Cub. He asked me if I wanted to go for a ride, and we did. He asked me if I wanted to fly it, and he let me. I thought that was the greatest thing since toilet paper.



What's your first memory of being PIC, excluding training?

My first solo. I had a choice between the J3 Cub and the Taylorcraft when it came to learning to fly. I asked him which one was the most difficult to fly. He said neither but that Taylorcraft required a little more finesse, so I chose that one. Later when I went for my checkride, I chose the J3. I liked the tandem seating and like sitting in the back. Plus, I liked the stick. The stick felt more precise control than the wheel. I like the feel of it better.



I soloed when I was 16. I hung out at the airport, and the guys let me fly a lot of different airplanes. My first tricycle gear airplane was a Tripacer.

How long have you been a pilot? (professional pilot)

I flew for money back in '69 or '70. Early '71, I got a job flying for a coal company out of [sic] Meckly, West Virginia, flying the MU-2. I flew with them for about nine years, and I got on with Piedmont in '79. US Air bought Piedmont, and I stayed with them for 25 years. I retired at age 60.



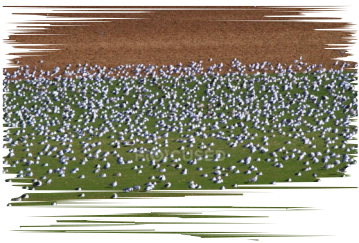
What's the best/worst thing that has happened to you as a pilot?

I had to make some precautionary landings because of some anomaly, and I almost had a NiCad battery explode in the MU-2. Almost had a battery thermal runaway in a Learjet. A battery thermal runaway is when the temperature of the battery gets over one hundred sixty degrees you could have a thermal runaway. It gets so hot it melts the plastic, and the cells fuse together and shorts out. It gets so hot it would literally melt through the bottom of the airplane.

I was about 15 minutes from Dever, going to Salt Lake City, the battery heat caution light came on. The FAA would allow you to fly with a caution light as long as you'd take it in for maintenance in a day or two. If the warning light came on, you'd get on the ground as quick as you can. My airplane's battery needed to be deep cycled, so maintenance swapped a known good battery. Unfortunately, they didn't make the proper connections.



I was at about 41000 feet or so, about 15 minutes out of Dever going to Salt Lake City, when the caution light came on. I didn't know the (battery temp) gauges wasn't hooked up. They didn't mention it so I assumed they were hooked up.



I was taking off one time in a B737-400 on a runway in Sarasota, Fl. The grass was pretty high on each side of the runway. I started rolling on takeoff, and a huge flock of seagulls kind of came rolling up out of the grass, and then they settled back down. They were off the the left side of the runway. I was watching for those seagulls, I was watching the airspeed indicator, and I was watching the V1 speed - the go/no go speed. I'm

watching those seagulls, and as we're accelerating down the runway, the seagulls came up out of that grass again, and they didn't settle back down into it. When there are so many of them, they move in unison; you see this in unison. I don't know how many of them; must've There was a huge flock, and they came up out of the accelerating to about 100 knots, or 115 MPH. They runway; then they broke away from the runway. approached them, they turned right, right across the when into the engines. The left engine took some, fan blades, meaning it stacked the blades together. There was this loud BANG! I was right at the go, no go speed, so I rejected the takeoff; cause I didn't know how much damage that engine had, and I didn't know how much damage the right engine had. I didn't want to become airborne and realize I didn't have any engines. So I rejected the takeoff, and that was uneventful; I mean, it stopped, and I taxied back to the gate. Canceled the flight, so I guess it wasn't uneventful to the passengers 'cause they didn't have a way to get where they were going.



white cloud moving been a thousand. field and I was broke left toward the Just as we runway, and some and it shingled the

Tell me how you got involved with EAA or Chapter 879?

EAA was around when I was a kid. Odell Wilkins was a member. I joined around '73; I can't remember the exact date. When we moved here almost 33 years ago, Sterling Gann, who owned the airport then, started Chapter 879. We had a lot of members back then. I started going to chapter meetings when he [Sterling] was alive. We had a lot of people coming to meetings then. We probably averaged 20-25 members.

What do you wish people know about EAA or the Chapter?

If i could wish anything for the chapter, I wish more people knew it was here and we had more people interested in it. Especially young people. That's what you need, young people. Young people keep everything going. It's just like a church. Churches fail because the population of the church ages out, and you don't have the young people coming to it. Maybe the community kind of deteriorates and a lot of people move away the older people who went to it died out, and you don't have enough people to support it. It's the same way with a lot of things, including the EAA chapters.

I wish that we could get more young people interested in EAA; I think one way to do that is through the Young Eagles program. But that doesn't stress joining a chapter and getting involved in aviation as much as it does just taking a ride and maybe considering, at some point, learning how to fly. It takes youth to keep things going, and you have to stimulate that interest.

What, if anything, do you want people to know about you?

I guess I wish I was just half the man my dog thought I was (laughter). The good Lord has been good to me. I always wanted to fly, and that's what I stove for, and the good Lord was kind enough to let me follow my dream, and I can still do it, fortunately. I have no complaints. If I could do it all over again, I'd do the same thing. I'm very fortunate.



REFRESHER QUESTIONS

What two things determine the term 'angle of attack'?

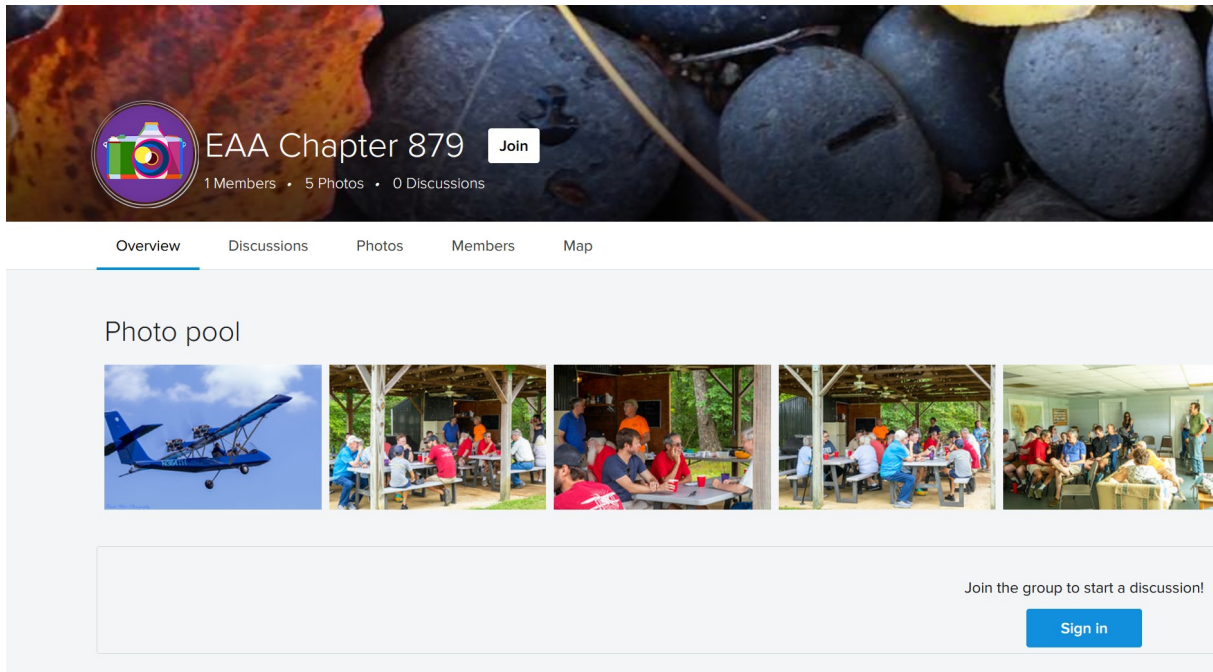
- A) The wing and the relative flow of the wind
- B) The chord of the wing and the relative wind direction across it
- C) The lateral roll of the wing
- D) The attitude of the pilot when confronted with bad weather

The radius of the procedural Outer Area of Class C airspace is normally

- A) 10NM
- B) 15NM
- C) 20 NM
- D) 5NM



EAA 879 IS COLLECTING PHOTOS



Share your favorite photos in our online EAA Chapter 879 Flickr group. It's easy, simply create a Flickr account – you can get a free one – if you do not already have one. Then search for EAA 879 under the “Groups” tab and add your photos. Alternately, you can click on this link: [EAA 879 Flickr Group](#). Your photos will also show up on the “[About Us](#)” page of our website.

ANSWERS TO REFRESHER QUESTIONS

What two things determine the term 'angle of attack'?

- B [Reference](#)

The radius of the procedural Outer Area of Class C airspace is normally - C [Reference](#)



CHASED BY A HURRICANE

By: Bill Watson

My wife and I started regularly flying Tigressa, our RV-10, down to Key West on our 25th wedding anniversary in 2011. It was our first long trip with Tigressa, barely 60 days after her first flight. The highlight was a sunset dinner on Sunset Key, That dinner has since become an annual tradition.

Key West has long been one of our favorite fly-in destinations, partly because flying a private plane there has some real advantages. There are only a few airline flights there each day but they tend to get overbooked during peak periods. Flying an airliner into Miami is an option but depending on who is driving, Key West is a 2.5 to 4-hour drive from Miami. Our trip in the old Maule took quite a while, but if you're flying an RV-10 from Lake Ridge, Fort Meyers (KFMY), it's only a 4-hour flight with a convenient



Sunset Key from the air, the ground and in person

and affordable fuel stop before making the quick 45-minute hop to Key West (KEYW). Once there, Tigressa had been pressed into shuttle service, picking up friends flying into Miami or Naples, either of which was less than a 2-hour round trip by private air.

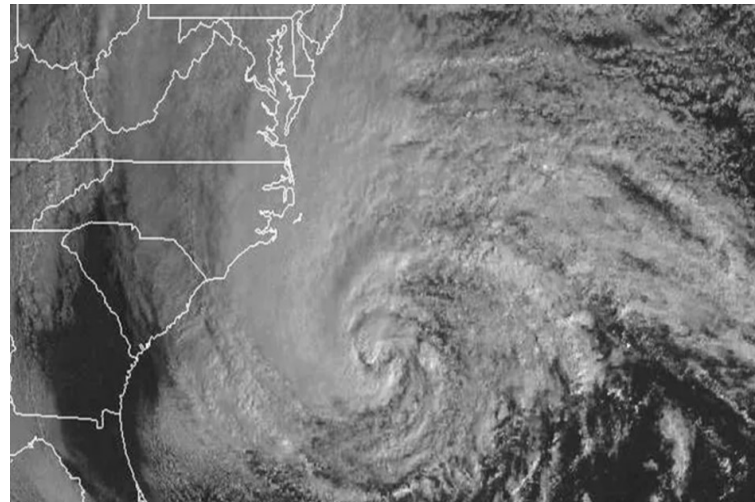


Cheap fuel can be had in Fort Meyers (or Naples) before landing in Key West

Tigressa's 2nd trip to Key West in October 2012 was made with a sharp eye on what would become Hurricane Sandy. One always has to keep an eye on tropical storm developments at that time of the year, and Sandy became a named storm early in our trip. Not wanting to ride out a tropical storm in Key West, where the average elevation seems to be roughly 3 feet MSL, we were prepared to take advantage of our ability to fly home independent of airline schedules. Fortunately, Sandy's path took her elsewhere, with the closest approach to Key West being landfall in Cuba, where it

did substantial damage.

Our plan was a non-stop flight back to Lake Ridge, just as we had the year before. The winds were favorable, with VFR conditions slowly deteriorating as we approached home. The forecast barely accounted for Sandy's fateful turn towards the west,



Bird's Eye View of the storm

so it appeared that we would still be in good condition for a daylight VFR arrival. However, it was not to be so.

We cruised between layers at 8 to 10 thousand feet as we approached South Carolina. Motoring along on autopilot, I kept a close watch on the instruments and remained impressed with the RV10 cross-country capabilities; 10.5 GPH at 155 Knots TAS was my sweet spot.



I had trouble maintaining my ‘sweet spot’ numbers. The speed would fall a knot or two and I’d increase the power by increasing RPMs. Another knot lost and I’d give a pinch more fuel. I could still get 155 knots but only by burning more gas and running the prop faster. Then I couldn’t hold 155 knots!

What had changed? The engine was smooth, the temps all looked right; flying between cloud layers, it didn’t seem like anything outside had changed... except for the temperature. The outside temp had dropped to freezing, so now I had to consider that when entering a cloud. Had I picked up any ice? I Couldn’t see any on the wing’s leading edge and I couldn’t see any on the leading edge of the horizontal tail. But wait, there may be some. Seems like a little white fuzzy stuff hiding on the wing’s white leading edge.

After using a strong flashlight (it was getting dark amidst these dense layers) and much scrutiny, I concluded that we were picking up a very small amount of rime ice even though we were in a clear area. I guess we were actually flying through light wisps while avoiding the opaque cloud decks. So now what?

I started recalculating our range given our slightly diminished performance. Checking the weather at RDU and points in between, it seems that we would still beat the wad of precipitation headed for Lake Ridge if, and only if, we continued nonstop. But our fuel consumption per mile had gone up just enough to compel a fuel stop short of our final destination. And a stop, even a fast stop, would mean a near-night arrival in worsening conditions.

‘Get-there-itis’ was definitely in effect after a long week in the Keys but I referred to a bit of aviation wisdom from a 1960s issue of Flying Magazine that I had committed to memory a long time ago. It went something like this:

To stay alive and have a long career in aviation...

Don’t run out of fuel

Avoid the terrain

Never pick up a package by its string

Pretty basic stuff but the magic is in its application. I knew we could make it in to Lake Ridge with roughly 30 minutes of fuel remaining if the weather stayed as-is. But the weather associated with Hurricane Sandy was rapidly getting worse than forecast. And if I stopped for fuel, the weather would deteriorate even further and my landing would be in the dark. Arriving non-stop from Key West was the package but the rapidly changing weather was the string that might break and ruin our plan. So an unplanned fuel stop was quickly negotiated and we landed at Southern Pines (KSOP) for fuel and perhaps the night.

At this point, it was important to slow everything down and think through the options. I was confident that we could safely depart VFR, pick up a clearance to Lake Ridge and use RDU as a planned alternate. So we departed for home, got the clearance from Raleigh approach, and explained our desire to get home and our willingness to land at RDU if that wasn't possible. Things were not looking good for a dark landing at Lake Ridge.

As always, the controllers at RDU were more than helpful, "Five Tango Golf, I think we can get you around this stuff and home to Lake Ridge". Frankly, our desire to get home didn't really need any extra encouragement, but on we went. Whatever happens, we knew we had more than enough fuel for it!



Sandy, off the coast of North Carolina

With in-flight Nexrad, RDU's radar, and a few pilot reports, we were vectored around the bad stuff and put into a position where we could 'see' Lake Ridge and go for the visual approach. I say 'see' because one almost never actually lays eyes on the lights or the strip at 8NC8 but rather, one sees the surrounding geography. At night, the prison lights are a good landmark from long

distances, but the airport itself is best located by spotting the I-85 traffic on the Falls Lake causeway.

Over the years, we've had a great deal of experience doing night landings at Lake Ridge with our old Maule. Almost all of our landings, day or night, are done uphill on 14. Despite Hurricane Sandy passing north of the Triangle earlier, it's westward turn had tightened and its inland influence was growing. The decision to land on 32 requires a strong tailwind on 14, and that is exactly what we had on this dark stormy night; the winds were from the west, strong, gusty and turbulent. Landing on 32 is challenging in these conditions, given higher approach speeds, obstacle clearance, and particularly runway slope. After some full control deflections and plenty of power adjustments, we rolled out safely toward the traffic on I-85 and were very glad to be back home on solid ground.

Little did we know how famous Hurricane Sandy, later known as Superstorm Sandy, was to become that night!



*Bill is a regular contributor who writes the **Tigressa Tales** series*

CONTRIBUTE TO THIS NEWSLETTER

No one can make every meeting. That is why our newsletter is essential. It also provides an opportunity for members about stories we find "Pictures are worth a thousand words". Share the story behind that great picture on your phone or in your photo gallery.



one of the reasons why our chapter opportunity to engage members and non-members entertaining or informative. It is said, Share the story behind that great picture

Send your announcements and/or, story & picture(s) to frank@ewhitecap.com for inclusion in an upcoming Chapter 879 newsletter.

LAKE RIDGE EAA CLASSIFIEDS

Buy/Sell/Trade/Lend/Giveaway | Send your items/service announcement to frank@ewhitecap.com

- **For Loan:** X-plane 11 flight simulator. Feel free to reach out to me to borrow the XP11 flight simulator. I'm not using it at the moment and the next scheduled Young Eagles rally is in November (I think). Depending on demand, you can borrow for 30 days, more if no one else needs it. The simulator is great for practicing IFR procedures that emulate real-world procedures. It's great for currency. Or you can fly VFR and just have fun. I'll be happy to come by your house and set it up. Complete with computer, monitor, yoke, rudders, mouse and keyboard. Internet may be required. Offer extends to EAA 879 Members only.
- **Asking price:** n/a
- **Seller:** Frank White - frank@ewhitecap.com
- ... no more ads

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- August 19, - EAA 1114 Monthly Breakfast Meeting (Apex, NC) [More info...](#)
- November 4, - Henderson-Oxford Airport (KHNZ). Young Eagles Rally (Sponsored by EAA Chapter 1114, Apex, NC) [More info...](#)

ABOUT EAA CHAPTER 879

| | |
|----------------|--|
| EAA 879 | Meetings: Every 2nd Saturday 10:00 AM |
|----------------|--|

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|---|---|
| Location: | Chapter Officers: |
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