



# THE TAILDRAGGER

NOVEMBER 2023

LAKE PALESTINE EAA CHAPTER 972

## Presidents Message: By Grif Leary

To start things off I just want to comment on the October meeting. It was a very good meeting with a nice turnout (25 +/-) good food, good weather, and a very interesting presentation on sky diving operations. I just thought I understood how that all worked. It was very interesting and informative! Thanks to 972 Chapter member Robbie Culver for putting that together. Since we are on the subject of meeting presentation, the November meeting will include a program by our AE neighbor (Glen Mathis) on his back country flying the past few years. Looking forward to that!

Gayla and I were fortunate enough to attend the Annual Cedar Mills Fly In/FAA safety seminar at OT3 last weekend. Diane & Lucas from 972 also attended. It was our 2nd time attending and we really learned a lot in the seminars that ran all day. On Saturday evening they have a dinner for attendees and guests, nice meal with door prizes. Hardly anyone left empty handed! The folks from the North Texas FSDO office handle the safety seminar programs and the Cedar Mills staff with the help from the Sherman EAA Chapter do the rest. Anyway good fly In at a nice grass field (with a restaurant) right on lake Texoma.

The YE workshop was a success, thanks so much for all the help pulling that off. In my opinion the chapter has a great opportunity to build on these events. We do have couple of events before the Christmas Party. Gayla will catch everyone up on those in her report. Thanks to everyone for making 972 what it is!

Bo Leary



**Lake Palestine Tx**



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# Eagle's Nest

**Total Young Eagles Flown: 2,332,551 — Stats as of August 25, 2023**



Hey Team,

What a great time. Thanks to all who helped with the YE Workshop. We had 13 to come and participate. Thanks to Sandra, we had an excellent lunch. The hangar was great and I have sent out thank you cards to Tyler, the owner of the hangar and to Alexia the airport manager. Tyler has expressed we are welcome to use the hangar anytime. I completely forgot to hand out the certificates but Frances addressed all the envelopes and I got them out last week. I'm sure this will be an awesome surprise for all.

We have an Eagle flight November 4th here at AE (T25). These are the TJC students that we have flown before and I will have them to meet here at our hangar at 0900. Amie is telling me that there is about 10 of them. I have Robbie, Brenda, John, and Bo. My plane will be down for annual so I guess I will not be able to help. Bo can fly 2 at a time.

We have a Young Eagles Rally planned December 2nd at Rusk Co. (RFI) This is a group of Home Schooled Students so it will be private. I have limited it to 30 and we already have 26 signed up. I will send out the invite through YEday.org so please respond.

For those of you that have not finished the Youth Protection Program go here:  
<https://www.eaa.org/eea/youth/youth-protection-policy-and-program>

See ya at the next meeting Gayla



# Eagle's Nest

**Total Young Eagles Flown: 2,332,551 — Stats as of August 25, 2023**



Hey Team,

Here is a reminder for our contribution to Henderson County Child Advocacy Center. Please bring your donations next week to the November meeting so we can deliver to them.

Hello Gayla,

It was nice visiting with you today. Just want to say thank you so much for thinking of our children and families.

We do see boys and girls ages 3 to 17 years old - so the age is diverse. We like to give each child something to take home with them. Journals and pens are great as are coloring books and crayons. Fidget spinners are versatile. Each child also leaves with a blanket or quilt - whichever we may have to give out.

We would love to show you our center.

Thank you again,

Susan

See ya at the next meeting Gayla

## October Minutes, 2023

Meeting held at Leary's Hangar

Members attending:

Joy Meadows	Patrick Rhoads	
Lucas Wagenaar	Diane Wagenaar	Garnet McClure
John Kearney	Jean Kearney	Patrick Moseley
Frances Moseley	Eddie Moseley	James Moseley
David Mason	Jeff Hancock	Doug Robertson
Dennis Teicheria	James Jepson	Dana Jepson
Walt Eastland	Sue Eastland	Robbie Culver
Brenda Culver	Grif (Bo) Leary	Gayla Leary

Grif Brought the meeting to order at 6:25 "Who's a fan of Baseball?"

Grif asked to have the minutes approved: John Kearney 1st, Robbie Culver 2nd

Jean Kearney gave the Treasurers report: Filing fee \$29.00

Gumbo brought in 494.00

Dues for new members 100.00

Gumbo Expense

Scholarship student Aime Beam's balance 1473.00

Scholarship student Caden Boucher's balance is 2020.00

Grif thanked everyone for the very successful September Gumbo. Right now we have the Gumbo scheduled for the 4th Saturday of the month. Diane asked to move it to the 1st Saturday, Garnet reminded us we need to be consistent with the gumbo no matter what Saturday we choose.

No vote was taken.

Grif mentioned we will need a few members to step up for 2024: We need a Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer. If anyone would like to take any of these positions please come forth. Anyone wishing to take the Young Eagles position just say so.

Christmas party is December 9 at the Leary's unless anyone wishing to host. No one volunteered. Party starts at 4:30 and please bring a White Elephant gift. Be reasonable with the price.

Anyone wishing to help just get with Gayla

Vice President John Kearney didn't have anything to add.

Young Eagles report:

The Young Eagles Camp at Rusk Co was a success. We had 13 students, and was on schedule. We will have

a Eagle flight November 4th for the TJC students at AE.

We have a Young Eagles Rally scheduled for December 2nd at Rusk County. This is a private group of home schooled students. The report on Amie is that she is very rusty and will take a few flights to get her caught up.

Caden's CFI is no longer available so we are looking to hire Jimmy Stewart at KISO. There has been a meeting with the CFI, Caden and parents. All agreed to use him, now the only problem is an airplane. There are no available CFI's at Johnson's aviation.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 and Robbie Culver gave an awesome presentation.

From The VP,

Hello all,

Well, the end of this year is closing out soon, and we made some major milestones this year. Just a couple of bullets that all our members should all congratulate themselves for these achievements:

- o Best gumbo year ever?
- o Second Ray Scholarship
- o Young Eagle Workshop
- o Young Eagle Flights (maybe not as many as we wanted but weather you know....)
- o Nearly doubled chapter membership (2-year effort)
- o Supported both High School & Junior College extracurricular aviation groups.

Jean and I just got back from the REKLAW FLY IN and while the weather was not ideal there was still a significant amount of attendance. Thanks to Doug and Lisa for supporting the Radio Communication tower. Several of the EAA 972 members dropped by our tent to talk and buy tee shirts. We put up the EAA donation jar and received 25.00. Perhaps not as much as I would have liked but every little bit helps.

Finally, as I will be president next year, we are still looking to fill the positions of vice president and secretary for next year. Please let me or one of the other officers if you can help out in one of those roles. While the current officers have offered to continue next year, they are willing to step aside for anyone with a passion to fill one of those positions.

#### This Month in Aviation History

- 5 November 1908 (France) — Wilbur Wright receives the Grand Gold Medal of the Aéro Club of France for advances in aviation.
- 10 November 1907 (France) — Louis Blériot introduces what will become the modern configuration of the airplane. His N°VII has an enclosed or covered fuselage, a single set of wings, a tail unit, and a propeller in front of the engine.
- 14 November 1966 (Antarctica) — A Lockheed C-141 “Starlifter” became the first jet aircraft to land in Antarctica.
- 20 November 1919 (USA) — The first municipal airport in the United States opens in Tucson, Arizona and is still in use today.
- 30 November 1949 (USA) — Aeronca Aircraft Corporation announces its 1950 Champion, the all-electric 90-hp Model 7EC, with a complete 12-volt electrical system, soundproofing, full-width rear seat, no-bounce gear and other improvements. Delivery to begin December 1, 1949.

Well, that is all I have for this month.

CAVU and Fair winds

Brenda Culver

## My Journey to Sport Pilot-The Old School Way

By Brenda Culver

### Part 1

Since the age of ten, when I was introduced to the world of general aviation, I have always loved flying but never wanted to fly. This probably doesn't make sense but let me explain. I've always had this ingrained fear that if I took the controls of an airplane, that airplane would plummet out of the sky like an anvil on fire. I know. Ridiculous thoughts but that was how I felt.

Growing up, I loved to fly as a passenger with my step dad in his Citabria and then later in the Cessna 170 and eventually the Cessna 180. Whether it was to a fly-in pancake breakfast a half hour away or a several day trip across the country to California, every flight was an adventure. We'd all pile into the four seat 170, my brother and I in the back seat and parents up front. After we'd take off, I'd press my forehead firmly against the side window and watch the mosaic of greens and browns pass below us. I'd try to read the water towers and see what towns we were passing over during our flights and identify landmarks on the sectional chart we carried with us.

Sometimes when it was just dad and I out for a flight, he'd ask if I wanted to fly a bit. I would hesitantly take the yoke and "steer" the airplane for a few minutes, my whole body would tense up, fearful of doing something wrong with my hands wrapped tightly around the yoke. Thankfully, we never went down in flames as I thought would happen.

Fast forward twenty something years and I became addicted to the sport of skydiving. This is when I met that camera geek named Robbie while jumping out of perfectly good airplanes (but honestly, is there really a perfectly good airplane?). It's funny. I was calm as could be hurtling myself out of an airplane and plummeting 120mph towards the ground but couldn't grasp the controls of an airplane without freaking out? My brain works in mysterious ways.

Robbie also grew up in an aviation family. His grandfather, father and two of his brothers all flew. He wanted to take flying lessons and I supported him 100%. He went on to earn his certificate in Dec of 2001 and we bought a Cessna 150 and later a Piper Cherokee. I continued to be the passenger and I couldn't shake that annoying fear of taking control. Robbie was always patient with me and reassured me I wasn't going to "crash" the airplane. He even made me go through pinch hitter training in case something happened to him while we were flying so I could safely get the plane back on the ground. This training made me realize why pilots sweat when landing.

We completed building the Sonex and eventually in 2020 bought our 1945 Aeronca Champ (It was supposed to be a Chevy Malibu, but that's another story). This is the airplane that would open up a whole new world for me. It was old school flying. Low and slow with big windows and minimal instruments. Basic but beautiful. We'd go out for sunset flights and I'd soak in the summer warmth through the open window. Robbie convinced me to fly from the back on occasion. I'd grasp the stick tighter than I should and shakily put my feet on the rudder pedals, my hamstrings like wound rubber bands. "Relax" I'd say to myself while trying to fly from the back seat with no instruments and only the wingtips and the back of my husband's head for reference. "Feel the airplane" I'd hear through the headset. "You can feel it in your butt." I also heard a lot of "More right rudder." As I flew for longer periods, I discovered that the plane wasn't falling out of the sky and just maybe I could conquer this fear of being in control. One small step at a time.



Brenda Culver

In January 2022, Robbie asked if I wanted to join him at the annual aviation safety seminar held by the Chicago chapter of the Ninety-Nines. They had a class for the “companions” and many other classes for the pilots. Did I want to continue to be a “companion” or did I want more? To be a pilot seemed overwhelming. From learning the instruments, the airspace, rules and regulations and talking on the radio! So much information for a middle aged brain to learn. In the companion class, I surprisingly knew most of what was discussed and decided to join Robbie in his classes after lunch break. The class was given by an air traffic controller. We learned about communicating with ATC and to not fear them. They’re there to help. I don’t know why this class was the trigger but on the ride home I told Robbie that I wanted to learn to fly. Luckily, he didn’t drive off the road out of shock when I told him.

With Josh heading off to college in the fall 2022, that summer was a perfect time to start the process. We decided what kind of ground training program to use and ended up with the Sporty’s video series. I started by watching the introduction videos and slowly progressed through the first chapter, learning about lift, weight, thrust, drag etc. Meanwhile, we were searching for a tailwheel rated CFI (certified flight instructor) who could teach me in our Champ. This ended up being more difficult than originally anticipated. We had a few favorites but they could not teach due to job conflicts. We finally made contact with an instructor at Aurora but that meant Robbie would have to fly me there, get out, sit there at the airport while I had my lesson and then we’d fly back to Clow. Doable but that would be at least a half day taken up with each lesson and it was limited to Sundays due to the instructor’s schedule.

My first lesson was basically straight and level flight, some climbs, turns, descents. The instructor did the takeoff and landing. I basically worked on keeping the plane coordinated and getting the feel for the controls. Also, this was my first time taxiing a tailwheel airplane. As I’ve seen it described, “try to push a shopping cart backwards. That’s how it is to control a tailwheel airplane.” Hence the reason my first taxi was slower than a snail’s pace. I was wiped out after my first experience being fully in control. What was this throttle and trim thing? I’ve never messed with these before. Venturing into unknown territory was both terrifying and exciting. I received my first entry into my new pilot log-book and I was officially on my way.

The next month was frustrating with weather, causing us to cancel every Sunday. This was not going to cut it. I needed to fly more often to get comfortable with what I was learning. The Sporty’s ground training was a great addition to my flight lessons but at the current pace I was on, I probably wouldn’t earn my certificate until my son graduated college!

One day in mid summer, Robbie and I were about to head home from Clow when Robbie had an idea and stopped the car. “I’ll be right back, I want to go talk to someone.” I sat in the car as he disappeared into the hangar next door. Several minutes later, he emerged with a smile on his face as he climbed back in the car. “I found an instructor for you.” Little did I know how this would change my life and create a deeper, new found love of aviation and flying.

My new instructor’s name was Howard. He had logged thousands of hours in tail wheel aircraft and was a newly retired airline captain who flew 747s, DC-10s and 787s for United. In fact, I found out later in my training that he spent over a year flying 747s. A full year! That’s over 8700 hours! Howard holds about every rating under the sun and you’d never know it. He has so much knowledge about airplanes, I call him the Mr. Miyagi of aviation. I’m lucky he wanted to take me on as a student. I think one of the reasons he decided to teach me was the Champ. The airplane brings back many fond memories for him. Howard grew up in the back seat of an Aeronca Champ from the age of three



Brenda Culver

with his dad up front, tooling around the California countryside.

We scheduled a lesson and I met him out at Clow after work. Robbie and I had pulled the Champ out when Howard walked up with his headset in hand. We introduced ourselves and we discussed where I was in my training which, at that point, wasn't very far. I think I heard him say "good" but I could be wrong.

I climbed into the front seat and he crammed himself into the back. Robbie hand started us and off we went. My taxiing had already gotten a bit easier but it was still at a slow walk pace. Howard already had me taking full control of the Champ but he still helped out with radio "lingo" until I got more comfortable with the radio.

We went up and did some basic maneuvers so he could gauge where I was in my training. The throttle and trim were still foreign to me and I needed to utilize those more as I got more comfortable with handling all the controls, not just the stick and rudder. He had me head back to Clow and enter the pattern. Flying the pattern always scared the crud out of me. It seemed like a zone of insanity with aircraft coming and going, all at different speeds, scattered around the airport like a swarm of mosquitos. You find your way into this swarm safely all while preparing to land the airplane. It all still seemed overwhelming to me.

"Clow traffic, Champ 81757, left downwind for 36, Clow." I pulled the carb heat and decreased the power to idle abeam the numbers. The sound of the wind increased as I pulled the trim back to full nose up. "That's perfect, keep that speed." I made my turn to base and lined up for final. "Do you think you're high or low?" This was a question I got from Howard quite often. "High? I've only landed a few times." I stammered as I approached the end of the runway that was growing larger and larger in the windscreen.

"You look good. Just hold this glide path."

Glide path? I was just trying to stop from breaking the stick off in my grip. How was he so calm? I crossed the threshold and pulled back a bit too much, the plane bounced and rose back in the air a few feet. "Just hold it off, nice and easy."

I worked the rudder to keep it pointed down the runway. The horizon disappeared behind the nose and the plane felt mushy as it lost lift. The Oleo struts on the landing gear got a work out when I "plunked" it on to the pavement. Immediately we veered to the right and I danced on the rudder pedals, hanging on for dear life. "Stick in your lap. Stick in your lap. Pin the tail." I pulled back firmly and regained control as we bled off speed. We taxied back to the hangar and shut down. I survived my first lesson with my new instructor. Hopefully he wouldn't be afraid to fly with me again after that fun adventure.

"You did great. Landings will come with practice." A little reassurance from my instructor.

We exchanged numbers and would keep in touch for the next good day to fly. Before leaving I asked "did you help me on that landing?"

He said "Nope! That was all you!" I felt a little better about myself that I was able to control the airplane from start to finish all on my own. I left the airport with a little more confidence that maybe, just maybe I could do this.

## 2023 UP COMING EVENTS

Here is a Calendar so far.

November 9th meeting and -Tentative YE Rally

December 9th Christmas Party at the Leary's

**There will be opportunity Eagle Flights**



### YOUR Articles needed

This Newsletter is YOUR Newsletter. I put the articles in it, but you have to write'em. Your Chapter needs your Contributions. Please share your experiences, skills, wisdoms, photos, humor and announcements with our membership. What may be common knowledge to you, may be priceless for a new pilot or builder. Even if you are not a Pulitzer level author — send me your words. Robbie or I will buff up the grammar if needed. Send input to [homanles@yahoo.com](mailto:homanles@yahoo.com).

NEXT Meeting will be at The Leary's hanger

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH AT 5:30

**We have a Chapter Website: The URL is:**

<https://chapters.eaa.org/ea972>

We are working on updating and modifying the website to meet our chapter needs and persona. We need to add pictures of members projects, and projects they are working on, building and or flying as well as the aircraft we fly. The EAA makes this available to all EAA chapters and each chapter can then modify to make it what they need. We can use this to help announce YE flights, runway Gumbo, Poker run, Events and past news letters. By the way, if you have any old information, newsletters, ETC involving the chapter please get it to me and I can