

EAA Smilin ‘ Jack Chapter 866

Newsletter April 2021



Some of the open hangar day participants enjoying eats at Ben’s hangar at Dunn Airpark March 20, 2021



Hello to all EAA Chapter 866 members and friends,

With the March Pancake Breakfast behind us – dare I say - we are practically “back to normal”. Everyone was so helpful, working together, providing great food and we even made a few new friends.

Saturday March 21st, I was overwhelmed by the turnout for our Open Hangar Food and Fun day! The weather was not cooperative – say “gusty and cold” – but it could have been worse! The fellowship was warm and inviting

and I was happy to see so many out and about – walking from one hangar to the next, visiting and of course – eating!

In addition, before the food started, there were two more members who received their BasicMed physicals – it was a full day!

At our meeting on April 7th, there will be a trip report from Cathy Jacob “CJ” regarding the flight she took in her champ to relocate the plane from Louisiana to X21. Hope to see you all at the meeting!



The member spotlight this month features Dan Hillman:

Dan was born and raised in Muncie, Indiana. One of his earliest memories was of flying on his Dad’s lap with his uncle – who owned a Piper side-by-side “Cub”. He enjoyed hanging around the airport and knew that he always wanted to fly.

Toward that end, after graduation from high school, he attended Ball State University and enrolled in the Air Force ROTC program. While there he was fortunate to receive flight training and his private pilot’s license as part of a contracted service. His first solo cross-country was to Connersville airport in Indiana in a 172 - he remembers this as one of the fun times of his life. After college, he went on to active duty and pilot training at Webb AFB in Texas.

During military flight training he was unfortunate enough to have an engine fire during his second solo in the T-37 – but he handled it correctly and landed safely. All this was during the Vietnam era, so his next stop was to fly the AC-47 in Viet Nam. Most all of his 500 plus missions were at night - over the jungle at about 3000 ft AGL. It was a one-year tour, after which he was stationed at McCoy AFB in Orlando flying a KC-135.



(Dan Hillman’s plane on his Viet Nam tour in the Air Force) C47 Gunship

After his required 5 years in the Air Force, he went on to charter flying then working for an Allegany commuter airline – mainly flying short routes in Illinois and Indiana. Later he worked as a personal pilot for evangelist Lester Sumrall, as his pilot flying a “Mixmaster” Cessna 337 for a few months before flying for the Ball Corporation as a corporate pilot.

Next he was happy to return to Orlando and was flying BAC-111’s for a start-up airline: Florida Express. It was in Orlando that he met his wife, June.

Dan went on to fly for TWA – based out of New York City – then United – based out of Chicago. I’m sure it was a challenge to commute from Orlando – but he made the most of it and had the opportunity to fly the 727, 737 and the 747-400. His favorite airplanes were the 747-400 and the T-38. He would often fly to the Orient from Chicago and enjoyed the amenities of the 747.

Dan and June attended a pancake breakfast here at bldg 10 in 2003 and he has been here ever since. He served at Chapter President between Jim Webb and Alberto Silva. He recalls there was a two aircraft crash at one of the breakfasts while he was president – a devastating crash in which everyone was killed except the pilot who was responsible. He owned a Thorp for a year – which miraculously was undamaged – when Hurricane Charlie came through Orlando – destroying all the other aircraft tied down around it – including a DC-3 which flipped over it!

Dan retired as a professional pilot a few years ago and has done some work “helping others out” and fixing up a property he owns. He also considered moving to an airpark, and bought lots at two grass strips: Gator Airpark and Mt. Royal (now paved) – so he has spent some time mowing grass – a never ending job. He has sold most of his airport lots now.

I am in awe of the wealth of experience, knowledge and quiet humility of so many of you in our chapter. “Commander” Dan – has enough interesting stories to fill a book.

Minutes of the March 3, 2021 Meeting of EAA Chapter 866 Inc.

The EAA Chapter 866 March meeting was held on the 3rd at 7:00 PM at the regular meeting location, 480 N Williams Ave, in Titusville, Florida.

Chapter President Kathy Anderson presided over the meeting.

Ben Charvet, Chapter Vice-president, Herman Nagel, Chapter Treasurer, and Richard Van Treuren, Chapter Secretary, were in attendance.

Deborah Van Treuren, member-at-large of the Chapter Board of Directors was also present, as was much of the regular membership of Chapter 866, numbering around 25, thereby establishing a voting quorum.

The meeting began at 7pm with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Don White offered discussion about the recent troubles at the Airport Authority.

President Anderson made a presentation about the upcoming open-hangar food event for later in March. Three volunteer hangars will offer food space.

The recent Basic Med event was reviewed. Plan is to do another Basic Med event later this month.

March 13th will feature a pancake breakfast at Sebring in conjunction with their Young Eagle event.

A video was shown explaining how an older person can egress a Petienpol.

Bill Bilsky conducted a training session with volunteers learning how to make a hose clamp from safety wire using the tool(s) he manufactured for the chapter tool box.

President Anderson made a presentation covering runway markings, showing common misconceptions and actual markings that are incorrect. Following the serving of refreshments the Andersons presented a video showing their recent trip out west, including ops at 13,000 ft Leadville, Colorado.

The Chapter Meeting adjourned around 7:45 PM.

Meeting Minutes were assembled & submitted by Chapter Secretary, Richard Van Treuren.

A Memorable Flight



By Mario Jimenez

I am willing to bet that very few pilots cannot remember that glorious day when they took their first solo flight. The exact date may become a bit fuzzy, as the time passes, but the particulars of the flight will forever remain a vivid memory.

It all began with a few touch-and-goes at the local airfield. Visibility and winds were good, but there was a very light drizzle- just enough to sprinkle the windshield with tiny rain drops. After three circuits around the patch, my instructor tells me to make the next one a full stop.

After landing, instead of going to the ramp, he instructs me to pull off to the side of the taxiway and shut down. He then proceeds to climb out and asks for my logbook. He then calmly instructs me to go back up and make three takeoff and landings...Oh my, the day I have been so nervously waiting is finally here, I think to myself!

The trusty Cessna 172 appeared to jump into the air, relieved of not lugging the extra 200 pounds. The climb was also faster than “normal” and, all of a sudden, I am downwind and facing my first solo landing. As I turned to final, I took a glance at that big, empty seat next to me and realized, for the first time, that there is no one there to fix my mistakes. Good training paid off and my landing was uneventful -even a nice one, I might add. Two more times around the pattern and I returned to the taxiway to pick up my instructor. With a smile that went ear-to-ear, I accepted his congratulations for having successfully soloed.

As I said in the beginning, that flight stays vividly on my brain but, the part I remember the most is my instructor's words after I had taxied to the ramp and tied the plane down. He said: "I kept your log book just in case you didn't make it. Had you crashed, I would have sworn you stole the plane". I hoped he was joking...

Mario Jimenez

Isn't it fun to hear these personal stories like this one that Mario submitted? How about you, do you have a story?

Please send me one of your stories if you do.....Larry

GPS Jamming

[AOPA and NBAA say](#) the FAA and the U.S. Air Force need to figure out how to minimize the effects on civilian aviation while they test the hardness of military GPS. There are almost always NOTAMS warning of potential GPS outages as the military intentionally jams signals for training and research. The groups say they understand the need for the testing, but it's disruptive and potentially dangerous for others using the signals. "The NAS has become increasingly reliant on GPS as the primary source of navigation and aircraft system functionality while reducing the ground based navigational backup infrastructure," the joint letter reads. It also notes the tests are on the increase and the government agencies have said they will continue to expand.

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I gleaned (stole) the article above off of an AVweb newsletter that showed up in my email a week or so ago. I have also seen NOTAMS about the GPS signals being unreliable close to our area. It has been a long time since I've made any long distance cross country flights but that's about to change once we get our C172A going. I've never gotten over having sectional charts with me when I travel although I've got kinda used to using an ipad with Foreflight for navigation with open paper sectionals as backup, just in case the GPS signal goes "poof". You might want to think about this too, if you're going somewhere in your plane. You know, "plan (B)"!

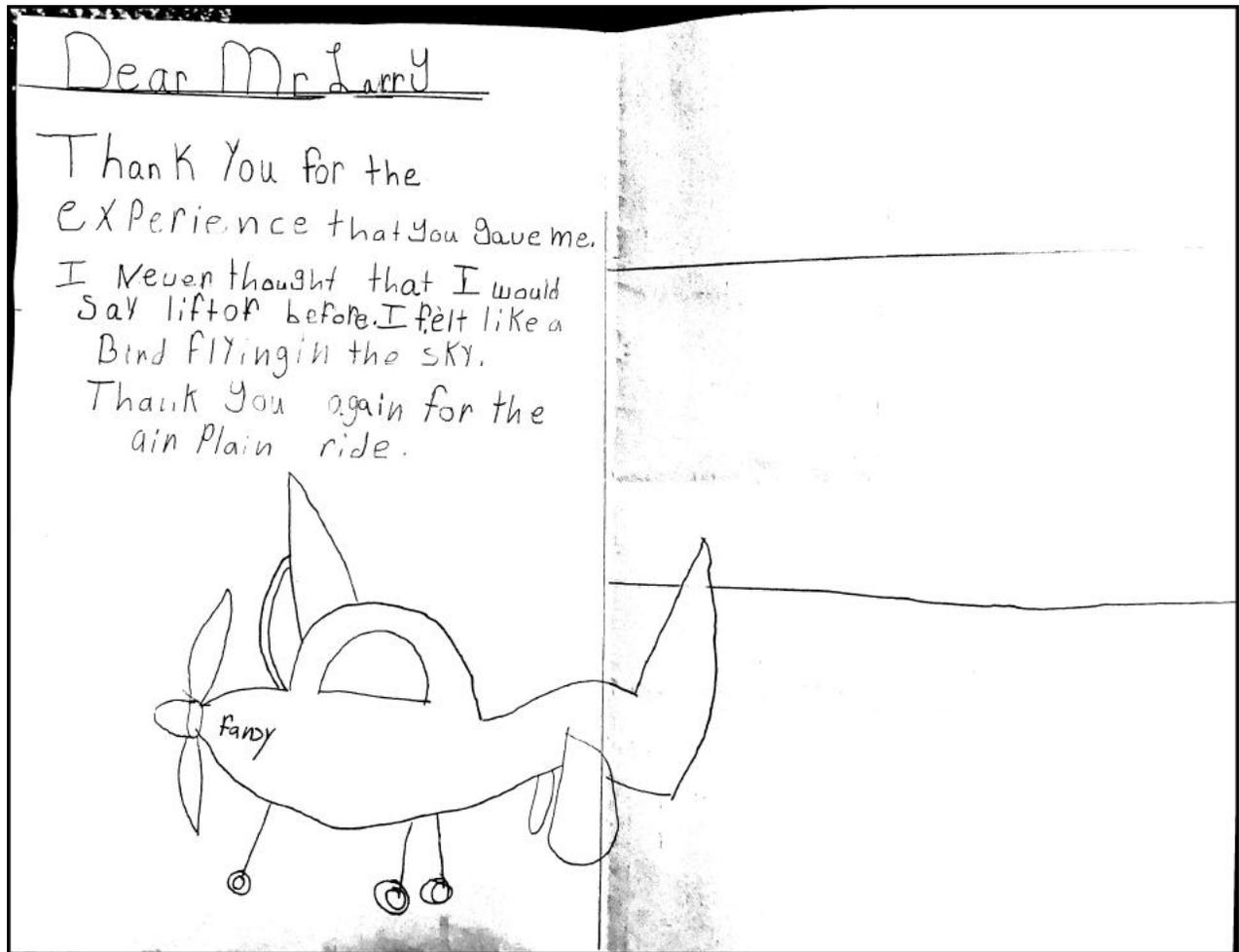
Larry

Fun Young Eagle Flight

A grandmother asked me to take her granddaughter for an airplane ride as a birthday gift for her. We did this and I decided to make it a Y-E flight. What a delight it was to fly with this bright, enthusiastic, and fun little girl! A couple of days after the ride her mother brought her out to the airport to give me this note below.

She is my 284th Young Eagle!

Larry



Ever Notice How Sharp the Art work always Looks on Bldg. 10?



Sun n Fun is Next Big Aviation Event



This is a view from my work station at a previous Sun n Fun event

It's almost upon us, the 36th annual Sun n Fun convention at Lakeland, FL starts April 13! I think this will be # 30 for me. Lookin forward to it!

Lg



Ben Charvet treated Jim Morgan to a ride in his Pietenpol on Jim's (87th) birthday

..... If you're interested in seeing a video of Jim (87yrs) getting in the Piet. Go to YouTube – Larry Gilbert Jim's birthday flight

Chapter Officers

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Monthly Breakfast

Sat. April 3, 2021, 8:00 am

Bldg. 10, Dunn Airpark (X21)

Titusville, Fl

April Chapter Meeting

**Weds. April 7, 2021, 7:00
pm**

Bldg. 10 meeting room,

Dunn Airpark

Titusville, Fl

