

# EAA 297 – KITTYHAWKERS NEWSLETTER



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NUMBER 1

## PRESIDENTS CORNER

As I take the time to address the club for the first time, I have to believe there are a few of you who are thinking well, dang, it's about time! Thinking about it, I have been a member for over 25 years. It surely is an honor to be your "Prez", and I look forward to the year! I want to thank Dave Moore for his leadership over the past year. Dave was a bit under the weather and missed the Christmas Party, so he missed his accolades. With Dave's leadership we had a really active year; three good fly ins, good speakers, lots of fun, new members, new paint, and great fellowship. What more could we ask for!

There were more than a few that were missing in action at our normally filled Christmas party, and you were surely missed. But for the crowd that attended, what a great time was had. The food and decorations were wonderful, with much thanks to Jane Johnson, Ella Rhodes, Billie Hughes, and CJ Spencer and her daughter Anna Ward. The white elephant gift exchange was an absolute hoot. There was a Wright Flyer that was in very high demand, (Who knew Ken Mcgee could imitate a Wright engine so well), I wound up with an old can of oil (non aviation I might add), and Billy Johnson wound up with a Horse's but'te award; I can't explain it, you will just have to ask Billy. (But Jane couldn't stop laughing!) It was a great evening!

See you at the January meeting, and bring a friend(s) or an aircraft!

Tom

PS. One request; if you have a Facebook account, please post our Newsletter on it and share the news with your friends.

## JANUARY SPEAKER

Our speaker at the January meeting will be Rear Admiral Ronald H. Henderson USN (Ret.) Ron was commissioned following graduation from Harvard. Designated a Naval Aviator he flew both the A-7E "Corsair" and the F/A-18 "Hornet". He has flown over 3800 mishap-free flight hours in single seat tactical jet aircraft and logged over 600 carrier landings. He served as the Commanding Officer of USS *Juneau* (LPD 10), forward deployed to Sasebo, Japan, and he commanded USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) during *Operation Enduring Freedom*. He has retired in the Wilmington area.

His talk will be about taking command of the USS John F. Kennedy and preparing the carrier to participate in Operation Enduring Freedom (2004). Join us in the clubhouse and learn a little about the extraordinary efforts required to maintain and deploy an aircraft carrier.

## CHRISTMAS PARTY

STAG AIR PARK – EAA 297 kicked off the holiday season with its traditional Christmas party. The clubhouse was festively decorated and filled with folks having a joyous time. The party started with a social hour and the sounds of Christmas music, corks popping, and animated conversations filled the clubhouse. As folks arrived, and brought their contributions, the serving table was soon filled to capacity with a delicious array of holiday dishes. The ham, turkey, and brisket were carved and dinner was soon served. The din of conversations dimmed only slightly as the feast was merrily enjoyed. I had visions of lots of food left over but I was happily mistaken. The fare rapidly disappeared; especially the desserts.

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With our appetites temporarily satisfied, our new President, Tom Goodwin took charge. His first order of business was to express our chapter's appreciation for the significant efforts of Dr. Jonathan Crane. A member of the ILM Board of Directors, he has been the lone voice of general aviation. And regrettably he has been swimming against the tide. But he has made great strides and has an ambitious agenda for the new year. He was presented a commemorative plaque and a very special EAA 297 cap and tee shirt.

In recognition of individual efforts, Tom awarded EAA certificates and pins to those chapter members who ably performed their assigned tasks during the year.

And then we held our traditional "White Elephant Gift Exchange". There were a series of "interesting" gifts that were opened, but the one that caused the most interest was a beautiful wooden model of the Wright Brothers Flyer. I do not remember who originally opened the flyer, but it was "stolen" several times and was finally possessed by our favorite "rotor head" Ken McGee. Gary

Henderson cast his covetous eye on the flyer as Ken tauntingly played with it. A second present that was stolen several times was large, white, furry, stuffed bear. There were several grandmothers in the crowd who intended the large furry critter for their newest grandchildren. It was great fun to watch the "Grandmotherly" competition unfold.

Thank you, everyone, for the significant efforts that you made. Starting as early as October with the painting of the clubhouse, to the festive clubhouse decorations, and then to the food preparation, everyone had a hand in the magical success of our Christmas Party. Well done!



Jerry Collins and his best buddy "Craftsman Santa"

## ALUMINUM OVERCAST

**B-17G-105-VE Serial No. 44-85740 N5017N**

ALBUQUERQUE NM - Jim Kessler - Photos by Mike Gordon. EAA Chapter 179 here in Albuquerque, NM, has been given the opportunity to spend some quality time with one of the greatest aircraft of World War II. *Aluminum Overcast* is getting its



annual inspection done at Double Eagle Airport (KAEG). This aircraft is owned by the EAA and is based in Oshkosh, WI.



I had the chance to spend some of that quality time with this beauty. This 80 year old doesn't look a day over 30. *Aluminum Overcast* is a bit more complex than my RV-6, so it was rather daunting. I was there for a few hours on a Saturday with a friend, Mike Gordon. The airplane was on jacks. I observed a team doing wheel and brake inspections. Another person was preparing to check one of the 36 cylinders that had been identified with low compression. I was part of a crew that disassembled a portion of the main landing gear actuators.



Unlike most modern aircraft, the gear retraction mechanism is a jackscrew. An electric motor is used to turn the screw to raise and lower the gear. Should the motor fail, the gear can be lowered manually.

I removed the dust cover of the jackscrew in the right main landing gear wheel well. I was surprised how clean the aircraft was for being 80 years old. My experience in the Marine Corps with 30-year-old aircraft told me that this airplane regularly receives some tender loving care. The wheel well was very clean. The jackscrews were like new, and the covers came off easily. The team doing the annual had only three paid employees directing the effort, and the rest of us were volunteers. When Mike Gordon and I arrived, we were the first ones there. But three hours later there were eight or more volunteers opening inspection panels and doing other simple but time-consuming tasks.



The tools are maintained in a trailer. A second trailer contained spare parts. The professionals were able to remove, inspect and reinstall both main landing gear brakes and wheels during the time it took us to remove the landing gear jackscrew dust covers. In our defense we had never removed jackscrew dust covers, and the wheel wells are difficult to work in. The photo below is of the jackscrew dust cover.

As we were finishing up our wheel well work, one of the volunteers was ready to take my ladder to start work on the left inboard engine. (Imagine

trying to identify which of these 9 cylinders has low compression.) While I watched, he was getting ready to pull the cylinder heads off the offending cylinder. The prognosis was that the exhaust valve was leaking. Lots of very dark oil was involved in the head removal. That didn't seem to concern the more experienced volunteers doing the work. However, when I stopped by a few days later, apparently the repair required a complete cylinder change.

Of course, after doing landing gear inspections and repairs, it is essential to "jack and smack" the gear. The landing gear cycle was done on the aircraft's batteries the next day.



It takes me about thirty hours to do an annual inspection on my RV-6, which is only four years old. (For those of you in the know, don't judge me.) This aircraft is about one hundred times more complicated and the three full-time mechanics were hoping to have it completed in five days. But there was a steady stream of volunteers helping them. I don't get too many volunteers.

*Aluminum Overcast* begins 2017 with its first rides in early January in Albuquerque. It will tour the country during the airshow season. Look for it at an airshow near you. And check out that right main landing gear jackscrew cover. It's a beautiful piece of work if I do say so myself.

Editor's Note: Jim Kessler and I purchased "PATROL" together in 1997 and joined Chapter 297 shortly after. Jim was a Contract Simulator Instructor (CSI #2) in the MV-22 training program at MCAS New River. He has logged hundreds of hours in the aircraft as a Bell Helicopter Production Test Pilot. He is currently an Instructor in the USAF CV-22 Pilot Training Program in Albuquerque, NM.

## 2017 CHAPTER OFFICERS

STAG AIR PARK – We start the new year with the following chapter officers. Contact information is detailed in the information block on page two of the newsletter.

**President** – Tom Goodwin. **Vice President** – Aubrey Thompson. **Secretary** – Jim Flippen.

**Treasurer** – Jerry Collins. **Newsletter Editor** – Mark Thoman. **Master Chef** – Ken McGee.

## ANNUAL DUES

STAG PARK – Yes, it is that time of year again. We get to pay our federal, state, and county taxes, and the Christmas credit card bill will arrive in the mail. But, with the funds that are left over, please remember that our annual chapter dues are also due. The dues are \$30.00 for the year. Please seek out our Treasurer, Jerry Collins, and affirm your membership in the chapter.

## FUTURE EVENTS

### January 2017

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup>  | <b>EAA 297</b> - Chapter Meeting<br>10:00 AM in the Chapter Clubhouse. Lunch in the No Whining Saloon 12:00 PM |
| Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>    | South Carolina Breakfast Club, Aiken Municipal Airport, (KAIK)   |
| Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> | <b>EAA 297</b> - Chapter Board of Directors Meeting in the Chapter Clubhouse. Meeting time to be announced.    |
| Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>   | South Carolina Breakfast Club, Lowcountry Regional Airport, (KRBW)   |

### February 2017

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> | <b>EAA 297</b> - Chapter Meeting<br>10:00 AM in the Chapter Clubhouse. <b>LADIES DAY LUNCHEON</b> in the No Whining Saloon 12:00 PM |
| Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>   | South Carolina Breakfast Club, Columbia Metro Airport, (KCAE)   |

- Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> **EAA 297** - The Chilly Fly-In and Chili Cook-Off 10:00 AM at Stag Air Park
- Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> South Carolina Breakfast Club, Greenville Downtown Airport, (KGMU)

**March 2017**

- Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> **EAA 297** - Chapter Meeting 10:00 AM in the Chapter Clubhouse. Lunch in the No Whining Saloon 12:00 PM
- Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> South Carolina Breakfast Club, Lee County-Getters Field, (52J)
- Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> South Carolina Breakfast Club, Lexington County at Pelion Airport, (6J0)

**HUMOR**

Three, nearly deaf, EAA 297 members met on a street corner in Wilmington.

“Isn’t it windy?” the first asked the second.

“No”, replied the second, “it’s Thursday”.

“Me too,” said the third with gusto, “Let’s go get a beer.”

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**HUNGRY?** – Come join us at the  
**NO WHINING SALOON**

**Enjoy a home cooked meal prepared by our master chef.**

**Lunch is served promptly (not really) at 12:00 following EAA Chapter 297’s business meeting the first Saturday of the month.**

**\$5.99 for fixed with pilots.  
\$4.99 for rotary wing pilots.**

**SeaHawk Aviation, Inc.**

**Ryan Evans**

Vice President & Director Aircraft Maintenance

910-338-8059

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EAA CHAPTER 297

**LADIES DAY LUNCHEON**

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4<sup>TH</sup>**

**NO WHINING SALOON - 12:00 PM**