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# Neo-Flites Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2005

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## **MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Our membership meeting was held on September 15th 2005 at 7:00 p.m. at G.M. Smith and Son Realtors, 203 S. Villa Ave., in Villa Park, IL. Most of the board and several members turned out to enjoy the fellowship, treats, and drinks provided.

## **FINANCES**

Financials were presented by Tom McGonigle thru the end of July 2005. They were accepted by the board.

## **NEXT MEETING – OCTOBER 20<sup>th</sup>**

**The next Neo-Flites membership meeting will be at Camera Press Printing, Inc., 13 E. Park Blvd., Villa Park, IL.** We will meet at 6:00 P.M. for hamburgers and “brats” on the grill if weather is good. Otherwise we’ll order something and have it inside. Meeting to follow dinner. **HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL THERE!!**

## **N12791 GOES TO AIRVENTURE 2005!**

### **SWEET&SOUR**

When Gaylord called asking if I could write up a brief of my trip to Oshkosh this year I had severe mixed feelings. Why? Simple. I had one of the most rewarding moments combined with the scariest moment of my life in a period of 8 hours that day. More on that later.

Everything started as usual when I talked to a co-worker who’s an aviation fan too. We planned a trip to Oshkosh by car. Departure date was set for Friday July 29<sup>th</sup>. As every year, I worked half day that Friday and hit the road as scheduled. The 4 hour trip by car was uneventful, even the expected half hour traffic jam on HWY 41 right at Oshkosh. I can’t believe every year it catches me off guard despite my effort to make a mental note to take a different road when I get there the following year. I blame the excitement of seeing planes flying low altitude around Fond Du Lac. Bad excuse for someone with a deteriorating memory. ☺

Once we reached Oshkosh we checked in the University dorms and head right into the air show to have a quick peek at the exhibition highlights. I like to do this every year to create a mental list of things to check in detail for the next two days. I usually arrive Friday and leave Sunday night. This year was a bit different since my friend

had to come back Saturday night because of a previous commitment he had scheduled for Sunday. I didn’t mind giving up a day at Oshkosh considering the good company of a good friend. But I established one condition. We would have to get up at 5:00 am Saturday morning to have a truly full day inside Airventure. My friend accepted with no hesitation. I wasn’t twisting his arm since he loves planes too and this was his first trip to Oshkosh. After dinner we ended up going to bed pass midnight. Next thing I knew, at five o’clock Saturday I was walking towards the showers.

It was great seeing White Knight, Space Ship One and Global Flyer. All the Rutan’s designs made the headlines big time during 2004 and 2005. His presentation this year was as good and inspiring as always. They had Space Ship One pilots presenting too. We heard rumors that the new Honda Jet made a surprise appearance at Airventure. After 1 hour of looking and asking for it we couldn’t find it. It was then when an official confirmed to us that the sleek looking plane had left as unexpectedly as it showed up. I couldn’t mask my disappointment. Luckily, we were rewarded by many other attraction including next generation personal jets like Eclipse and Mustang with their neat looking glass cockpits.

As every year, you end up meeting tons of new people, exchanging cards, emails and answering the typical question of ‘where do you come from?’. The level of aviation camaraderie was great, again. A couple of people asked me if I flew in or drove into Oshkosh. I gave them my standard answer: “I drove; I don’t feel ready for the ultimate PIC experience to KOHS during Airventure”. This year though, giving such answer bugged me more than ever. I felt I was providing a flat answer without truly understanding the implications of PIC to Oshkosh. So, after lunch I stopped at the FAA building and asked for a copy of the Airventure NOTAMS. I read it on and off between walks and exhibitions. Soon it was time to drive back home. During the almost four hour trip to drop my friend off, I repeatedly wondered if I was ready for PIC destination Airventure.

I arrived home. One thing was true; I was thirsty for more Airventure. That's when I started considering driving again the next morning. Then it hit me. Maybe I can fly there. So I carefully read the NOTAM and constantly came up with the same conclusion. I can make this. Then I called George Warner to ask for his opinion. I thought of calling George Smith but hesitated since he was still on vacation with his family. Never thought I needed to call him anyway 24 hours later with a very different reason. Now it was ten at night on Saturday so I started planning the trip. I told myself constantly not to commit to this trip until I finish the planning. When I finished it was 12:30 am. Conclusion came naturally then. I'm going, I said. Unfortunately, it was too late to invite anybody to come along. I went to bed and set up the alarm for 5:00 am again so I could take off early and avoid traffic (air traffic that is). At 4:15 am my eyes just opened. I couldn't sleep more. Call it excitement, who knows. I was at Dupage at 6:00 am. After a very detailed pre-flight I was at 4500 calling Kankakee radio to activate my flight plan. Later I contacted Madison for flight following. It was a calm and beautiful morning. One hour and forty minutes later I was in contact with RIPON approach. I confessed right away I was a first timer. The controller was extremely nice. You could tell they were fresh. There was only a couple of traffic inbound. RIPON handed me over to "tower". These people are really on the ground directing the operation. There was a moment of confusion and subsequently ants in my stomach when the controller cleared 791 to land on runway 18. I looked at runway 18 and there were tons of planes of all different sizes taking off. Confession time, again. I declared my concern to the controller and he replied back apologizing he actually meant RWY 18L. I think he sensed the nervousness in my voice. I still did not see it. Then he came back clarifying that it wasn't really a runway but a "skinny" taxiway with temporary numbers in red ink. For this approach you have to stay north of runway 9/27 and not lower than 1800 feet until you crossed 9/27. It was tough to see 'the numbers' from up there but the controller assure me that I was doing great. Don't know under what standards. Idle, 40 degrees flaps and I still landed long but with no incidents. It was windy for that early in the morning.

That's when it hit me. It was the greatest reward feeling ever. A true achievement. Many things went through my mind then. Many episodes of my life crossed my mind. Many good memories but also many bad memories like the loss of my father whom I dedicated the accomplishment of obtaining my pilot license back in 2003. Good thing I had a lot to think about since the taxi to parking was the longest ever. Not less than 20 minutes over bumpy grass. Airventure volunteers approached the plane and offered anchors and ropes. I bought them from I guy who swore he knew 791. He asked if I came from KDPA. When I answered affirmatively, he said he changed the sump valve in the pilot side of 791 a couple of months ago. His name was Robert and he works for Mukenschnabl. He said he and his son volunteer at Airventure every year.

The day went fast and I spent the last hour evaluating the departure procedure. I have to admit it was MUCH easier than the approach simply because traffic is dispersing rather than concentrating in one spot.

At 5500 I established contact with Madison again. Good thing since I needed advice big time. Right in the middle of the return leg, I started feeling tired. Very tired. Initially I thought it was an oxygen problem so I confessed (again) and requested a decent to 3500. Controller approved. I started feeling better again but only for ten minutes. Madison released me since I was south of their jurisdiction. I tried to push it and find myself looking at the GPS ETE every minute. Not a good sign. Then I felt more tired and my hands started to sweat. At this point I thought I was going to faint and thus die. I tried to focus and I desisted of the idea to make it back home non stop. I hit the NSRT button in my GPS and miraculously Lake Lawn (C59) showed up a couple of miles away to my right. I landed and I felt the biggest relieve. Never had I thought I was going to find myself in a situation I read so much about in aviation magazines. Never had I imagined I could be the main character of one of those Peter Garrison "Technicalities" Flying Magazine columns. Never had I thought I would experience first-hand the old aviation saying of "better being down here wishing you are flying, than in the air wishing you are on terra firma".

The root cause was pure fatigue. Lack of sleep, mental stress and excitement conspired against this wonderful trip and put me at the edge of the envelope. I called George Smith and explained what just happened. He gave advice. Initially I thought of leaving 791 there and come back next day to pick it up. But after I rested for an hour or so I felt better. Like if it wasn't enough, when I was about to take off from Lake Lawn, I remembered I forgot to close my flight plan for the return trip. I was way passed due. I returned to parking to call FSS. They had called my house. They didn't make a big deal. I apologized and continued on. The rest of the trip was uneventful although I felt still a bit tired and very anxious to get home.

Lessons learned: Dreams are always possible with good preparation, dedication, commitment and study. Sometimes we underestimate our capabilities. Before even trying, I was giving up the possibility of flying PIC to Oshkosh. I prepared, I asked for advice, I tried and I succeeded. It felt good. On the other hand, sometimes we overestimate our capabilities. I pushed my mind and body to an extreme condition I only had read about before. It was flat out a sweet and sour experience. Sweet and Sour is good for Chinese food, not for aviation. I'm glad and thankful I was able to make it back and have the chance to share this story with others that can learn from my mistakes. Rest assured I am going to



Oshkosh PIC again next year. Any volunteers?  
Submitted by Robert Revilla

### ***ANOTHER MEMBER GOES SOARING!***

A couple years ago Gary Tice joined Sky Soaring Glider club, out by Marengo and got his

glider rating. Yesterday, 10/1/05, Gary called and invited me out to the glider field so I met him out there. We spent the afternoon hanging around the airport watching gliders fly and helping move them around the field. The best part of the day was the two flights Gary took me on. If you have never experienced soaring, it is something you need to try at least once.

The aircraft is much smaller and a little tough to get into but once you are buckled in and you start rolling behind the tow plane you forget about how cramped it you are. The tow is a little bit scary for someone who is not used to being so close to another plane but it only took a couple minutes to get to 3000 feet where Gary pulled the handle to release the tow rope. Immediately after releasing the rope, the tow plane makes a left descending turn and we make a right climbing turn and we quickly slow down from about 60 knots to 42 knots and everything becomes even quieter. The only noise is the faint sound of the wind. It was so quiet that even though he was sitting behind me, we could have a normal conversation without headsets or yelling.

Gary let me take the stick for a few minutes, what a blast! Flying so slow and quietly, not trying to go anywhere or accomplish anything other than enjoying the flying is something different than we are all used to.

I hope to be able to join Sky Soaring next year. It is very reasonably priced and once you are a member, the plane is free. All you have to do is pay for the tow and \$6/flight for instruction. They have their own grass field and a nice big hanger. There were lots of very friendly people out there flying and grilling burgers and brats. What a great way to spend a day, Thanks Gary!!

If anyone is interested in trying soaring, I bet Gary wouldn't mind an e-mail or phone call to get more information.

Submitted by George Smith

### ***THE HISTORY OF FOWLER FLAPS***

We Got Flaps called Fowler

During preflight of our C172, ever notice the big gap left when the flaps are extended for inspection? The C172 flaps aren't always the way it used to be, way-back-when.

By 1914, flaps were introduced on the British S.E.-4 biplane, but pilots rarely used them

because they did not increase performance all that much. By the 1920s, flaps were combined with slots to provide lift and to eliminate the drag caused by the slots in normal flight. They were used in some commercial aircraft but remained rare for several years despite their ability to improve performance.

In 1920, Orville Wright and J. M. H. Jacobs invented the split flap, which consisted of a hinged section on the trailing edge of the underside of the wing. The split flap was simple and also had the benefit of increasing drag, which helped a pilot descend toward the runway at a steeper rate than current wings would allow and thus made landing approaches easier.

In the mid-1920s, Harland D. Fowler, a U.S. engineer who worked for the Army Air Corps, used his own time and money to develop a new kind of flap.

Fowler's flap did not simply hinge down from the wing, but actually *slid back from the wing and then rotated down*, while creating a slot between it and the wing. The Fowler flap had the benefit of actually 1) increasing the wing area in addition to 2) increasing the wing's lift.

Fowler built a wing and tested it on several airplanes in 1927-1929. He had a hard time convincing others that his design was useful and during the Great Depression, he had to work as a salesman to support his research. He persisted in pushing his design and ultimately got it adopted on an unsuccessful Martin bomber and then the Lockheed 14 twin-engine airliner in 1937.

Boeing also introduced the *triple-slotted flap* with its 727 airliner, which has seen wide service. Today, large commercial passenger jets have many complicated control systems for improving controllability during the takeoff and landing phases of flight. A passenger looking out a window over the wing just before landing will often notice the forward edge of the wing extending outward and down and the trailing edges extending backward and down, opening up gaps (the slots) in the wing.

This complicated system of controls represents the highly evolved descendent of the ideas of Lachmann, Mader, and the engineers of Handley Page during that remarkably productive period from 1917-1921. Luckily this all happened

before the start of WWII, and the aircraft that were designed for that conflict.

For the Soaring community of flyers, Fowler flaps are just the remedy. While chasing a thermal, the right amount of Fowler added in the spiral tweaks out the most L/D that the craft is capable of.

Submitted by Dennis Burke

### ***A FUN WAY TO ENJOY FLYING!***

George Smith took his daughter Amanda and two of her friends out to lunch at Janesville, WI. It looks like they enjoyed themselves!



Left to right, Amanda, Amy and Bethany

### ***END OF FLYING YEAR IS NEAR!***

If you have hours left to use up, remember the end of our flying year is October 31<sup>st</sup>. Don't lose your hours when the weather is great!

### ***NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS***

If you have articles or stories related to flying, to share with our members, please send them to me at [BULKMAIL01@aol.COM](mailto:BULKMAIL01@aol.COM).

It sure makes our newsletter more interesting!

Thanks to all who have sent articles.