



# The ThunderWord

Thunderbird Field EAA Chapter 1217

May 2023

Scottsdale, Arizona

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings from my corner of the hangar! At the march meeting, Chapter member Bob Carter lined up 98-year-old Larry Kentara from Globe, Arizona to speak. Larry is an actual World War Two veteran who served in the South Pacific on board an aircraft carrier. Bob did an excellent job of putting together slides to go along with Larry's talk so we would know where each of the battles was fought.

After a very well attended Flying Flea Market last month and a great turn out for our May Day Chapter BBQ we are going to try something entirely new. Instead of our normal monthly meeting we are going to do **a road trip** to the Pitts Flying Museum at Pegasus Airpark.

The Pitts Flying Museum is the brainchild of Pete Diaz whose mission is to "Welcome everyone to the world of aerobatics, inspired by the legendary Curtis Pitts." The museum features fully restored Pitts Specials of every model. They are restored to perfect condition just as they rolled off the assembly line. There are some modifications to these planes so they can operate in today's airspace and comply with service bulletins and Airworthiness Directives. The planes are flown regularly.

We have had low attendance at meetings since the pandemic restrictions lifted. In an effort to get more people engaged in the EAA Chapter experience we are trying to think of new fun ways to get people involved. The Flea Market and BBQ were winners as far as attendance, we will see how the road trip to the Pitts Museum turns out. After Chapter member Mike McGarry called me up one day and said "you have got to go see this" a visit the Pitts Flying Museum has been on my bucket list.

Don't forget on the evening of first day of AirVenture, a Monday. We will be having our

24th Annual AirVenture Happy Hour! Invite your friends and family. 7 PM at Wendt's-On-The-Lake.

See you around the aerodrome!

*Curtis*

## MAY CHAPTER MEETING

The May 2023 meeting of Thunderbird Field EAA Chapter 1217 will be held on **Saturday, May 20th, beginning at 9 am**. The location is at the Pitts Flying Museum at Pegasus Airpark. It is important that everyone plan to arrive before 9 am as that is when the tour will start. People should plan an hour for the drive down from Scottsdale. If you plan to drive think about reaching out to other Chapter members to carpool.

Guests are always welcome!

## IMPORTANT - MEETING LOCATION

Pegasus Airpark 26505 S Crismon Rd, Hangar 2, Queen Creek, Arizona 0900 hrs.

## MAYDAY-MAYDAY BBQ

Since May first fell on a Monday this year we decided to have the 23rd annual Thunderbird Field EAA Chapter 1217 May Day-May Day BBQ on Saturday, May 6th at the Deer Valley Airport northside wash rack.

Our motto is Flying, Friends and Food and we managed to get a high score on all of these. We tried to build on the successes of 22 previous BBQ's.

Jack and Clare Pollack premade eighty burgers on Friday evening so when our Chefs Brian Mitchell and Nikki Fox started cooking they didn't have to make the pattys. Jack and Clare as well as Chrissie Clark deserve a big thanks for buying all the food, fixins and refreshments. Also a huge thanks to everyone

Continued on page 2

that brought a tasty assortment of delicious delights and desserts. No one went home hungry!

We had a nice assortment of display aircraft including a Taylorcraft, Cherokee, RV-8, RV-12,

Waco RNF and a Curtiss Jr. While a good chunk of the country was still digging out from winter we had near perfect weather and light winds.



### Pitts Flying Museum



**Pictures from the Flying Flea Market held on April 15th**

**EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2023**

There are several important FAA-approved changes in the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2023 Notice (commonly referred to as the Oshkosh NOTAM), featuring arrival and departure procedures for EAA's 70th fly-In convention on July 24-30 at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh.

The document is in effect from noon CDT on Thursday, July 20, until noon CDT on Monday,

July 31, and outlines procedures for the many types of aircraft that fly to Oshkosh for the event, as well as aircraft that land at nearby airports. The Notice was designed by the FAA to assist pilots in their EAA AirVenture flight planning. It is now known as the Oshkosh Notice instead of a NOTAM because of a changed FAA internal procedure.

Continued on page 5



**Brian Mitchell and Nikki Fox on cooking duty**



**Eating, and talking airplanes**

**Various pictures from the May Day Fly-In**



**John Davis tries on the Curtiss Jr.**

Continued from page 3

## **EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2023 Notice**

Some of the 2023 changes include:

- A change in the AirVenture ultralight pattern at Wittman Regional Airport.
- Guidance regarding Oshkosh aircraft parking areas, including North 40/South 40 designation.
- Elimination of the Fond du Lac diversion procedure.
- The start time of the daily air shows has been changed from 2:30 to 2:15 p.m. CDT.
- The Notice and its procedures are effective through noon CDT on Monday, July 31.

The ATC-assignable transition points approaching Oshkosh from the west that will ease holding and congestion will again be in effect in 2023. These points are at Endeavor Bridge, Puckaway Lake, and Green Lake. They will be announced on the arrival ATIS when ATC activates them at times of highest traffic flows.

“The most essential information for any pilot flying to Oshkosh involves reading and thoroughly understanding the 2023 AirVenture Notice to ensure safe operations on arrival and departure,” said Sean Elliott, EAA’s vice president of advocacy and safety. “This FAA Notice document states the official requirements and expectations for pilots. We also urge all pilots to log appropriate cross-country time prior to their trip to Oshkosh so they have the proficiency and confidence to fly safely.” EAA is also hosting a webinar on June 14 at 7 p.m. regarding [flying to AirVenture 2023](#) and changes in this year’s Notice. Pilots are encouraged to participate to build their knowledge prior to their flights to Oshkosh. Pilots can download a digital version of the Notice at [EAA.org/NOTAM](http://EAA.org/NOTAM), or order a free printed copy via that website or by calling EAA Membership Services at 800-564-6322.

## **GLOW IN THE DARK**

Canadian air show pilot Kyle Fowler flies a 1986 Burt Rutan-designed 2-seater Long-EZ airplane. This canard wing design with its dramatic swept-back wings is an odd-looking aircraft. In its fresh, hot electrified yellow paint scheme, it is an instant eye-catcher. It instantly catches the eye on every flight line and is an air show photographer’s favorite.

Compared to other air show performers seen at this year’s SUN n’ FUN event, Kyle’s Long-EZ is a somewhat tame act. He is slow and methodical in his intricate performance. He does a lot of slow rolls and knife-edge flying, yet the crowds love it and respond to the distinctiveness of his strange little airplane. He stands out for the crowd who are awestruck by his efficient execution of each maneuver in his wacky backwards flying airplane - well, it looks like it is flying backwards anyway, even if it is not actually doing it.

Kyle’s Long-EZ sports a special paint job, too. He has a LumiLor coating underneath the paint of his hot yellow bird. Kyle’s Long-EZ is perhaps the only airplane flying today with this electrified coating. It is not the old-fashioned glow in the dark paint job. The LumiLor paint solution is an electroluminescent coating system that is meticulously applied in five main layers with a back-plane layer, dielectric layer, lumicolor layer, a buss bar layer application, and a conductive top coat layer. The electroluminescent paint job is topped off with a light whitewash and finally a clear coat for protection. Powered by alternating current from an onboard electrical system and controlled by a custom programmed Arduino microcontroller, the paint is stunning in the dark. LumiLor is available in eight colors - white, blue, aqua, green, orange, yellow, violet, and pink, and the lighting sequence can be controlled in various ways, such as - simple on or off, strobe effect, sequencing, and motion and sound activation. Look for his night airshow routine at major air shows across Canada and the US.

## **VIRGIN GALACTIC IN MESA**

Executives at Virgin Galactic said construction on the company's spaceship manufacturing facility in Mesa is coming along as it touted the "strong returns" of its next generation of spaceships and prepares to head back to space through a test flight later this month. Assembly of the company's Delta-class spaceships is set to take place at a facility currently under construction near Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.

Virgin Galactic expects the two-building facility in Mesa to be operational in 2024. The buildings are made up of 35,896 square feet and 115,200 square feet and will carry an address of 5559 S. Sossaman Road. As it opens, Virgin Galactic will hire "well into the hundreds" of engineering and manufacturing employees.

The company first announced that facility last summer, at the time saying it should be operational in late 2023. Virgin Galactic announced earlier this month that it plans to fly six people, two pilots and four "mission specialists" to the upper limits of the atmosphere on a rocket-powered test flight of its VSS Unity spacecraft later in May. That test would be "the final assessment of the full spaceflight system and astronaut experience" ahead of a full commercial flight with a crew from the Italian Air Force planned for June 2023, according to a news release from the company.

Virgin Galactic's says that it makes an estimated \$2.7 million in revenue per commercial flight of a Delta spaceship, which the company is designing to hold six customers at a rate of \$450,000 per seat.

Commercial flights with Delta-class ships won't happen for a while, however. Virgin

Galactic expects the first Delta-class test ship to be assembled in 2025. It would then undergo a year-long testing process out of Spaceport America before moving into commercial service with the "early ships" in 2026.

In November, Virgin Galactic partnered with a pair of Texas-based companies Bell Textron Inc. and Qarbon Aerospace to supply sub-assembly parts for putting together the Delta-class ships in Arizona.

Commercial flights with Virgin Galactic's existing "Unity" line of spaceships are expected to happen much sooner. A paying crew from the Italian Air Force is set to launch out of Spaceport America in New Mexico next month. But before that can happen, the space tourism company has one last test flight planned for late May carrying six people into space for the first time since Sir Richard Branson, Virgin Galactic's founder, flew in July 2021.

In late April, the company ran a "glide flight" of the Unity spaceship. That marked Virgin Galactic's second flight out of Spaceport America since 2021, in addition to a mated configuration flight one week prior.

It also marked the start of what the company hopes will be a steady cadence of flights to space one per month.

"We are finally at the cusp of what will be a defining moment for our company commercial spaceline operations," the CEO said during Tuesday's earnings call.

Virgin Galactic didn't provide any updates on its Southern New Mexico astronaut campus, which the company announced in August 2022.



**FUTURE VIRGIN GALACTIC MESA FACILITY**



**MOTHER SHIP and SPACE SHIP**

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