

# The FlyPaper

June 2017

The Official Newsletter for EAA Chapter 477, Charleston, South Carolina



## Words From the President

The heat has arrived and so have the thunderstorms, which left many young eagles and their parents very disappointed. As many of you know we had to cancel the Spring Fly-in and Young Eagle rally, which was scheduled for May 13<sup>th</sup>. We, has weather permits, we will do our best to fly as many Young Eagles as we can through the summer months. We did have a great Fly-In planed, with a few war birds scheduled booths and food vendors, but Mother Nature had other plans.

Moving on to other events, I was able to this past week take a few days off and fly to Seattle Washington to visit my son and his family and do some camping. Now you're thinking, did he fly himself, well no, my Seneca could have it made it, but my wife didn't want to make a few stops and take two days to get there. Southwest airlines did a great job in getting us to Seattle. I didn't let the pilots, two lady pilots by the way, know I was aboard the airplane, you know just in case. (LOL) My purpose for sharing my trip is I was able to witness a super kind of flight. Two beautiful white headed birds with a wing span of six feet with those piercing eyes swooped down over our camp site at what seemed to me the best air show I've ever seen. Two American adult eagles graced our camp as though they knew I was there; well that sounds good, at least I like to think so. I attached a photo of what an Eagle looks like. The reason I share this moment with our EAA members and all those who read this newsletter, it gave me a new since of pride for our country and also the fact that we use the term Eagle (Young Eagles) when flying kids, which by the way I love doing. Seeing the eagles make me stop and realize we rush through life and never stop and think how blessed we are to enjoy the freedoms we have in this great country we live in. I have had the pleasure of flying an airplane soaring the skies and like the poem said, "Touching the face of God." Thanks for letting me share this sighting, thought it wasn't over Walterboro, (RBW) it was totally awesome.

Now moving on to our June meeting and what's going on with the 477. Looks like the Air force will be visiting us again with some more tips on air space and routes they fly. This should be a great time of good information and conversations. Young Eagles flights will start around 8:00 am, with pilot briefing at 7:30 am, with burgers and hotdogs to follow for lunch after the senior meeting.

Again I was disappointed as I mentioned earlier about the canceling of the Fly-In, but like my mama always said, there will be another day, another fly-in. Well that should cover it for now and remember like I always say "keep those wings level and fly safe!



Roger Medlin  
President EAA 477



## Upcoming Events

### EAA477 Chapter meeting

June 10th Young Eagles at 8:00 with meeting at 11:00. Burgers and dogs on the grill after the meeting

### South Carolina Breakfast Club:

June 4th Salisbury, NC

### KRUO

June 11<sup>th</sup> Greenwood, SC

### KGRD

June 25<sup>th</sup> Pickens, SC

### KLOK

## **Summary of May Young Eagles Event And other notes of interest for the month**

*Ron Malec*

Due to the forecast of Rain, Rain, and more Rain with a 60 to 70 percent chance of Rain and Thunderstorms forecast for Saturday, the decision was made to cancel the event with no back up date due to (1) Mother's Day and (2) ongoing construction of the RBW ramp. While the weather did not initially develop as forecast by late morning/early afternoon, the area was covered in rain and thunderstorms.

I attended the EAAA1167 Spring Fly-in on Saturday, 20 May. Much like our event, they were hampered by weather with low ceilings until about 1100. This prevented many from flying in and EAA1167 from getting an early start on their Young Eagles Rally. They are just getting their Young Eagle program off the ground and they hope to get some pointers from us on how we conduct such a successful program.

While it conflicts with our next chapter meeting, on 10 June, North Carolina Aviation Museum and Hall of Fame (NCAMHOF) is hosting their annual fly-in at Asheboro Airport (KHBI) from 0900-1600 for those that might want to fly up.

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### **Article of Interest**

Submitted by

Roger Medlin

It's time to down size; you know budget cuts, cut backs. So I've decided to do just that with my office space. I have learned to do more with less, become more efficient with time and space. So if you need me I'll be in my office. I have attached a photo of my office.



(Newsletter editor's note: could he really be Super Man?)

## Sightings Report

Glen Phelps

We were priveleged to have a privately owned TBM Avenger stop by RBW. These are incredible aircraft. Below is some of the details available about the plane.

Though its introduction to combat at the Battle of Midway was not a promising start (five of the six Grumman TBF-1 Avengers assigned to Torpedo Squadron (VT) 8 were shot down, and the lone survivor was heavily damaged), the TBF became the Navy's standard torpedo bomber throughout the war. It served in other roles as well, including glide bombing in close air support, reconnaissance, and light transport. In all, 9,836 Avengers were built, 7,546 of which were turned out by General Motors Eastern Aircraft Division and designated TBMs.

Ordered by the Navy in April 1940, the XTBF-1 was Grumman's first attempt to build a torpedo bomber as a replacement for the already obsolete Douglas TBD Devastator. The Navy placed an order for 286 of the aircraft in December 1940, and the first flight of the XTBF-1 took place on 1 August 1941.

By December of that year, a second prototype had been accepted and in January 1942 the first production TBF-1 joined the fleet. During the first six months of 1942, 145 TBFs were delivered. Six of them were assigned to Torpedo Squadron (VT) 8 for evaluation. Missing the movement of the squadron aboard the carrier *Hornet* (CV-8), the six aircraft were ferried to Midway from Pearl Harbor, in time to take part in the Midway battle. Operating from land, the aircraft attacked the Japanese fleet but were mauled by enemy fighters. Five were shot down, and the surviving aircraft was badly damaged with one crew member dead and one wounded. The heavily damaged TBF-1 provided valuable information that would be the source of improvements to its combat survivability.

With ever increasing demands for aircraft, and faced with the Navy's push for a replacement for the F4F Wildcat fighter, Grumman concentrated on development of the XF6F Hellcat, farming out much of the F4F and TBF production to General Motors' newly-formed Eastern Aircraft Division. The GM plants in New York, New Jersey and Maryland took over production, redesignating the Wildcat and newly-named Avenger FM and TBM respectively. By war's end, Eastern Aircraft's plants had turned out 18,000 aircraft, 7,546 of which were TBMs. By 1944 Grumman had produced 2,290 TBFs before production ended, bringing the total Avengers produced to 9,836 (2,882 TBM-1s and 4,664 TBM-3s). Great Britain and New Zealand received 921 of the aircraft. In keeping with their naming of torpedo planes for fish, the British named the TBF/TBM the "Tarpon." Increasingly effective anti-aircraft capabilities, combined with the vulnerable attack profile of a slow-flying torpedo bomber, rendered torpedo attacks rare after Midway. Thus Avengers were used in a variety of other roles, including reconnaissance, antisubmarine, light transport or cargo work, medical evacuation and close air support.

Here are some of the photos taken when it was at Walterboro,



Typical specifications for the plane is shown below:

**Manufacturer:** General Motors Eastern Aircraft Division

**Type:** Torpedo bomber

**Crew:** Pilot, gunner, and radio operator/bombardier

**Powerplant:** One 1,900 hp Wright R-2600-20

Length: 40 ft., 11 in.

Height: 16 ft., 5 in.

**Dimensions:** Wingspan: 54 ft., 2 in.

Wing area: 490 sq. ft.

**Weight:** Empty: 10,545 lb.

Maximum: 17,895 lb.

Max Speed: 276 mph at 16,500 ft.

Cruise Speed: 147 mph

**Performance:** Climb Rate: 2,060 ft./min.

Ceiling: 30,100 ft.

Range: 1,010 miles

**Armament:** Two .50-in. forward-firing machine guns; one .50-in. dorsal gun; one .30-in. ventral gun.;  
2,000 lb. bomb/torpedo load. Also capable of carrying the Norden bombsight for level bombing.

We had a rather humorous experience that day with the plane. As it turns out, the pilot can access the pilot's seat by climbing from behind the left wing. There are "steps" and "hand-holds" positioned to do so. I did not attempt it, but some of the, ah, older gentlemen did so. Even one of the "not so old" guys there tried it. The event was really something to see them TRY, and fail, until they got "help" with pushing and shoving onto the wing.

I made the comment to a retired Navy Captain I know, that the guys that did this during the war were probably not over 30 years old. He corrected me, saying probably not over 24 and not nearly as fat! (did I day that...)

Just coincidentally, I got an article from an acquaintance about an incident during the war. It is included below. You might find it interesting, and I have included a link for readers using their computers to view the recorded event.

**Loyce Edward Deen, an Aviation Machinist  
Mate 2nd Class, USNR, was a gunner on a TBM  
Avenger.**

**On November 5, 1944, Deen's squadron  
participated in a raid on Manila where his  
plane was hit multiple times by  
anti-aircraft fire while attacking a  
Japanese cruiser. Deen was killed. The  
Avenger's pilot, Lt.; Robert Cosgrove,  
managed to return to his carrier, the USS  
Essex.**

**Both Deen and the plane had been shot  
up so badly that it was decided to leave him  
in the plane. It is the only time in U.S.  
Navy history (and probably U.S. military  
history) that an aviator was buried in his  
aircraft after being killed in action.**

Here is the link to the recording of the event:

<http://loyceedeen.webstarts.com/uploads/GoingHome.mp4>

## ***Treasurer's Report***

*Glen Phelps*

Obviously, there was not much activity for the month, with the cancellation of the Young Eagles event and no subsequent meeting. There was a disbursement of funds for Young Eagles support as well as two deposits of monies from EAA National for our Young Eagle work.

The financial summary is as follows:

Beginning balance =	\$2,070.85
Ending balance =	\$2,152.11
Increase or (decrease) =	\$81.26