

# CATFISH SQUADRON

## EAA CHAPTER 797



Live Oak, Florida



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## Chapter 797 Meeting

**Saturday Jan, 28th**

The monthly meeting (on the last Saturday) will be held at the Suwannee County Airport at our EAA Chapter Building at approx. **10:30AM**. Pot Luck Brunch will be at 10:00AM. All of our members are asked to bring a dish to share.



Neal Harris

## **EAA 797 Morning Fly-In**

The LAST Saturday of the month

**Jan 28, 2017**

**8:00-10:00 AM**

## **Plane Flips on Suwannee**

In the late morning of Saturday, January 14, 2017, a small amphibious airplane touched down on the Suwannee river a mile or so west of *The Trails* airport. It caught the eye of everyone because not many airplanes land on the Suwannee. In fact, locals couldn't remember a plane landing on this part of the river, ever.

Neal Harris was dropping in on a friend. A witness recalled them talking about air-camping and how much they enjoyed it. A search of airman shows Neal to possess a Light Sport Aircraft Certificate.

A search for N-696FT in the FAA database indicates a last status of a pending registration for a Mr. William Sharpe of Mount Dora, Florida. The aircraft had been fairly consistently registered by various owners as a Class 1 registration since 1999. (According to aviationdb.net) The FAA database just comes up with a cryptic statement that the registration may not be currently airworthy.

I decided to look into the rules concerning seaplane operations on a navigable waterway. Although the FAA rules the skies, the individual states determine how you use their waterways. Florida is fairly open in the use of their waterways. The moment your plane touches the water, you become a boat. Use the lights at night, yield to sailboats, etc. If you want to station your plane at your riverside home, you might be required to register your "seaplane base". There are somewhat

prohibitive requirements. FFW have much more restrictive rules. If you land on parkland, it better be an emergency. By all of my research, it was legal to land on the river and do a little fishing.

There are a few questions raised by the information I was able to find, but I think I'll stick with what I know. I was able to do some flying in a Searey at the 2003 Splash-In at Sun-N-Fun. There had been a bit of rain that spring and the lake was high. The Searey demo pilot would bring us in time and time again, touching down directly under the power lines every time. The consistent performance of pilot and machine put me at ease, and the whole experience was intoxicating. If you ever get an opportunity to visit Searey in Tavares, FL, notice the pond next door. It seems too small for seaplane operations and is situated at the bottom of a bowl shaped valley. The company pilot flies their planes in and out of that pond consistently.

What I learned was how intoxicating and fun these little amphibians can be. I learned that it was easy to get comfortable and lose sight of the power lines. I learned that I didn't yet belong in that environment without the greater experience in the left seat keeping me safe.

I didn't know Neal, and I'm not going to condemn his actions with what I know. I know that Neal got his little plane down in confined quarters. I know that he caught the power line with the engine. It yanked the plane onto its back. It was unrecoverable. I'm pretty sure that he died with his boots on. I may envy that some day.

Blue Skies, Neal, and God Bless.

*Editor*

## Nominations needed

Allen has led our merry band for a couple of years now and it is time to pass the torch. I would be happy to stay in my positions for another year, if you'll have me. I believe that President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer may need to be filled. Bring your thoughts to the next meeting.



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## David Starling

12/26/2016

I am very sad to report that my friend, neighbor and EAA 797 member David Starling and his family lost their lives in bad weather in the Smoky Mountains on December 26. David and his family were flying their Cessna 182 to Gatlinburg and crashed into Mt. LeConte on approach to the airport. David and his son Hunter lived in Lawtey and Steinhatchee. David's girlfriend Kim Smith was born and raised in High Springs. They were good people and will be sorely missed.

*Allen Rice*



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## News Wanted!

This is your newsletter. I am very happy to see that several people have stepped forward with their experiences to fill these pages. Let us know how your project is going or where you've been. It's your newsletter, let's make it about you.

## FAA Announces Aeromedical Reform Rule

New law takes effect May 1

**January 10, 2017** - Years of effort by EAA and AOPA culminated on Tuesday morning as the [FAA announced regulations](#) that will implement the aeromedical reform law passed last July. [The regulations](#) will be published Wednesday as a final rule, to take effect May 1, 2017. According to the FAA, no changes have been made to the language in the law.

Because it is final, the rule will not go out for a typical public comment period. The FAA also said it would publish an advisory circular describing the implementation of the rule later this week.

“This is the moment we’ve been waiting for, as the provisions of aeromedical reform become something that pilots can now use,” said Jack J. Pelton, EAA CEO/chairman. “EAA and AOPA worked to make this a reality through legislation in July, and since then the most common question from our members has been, ‘When will the rule come out?’ We now have the text and will work to educate members, pilots, and physicians about the specifics in the regulation.”

Tuesday’s announcement finalized the highly anticipated measure that was signed into law last July as part of an FAA funding bill. That was the ultimate success of a long effort by EAA and AOPA to bring significant aeromedical reform to pilots flying recreationally and eliminate the time and expense burdens on those holding third-class medical certificates.

The law guaranteed that pilots holding a valid third-class medical certificate issued in the 10 years before the reform was enacted will be eligible to fly under the new rules. New pilots and pilots whose most recent medical expired more than 10 years prior to July 2016 will be required to get a one-time third-class exam from an FAA-designated AME.

The FAA was required to implement the law within 180 days of its signing, or this Thursday (January 12). Since AirVenture 2016, FAA senior leadership has been assuring EAA that the 180-day deadline would be met. Despite the release of the regulations as a final rule, EAA will be reviewing the language carefully to ensure it fully reflects the language and intent of the law.

EAA has [updated its Q&A](#) and will continue to update them to provide the latest information. EAA is also working with its aeromedical and legal advisory councils to provide resources that will help members and their personal doctors understand the provisions of the new regulations.

*Reprinted From EAA.org*

## Wings Over Suwannee Update

With just 3 months to go until our annual Wings Over Suwannee Festival & Fly In, seminars, events, and vendors are confirming with the event shaping up nicely. In addition to AOPA's 'Rusty Pilot' seminar we have added 'Getting Your Seaplane Rating' presented by Jack Brown's Seaplane Base, and 'Aircraft Maintenance for Owners', presented by Morris Brown. Several other seminars are still in the works.

Clark Dechant has confirmed the hot air balloon rides again along with static displays from Maule and Mosquito Helicopters. Gleim will have a display of flight materials alongside display tables manned by Santa Fe and Madison Community Colleges. There will be a 'Flymart' all 3 days of the fly in.

Suwannee County Fire Rescue is lighting a big bonfire on Friday night to accompany a corn roast and lots of pickin' and grinnin'. The Live Oak Police Dept is providing the pig roast on Saturday afternoon followed by a bluegrass band concert for the evening. Several drink and snack vendors are lined up as well.

Our Young Eagles department is ready to fly all the 8-17 year olds while the little tykes can fly in our Kiddie Squadron planes.

The dates for Wings Over Suwannee are April 28, 29, 30, 2017

*Allen Rice*

## Suwannee Valley Flying Club News

Well, we held the first open house of the Suwannee Valley Flying Club and it was a big success! Over 40 prospective members showed up and were treated to cheeseburgers and hot dogs by EAA 797. President Allen Rice presented a Powerpoint presentation on many of the details necessary to set up the club including an estimate of the costs. Allen reported that the initial goals are for a \$200 initiation fee, \$40/month dues, and \$40/hr for an airplane. Allen went on to explain that the Suwannee Valley Flying Club must be a completely separate corporation from the EAA 797 Chapter, however all members of the SVFC must be members of EAA 797. Several attendees signed up on the spot. The bylaws and operating rules will be finalized at the next meeting.

*Allen Rice*

## Kiddie Squadron Flies Again

After viewing the EAA 797 Chapter entry in the Live Oak Veteran's Day Parade, the organizers of the Heritage Park Festival requested the Catfish Kiddie Squadron for their event. Thanks go out to David Brown, Tom Burnett, Pete Wallace and Allen Rice for hauling everything to the old Crapps House and treating over 250 children to rides in the airplanes. Thanks to Greg Scott from Parks & Recreation for donating the Polaris Ranger tow vehicle to the Chapter.



## Tailwind

I'm sure that I missed something or someone and I welcome healthy criticism. You can send comments, questions, ideas or articles to:

[dave@davesflyin.com](mailto:dave@davesflyin.com)

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