



THE *SPORT FLYER*



September 2003

!!! NOTICE !!!

**October Meeting will be October 11th
At Sport Flyers for the Bald Eagles Day !!**

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Pat's Patter

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11th is our BALD EAGLES DAY !!!

Our meeting for October will be our Annual Pancake Breakfast / Bald Eagles Day on **October 11th at Sport Flyers at Leonard's hangar**. It will start at 9:00am and run til whenever. Invite your relatives and friends. Pilots need to bring their planes to fly members, families and friends. This is always a special event so do try to be there.



From the Editor's Desk....

It's with great sadness that we bid farewell to another fine chapter member. Cliff Harkins passed away Tuesday, September 29th. Many of you are probably familiar with Cliff's 1957 Tri-Champ "Little Darlin". It won many awards at Oshkosh, Sun'n Fun and many other events. Cliff, age 80, lived in Waller and is survived by his wife, Helen. Cliff was born and raised in Wisconsin and served his country in WWII. Memorial services were held in Waller, but it was requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Young Eagles Association. (EAA, P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086). Til next time, Gary



18th Annual "Reklaw" Flying M Ranch Fly-In is October 24-26th

If you've never been to the Flying M Ranch (7TA7) fly-in, informally known as "Reklaw", then you don't know what you've been missing. What started out as a simple small Cub fly-in, Reklaw has grown to host a few hundred aircraft of many different types.

David Mason is an aviator who was sitting at a local Houston, Texas airport about 16 years ago and found his hangar rent going up and the airport rules beginning to confine his penchant for hosting large hangar parties and fly-ins. He finally got tired of it.

So, he drove up to east Texas between Nacogdoches (the earliest pioneer settlement in the area) and Rusk, Texas to the small community of Reklaw. He bought some acreage, and started cutting down 140 foot-high pine trees until he had a nice 3500 foot long canyon! Next he built a hangar for his airplanes. (SIX of 'em! A Cessna 170B, an experimental, a Stinson Voyager, a Stinson Gull-Wing, andI lost track of 'em all!) Then he bulldozed a lake and stocked it with fish for kids to enjoy. He put up about a hundred picnic tables and scattered a dozen or so public toilets throughout the woods, and built a large, stone campfire area. He joined all his favorite aviation clubs. The EAA, Antique Assoc., Int'l Cessna 170 Assoc., Stinson Assoc., Cub Assoc., Short-wing Piper club, and on and on.

Then he sat back and listened to crickets chirp. Very silent in East Texas. And dark. Stars that look like phosphorescent powder cast up there above the tree-lined canyon. And Dave imagined things. And it came true.

Last year, over 355 friendly airplanes came in overhead, entered left-hand traffic and landed at 7TA7. Over 1,000 people,...husbands, wives, kids, friendly dogs, arrived in so many different airplanes, both common and un-common types that it boggled the imagination.

That was the 17th annual Reklaw Fly-In/Campout hosted by this wonderful aviator who loves airplanes and airplane people, and invites them to his place to spend the weekend meeting and enjoying others of the same ilk, and does it all on his own nickel! No registration fees. No parking fees. No camping fees. No tie-down fees. No landing fees.

All the meals for the weekend are provided on the field! They are delicious, hot meals provided by the local EAA chapters, the 99's, and Dave himself. Hardwood-smoked Bar-B-Que, hamburgers, hotcakes and sausage, you name it. (The meals are provided for a small \$5 donation to offset costs of the charitable organizations who cook them.)

Weather permitting, Ted Callahan and myself (Gary Craze) will be flying up Friday morning and camping. If anyone else is planning on going, feel free to hunt us down (Ted will be in the red, white and blue Kitfox and I'll be in a beater 172).

Calendar of Interesting TX Area Flying Events for 2003

2003	OCTOBER	COMMENTS
Oct 11	Chapter 774 Pancake Breakfast/Bald Eagles Day	Sport Flyer's, Brookshire, Milholland hangar. 9am to ?
Oct 18-19	Wings Over Houston	www.wingsoverhouston.com
Oct 24-26	REKLAW Flying M Ranch Fly-In (7TA7)	See article above