



**NAME
THAT
PLANE**



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President's Desk

Al Nodorft

This week I hope everyone will have a chance to attend either the Masters Golf Tournament or Sun 'n Fun, or both. I won't, since I need to get a lot of necessary work done during this week.

When you come to the next meeting you should notice some differences in the club house. Our cleaning crew did a great job sprucing things up as well as rearranging and downsizing. A big thank you to all who participated!

March marked the end of one generation in the Nodorft family. My last living grandparent (grandmother) died. She was 100 years and 9 months old. I think you should count months after you reach 100.

It was my grandfather who started the flying bug in the Nodorft family, but my grandmother supported him every step of the way. She also got her pilot's license. She couldn't do all the piloting chores, but she did fly twice from the left seat on her 100th birthday!

From that beginning there were two sons who flew, three grandsons, and looking like two great-grandsons. Time will tell how many future generations will fly because of my grandparents.

April Meeting:

The April meeting is on the 15th at the Pea Patch. This is our fish fry and we will start eating at 11:30 am. Because we will be having fine food we will charge \$8/plate. Please bring sides, as well, as they are important too!

I have a CD of an interview of Joe Miles telling of his life and time in the Korean war. Joe was a long-time member of EAA 172 and passed away nearly two years ago on July 13, 2015. This interview was done by Phil Turner.

Fly Safe!

Al



You might want to bring appropriate fish side dishes -- which could include hushpuppies, an almost required adjunct to a Southern seafood meal, deviled eggs, lemon wedges, sliced cucumbers, blackeyed peas, cole slaw, and other Georgia fish fry garnishings as well as desserts such as fruit salad, jello, lemon meringue or coconut cream pie, fruit cobbler, strawberries, grapes, cookies, or pound cake.

Minutes of the Meeting of EAA Chapter 172 Members for 9:30 AM on March 11, 2017
Drone Presentation at Augusta Aviation, Daniel Field Airport (DNL)

The weather was mild under clear skies and no rain, with the temperature in the lower 60s. Three planes flew in for the program. Starting at 9:30 AM, before the Drone Presentation, nineteen members & their family members as well as six visitors enjoyed socializing and partaking of refreshments in a second floor meeting room of the Augusta Aviation FBO. Before the program everyone enjoyed the coffee, juice, and donuts provided *gratis* by EAA 172. Then, at 10:00 AM, we had a very interesting program put on by our guest speaker: Sgt. Garry Harden from the Columbia County Sheriff Office who handles the Drone Division for that county. Media Coordinator Sandy Walther wrote this report about Sgt. Harden's presentation. She also took the photo.



Gary Harden, a 22 year veteran of the Columbia County Sheriff's Office, gave a presentation on the drones used by the county. He brought a [Phantom 2 drone](#) and a tiny little [Elfie drone](#). Gary told us about several recent incidents for which the drones assisted. One such incident was the tractor trailer accident on I-20 during heavy winds. A drone provided a higher-level view of tire tracks that showed where the tractor had veered into the median and back onto the highway, and how other vehicles had left the road, too. This additional information helped the investigators wrap up their reports very quickly. The drones have also been used to search for an Alzheimer patient and to safely monitor a hostage situation.

Columbia County has at least six drones and is checking out the latest gadgets. The biggest limiter on drone use, Gary said, is battery life. The Phantom 2 drone uses two [LiPo batteries](#), and Gary carries six batteries so he can switch out after about 20 minutes use. Surprisingly, the batteries deplete more quickly when the drone hovers than when it flies. Gary can switch out cameras and filters to use infrared, thermal or full color. Infrared is not that useful in the South Carolina summertime, Gary admitted. When the drone is sent out, it requires an operator and one or two observers. Drones must be operated in sight at all times. Currently the drone must be within 25 feet of an object for immediate viewing of the image, although the recorded footage can be reviewed later for a zoomed-in viewing. Normally the drone is flown at around 200 feet AGL.



Elfie drone

Gary talked about the two years it took to obtain their Certificate of Authority which allows Columbia County to use its drones state-wide. Initially, all operators were required to hold a pilots license, but now only special training courses are required. The operators carry two handheld radios, one of which is used to monitor air traffic. Although the operators are normally required to operate within 400 feet AGL, they will disregard weather/clouds if there is a life at risk. There is a Website for requesting clearance, but if the need is immediate, as is the case for most police actions, the operator contacts ATC requesting immediate, specific clearance (such as a radial DME from a radio tower) and timeframe. All flights are logged and submitted monthly to the FAA. Columbia County's drones are registered and each has a tail number. When private citizens operate drones "for hire" under Part 107, it is the pilot/operator who is registered, not the drone. All operators must have a medical or must be able to self-certify.

Maintenance checks are performed twice a week on the drones, primarily a battery check. Drones have brushless motors and have not had problems so far, as long as they are not dropped into water. Columbia County carries insurance on its drones. As for the software, Gary recommends that operators delay installing the weekly firmware updates for about a week until you know the update is stable and bug-free. Although Columbia County's eight operators are required to have periodic training, most private citizens can use [YouTube videos](#) for their training. Gary strongly recommends private operators get to know the regulations and, if operating near an airport, call ATC.

Drone technology is changing rapidly. Software developers are trying to incorporate ADS-B into their drone units. The cost of a drone varies from the \$35 Elfie to more than \$25,000 for the [Draganflyer X4-ES](#). Battery cost varies, too. Gary tends to use the \$160 [LiPo batteries](#). Hydrogen cell batteries are lighter and last as long as four hours, but are very expensive right now. Drones use [lightbridge technology](#) for the digital signal to a specific controller, much like a cell phone.

Gary's presentation was very interesting, and he answered lots of questions from the audience throughout. If you see a drone flying nearby and it becomes a nuisance or potential voyeur issue, call the police. Do not shoot down the drone! Note: Under FAA regulation part 107, private citizens are required to operate a drone within 400 feet AGL and essentially during daytime. See [Fact Sheet](#) – Small Unmanned Aircraft Regulations (Part 107).

