

FAMFAM UPDATE

Friday AM Friends of Airport Manatee

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HIDDEN GEMS



Airport Manatee continues to produce surprises. An airplane sat for years covered by a tarp and layers of dirt and mold in an open hangar. I must have driven or walked past it dozens of times and never really saw it. In fact, a lot of us missed it. Rich Hueber knew what was hidden under all that dust. Aware of its history, he kept in touch with the owner who had parked it there six years ago with barely thirty hours on the tack due to health

issues. When the time was right and the owner realized he wouldn't fly again, Rich was there with a check.

A thorough wash-job revealed a beautifully preserved Tecnam Astore looking like new once all the grime was removed. Looks can be deceiving. The old adage, "the worst thing for an airplane is to sit, unused," certainly proved to be true in the case of the Tecnam. Cor-



rosion had taken its toll on rod-end bearings, hinges, nuts, bolts, and paint. The airplane couldn't have fallen into better hands. Rich and his team of buddies, Ed, Gerald, and Winn went to work crawling all over the airframe like ants on a banana. Ailerons and inspection plates came off, bolts were pulled, tires changed, hinges lubed, rust removed, surfaces treated, etc., etc. It won't be long before the Tecnam joins the birds in the sky once again.

The Tecnam Astore is an Italian light-sport aircraft. A low-wing, two-place airplane made of carbon fiber, it is powered by a Rotax 914 engine. I, for one, am looking forward to seeing it fly and perhaps even getting a short hop in it.





EAA CHAPTER 180 SPRING COOKOUT

The weather kept most fliers on the ground last Saturday at Airport Manatee. The lack of flyable weather didn't dampen the spirits of those who made it by other means. Brats, burgers, hot dogs, side dishes, and desserts were plentiful along with no lack of good aviation stories. Old friends were united and new friends made.

There is something

about airports and the pilot community that makes events like these feel like family. While I'm sure EAA Chapter 180 members were disappointed with the weather, I hope they enjoyed the gathering as we did. We're looking forward to the next Spring Cookout and the usual stream of airplanes we've seen in the past.



IT FLIES!

After a few weeks of maintenance and sprucing up the engine, Ron Jarvis finally got to experience flying his Taylorcraft for the first time. "It was wonderful," Ron said. "Everything I had hoped for." Once he got used to sitting side-by-side instead of in tandem like his Champ, he and the seventy-five-year-old airplane quickly became friends. We shot a dozen landings and after the first few, Ron was putting down some pretty nice three-pointers.



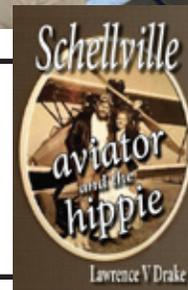
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If you have any announcements or news you would like to share with the group, please Email it to me and I will include in the next update (whenever that may be.)

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