

FAMFAM UPDATE

Friday AM Friends of Airport Manatee

issue 45

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AN ECONOMICAL TWIN



Friday mornings at Airport Manatee often attract rare and unusual aircraft. Dave Thompson arrived in his Aeroprakt A26 Vulcan that he has owned for over twenty years. The A-26 is a light twin-engine aircraft developed from a modified A-20 single-engine aircraft. Dual Rotax 582 64 hp engines with three-blade composite props push the A-26 into the air in less than 100 feet. It can land in 350 feet and climbs out at 1800 feet per minute. It can pass a Cessna 172 in cruise.

Initially based in Kyiv, Ukraine, Aeroprakt Aircraft now operates out of Poland with distributors around the world. Their flagship aircraft are the Aeroprakt 32 Vixxen and 22LS. Both are high-wing tricycle gear tractor aircraft. The US distributor is Heavenbound Aviation in Johnstown, Ohio.

I bought the first A-20 to arrive in the States from the Ukraine from John Hunter, Spectrum Aviation, in Sebring after it had served for several years as a demonstrator. A real performer, of all the aircraft I have owned, I rank it in the top two I would like to have back.

PS - Ask Rich Hueber about his experience with an A-26 sometime as a conversation starter.

GREEN - THE ORDER OF THE DAY



The last things you might expect to show up for Friday morning coffee are boxes upon boxes of fresh veggies. That is what we found dressing the tops of the picnic tables a couple of weeks ago. Charlie Turner surveys the cache of Romaine lettuce, celery, and more, packaged up and free for the taking. Evidently, a local farmer dropped the boxes off early and said, "Take what you want. Whatever is left is going into the trash."

By afternoon, after almost everyone had their hands full of more veggies than they could hope to eat, there were still three full boxes left. I think Tom Reeder found a home for them. I never did find out who the generous donor was.

NEW AIRPORT MASCOT?



We do live in gator country so we shouldn't be surprised when one gets curious about all the activity on the airport. This guy showed up under the pilot lounge picnic tables and one of our Friday guys got a picture of it. (Sorry, I don't remember who.) I'm told it measured about five feet long. Ricardo, our brave airport maintenance man, lassooed the beast by the tail and drug him back to the wilds where he belongs. In the meantime, if you see any moving logs on or near the runway, it would probably be best to give them a wide berth.

THE \$100 TACO

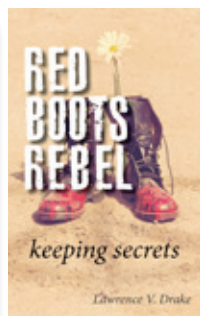
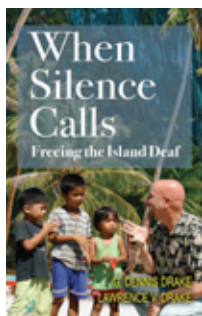


Do you need an excuse to go flying? Taco Tuesday at Arcadia X06 fills that bill nicely. Last week Airport Manatee fliers made a smooth trip there and back for tacos, breakfast burritos, and pulled pork sandwiches. The crowd was small but enough aircraft variety and good company made the trip worthwhile. John and Sue Santonocito have been there so often that the food truck vendor knows them by name.

Charlie introduced me to a guy who once owned my Aero-prakt A20. I thought it had been lost in a wreck. It turns out that it is alive and registered in Florida. That made my day.

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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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