

# FAMFAM UPDATE

Friday AM Friends of Airport Manatee

issue 48

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## RUNWAY RUMORS

Last Friday, as we sat around the pilot lounge table snacking on donut holes and Richard Ilfeld's home-baked cookies, Airport Manager Tom Reeder, announced the latest iteration of Airport Manatee runway plans. Of course, there have been many speculations as to if, where, and when a new runway might be constructed. Chances are good that this may be another in that long line of guesses but Tom seemed to have it on fairly good authority that building a new asphalt runway south of the current grass strip 07/25 is on the agenda.

The general thinking is that the grass strip would remain active while the new runway is built. Once finished and active, a taxiway would be constructed along the centerline of the grass strip. The good news is that Airport Manatee would have a 4,999-foot long paved runway. The bad news is that it appears we will lose our beloved grass strip. One would hope that the final plans would preserve some grass for us taildragger lovers.

Why 4,999 feet? Apparently, a runway 5,000 ft or longer has considerably more federal requirements to fulfill. Some mentioned the length restriction does not include overruns that could be added to each end... more speculation of course.

The big question is, when? Tom didn't have an answer for that. Construction could begin next month or in five years. It has been over two years since the Blazer family (DFM Properties) acquired the airport with the goal of commuting from Georgia to Tampa Bay in their Beechcraft King Air to manage their shipping business at Port Manatee. It's anybody's guess as to the future timeline.

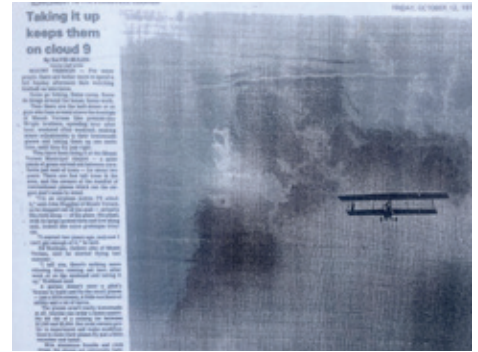
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## WILD MAN, ED



Back in 1978, Ed Koehnen (one of our FAMFAM regulars) started flying in an Easy Riser ultralight. "I tell you, there's nothing more relaxing than coming out here after work on the weekend and taking it up," Ed told the Evansville Courier, a Mount Vernon, MO newspaper. What started out as a swept-wing biplane, the Easy Riser became the first modern ultralight aircraft when wheels and an engine were added.

That was then. This is now. Rich Hueber rescued the derelict plane from a trip to the scrap yard and sent me these photos. We will have to wait to get the full scoop on Ed's early days and the ultimate fate of his Easy Riser.



## CUB TIME

Rachel Rheintgen got some coveted Cub time in the front seat of Mike Haskel's Legend Cub. I sat in the back, hands in my lap and feet on the floor while Rachel put the Cub through it's paces. Well... not entirely true. I did get to demonstrate a few 100°-bank wingovers.

After a series of "bounce and goes" we determined that we are seriously going to miss the grass if it disappears under asphalt.



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