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Subject: May FAMFAM Newsletter (REV)  
Date: May 12, 2025 at 9:55 AM  
To: undisclosed-recipients;;

LD

**APOLOGIES:** You may not have received this May Newsletter previously because of the huge image files.

If you did, sorry for the size of the file. If you didn't, I hope this smaller file version has made it to your email box.



## Friday AM Friends of Airport Manatee

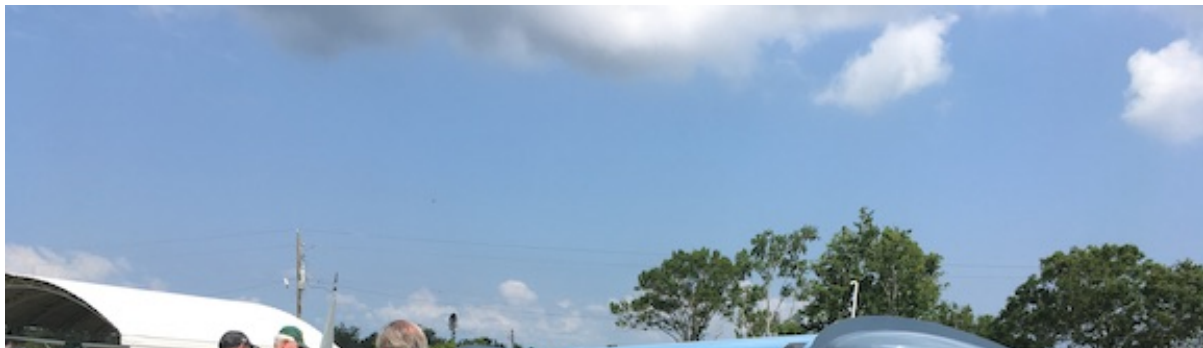
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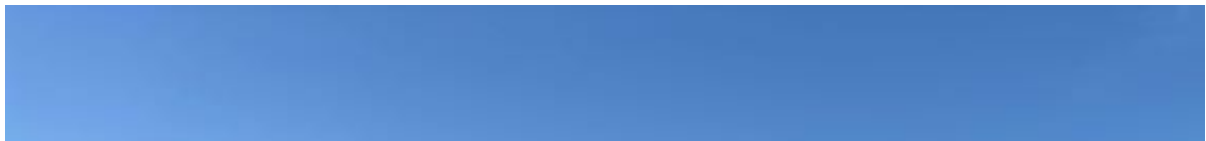
**NOTE:** *This is a new combined mail list so if you received this and had previously opted out, please notify me by responding "Opt Out." Sorry for the inconvenience.*

## SNOW BIRDS FLYING NORTH

The Friday morning coffee and donuts crowd has shrunk significantly lately as most of our Snow Bird friends have flown the coop. This leaves empty hangars and tie-downs. Our lunch group at Popi's Restaurant is also smaller but easier to get a table. Early morning flights are reasonably cool and smooth but things heat up quickly. We still get drop-ins and enjoy tall tales.

## FRIDAY MORNING FAMFAM DROP-INS









## **OH, DEM WATERMELONS!**

An airport located amid acres of watermelon fields has its detractions, blowing dirt being one. A couple of days parked at Manatee Airport results in a layer of dirt on all surfaces and in the cracks. Cleaning dirt off your airplane becomes a preflight ritual around here. Even those parked in enclosed hangars. As a partial compensation, the farmer drops of a pallet of melons at harvest time, fresh from the field, free for the taking. I don't know about anyone else, by my choice was delicious. I would rather have a dirt free airplane but the free watermelon does make the cleaning chore a little more palatable.





## **HARD WORK KEEPS OUR FIELD LAND-ABLE**

The grass is always mowed, the ferrel pig holes filled, the restrooms clean, and repairs made. Ricardo, Airport Manatee's maintenance man has been keeping things green for thirty-seven years. Almost every day you can see him on the mower or pulling a roller down the runway. For those of us who love grass runways, we have Ricardo to thank for keeping ours in pretty good shape and Airport Manager, Tom Reeder for keeping Ricardo around.







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The promotional banner features a portrait of the author, Lawrence V. Drake, on the left. He is wearing a black baseball cap and a dark jacket. To his right is a book cover for 'Pilots and Painted Ladies' by Lawrence V. Drake. The cover shows a woman in a red dress and a group of men. The background of the banner is a dark, textured surface with a red horizontal band across the middle.

Visit my website at [drakeip.com](http://drakeip.com) for more books.