

# POTTSTOWN AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS

Originated February 26, 1948 – Incorporated January 15, 1960  
www.paop.org, Facebook: PAOP, Inc. a/k/a "The Flyers Roost"  
3310 West Ridge Pike, Pottstown, PA 19464

April 2020 News, enticing articles, and more...

Dear Members,

It is unfortunate that the pandemic shutdown has closed restaurants and group meetings, but we are all in this and must do what needs to be done to prevent further escalation. I hope to turn the water on at the Roost before the end of April, but cleanup day is still uncertain. Hopefully we can get something happening by mid-May. It does not seem as though things will be back to a norm quickly.

I humbly and regretfully say that a gusty thunderstorm on April 9th (winds over 63 MPH) grabbed our Cub in a freak way and damaged a wing and shattered the windshield. It was not a good feeling. Those of us invested in the Cub are still licking our wounds. We are currently accessing the damage and evaluating the repairs for a course of action. Mayhem happens and life goes on.

Let's look forward to a clear sunny sky for a Sunday fly out. At some point a new state of normality will return and our dinner meetings and fly outs will resume. We at PAOP look forward to your participation in our Roost activities. Your dues are much needed funds to keep our expenses met. If you have sent your dues, thank you! If not, please consider sending them soon.

Thank you, your Prez

Erik Forde

## Planned 2020 PAOP Flyouts

Date	Event	Comment
5/31/20	Cherry Ridge (N30)	Brunch
6/28/20	Kentmorr Marina, Stevensville, MD (3W3)	Crabs!
7/26/20	Ocean City, NJ (26N)	Brunch
8/30/20	Cape May, NJ (KWWD)	Sunday date afternoon dinner
9/27/20	Sky Acres (44N)	Brunch
10/24/20 (Sat)	Grimes	Great Pumpkin Fly-in
11/22/20	Sky Manor (N40)	Brunch
12/20/20	Millville (KMIV)	Brunch at Verna's
1/31/21	Frederick, MD (KFDK)	Brunch

*Editor's note: I've heard requests for a Saturday Flyout from members who have standing commitments on Sundays yet would like to be involved in our weekend flights of fancy. In keeping in line with a careful resumption of recreational activities, I propose a "social distance" flyout tour up and down the Hudson on Saturday May 2, 2020. If you've never done this, it is very cool. Please respond to me ([Andrew.landis@chlsystems.com](mailto:Andrew.landis@chlsystems.com)) if you want to join in the fun. I haven't set a time yet. I have done this many times and can lead you to the document you must study to conduct this properly and once the group is set; we can have an online meeting and review my plan. Don't worry if you are online meeting challenged, I have a plan for that too. I envision a follow the leader group where we all fly the speed of whomever has the lowest cruise speed. This is not formation flying but is more like multiple aircraft in a traffic pattern.*

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## The Last Pilot

She was born in the year 2000, a millennium baby. Her Mom and Dad were both private pilots who flew her and her brother up to Cape Cod for family vacations. She always remembers being in or around airplanes. But that was before autonomy.

Her name is Alex, her younger brother is Bart, and she always told him he was named after a character in that old cartoon show her Dad watched on home entertainment system when he was younger. She was always curious about the how her Dad handled flying and how seriously he took all the preparations before flying. Bart just took it as just another part of how life was. Some kids travelled in their family van, some went to the airport and flew away with their family.

Alex's life in suburban Philadelphia area was fairly normal, she went to the highly touted local school district in the shadows of Valley Forge. Growing up Alex, Bart and the family spent a lot of time in the big national park biking and walking on the numerous trails, sometimes they took Paco, the family dog to the park with them, which was fun, most of the time. Her Dad's name was Alexander, he had a career in the Aerospace industry in King of Prussia, not far away. Her Mom was an accountant who gave up full time work while the kids were in school.

Aviation had changed over the years, but the last ten years the pace of change was hastened by advances in the quality of satellite communications and the replacement of the original ADS-B systems which made every airplane flying visible to every other airplane and the then F.A.A.

The first mandate was back in 2020, when planes in busy areas had to have the ADS-B onboard. She often flew with Dad on hamburger flights when Mom was busy, and Bart wanted to hang out with his friends.

ADS-B eventually morphed into a system where all flying aircraft and drones had to comply, and in theory anyway, the aviation community was safer. Western pilots and those in wide open places lobbied and held out that we don't always fly from airports. Many western flyers go from Ranch to Ranch or to small airfields that have never had crowded skies. Eventually, they were mandated into compliance. By, 2039 the North American Aviation Agency, The NAAA, (USA and Canadian combined agencies) got full authority over North American Airspace.

When Alex was sixteen, she had worked with her Dad and unlike other girls her age, got her ticket to fly. Her dad was, of course, her first flight instructor. He had been teaching her little but important things quietly over the years. Maybe knowing that her Mom had taken the Pinch Hitter flying course for spouses and significant others, before Mom became a licensed pilot, suggested the idea of her becoming a pilot, maybe it was more subtle nudging over time. But in 2016, three weeks after her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, she had her check ride in the family Cessna 182 that was, even now, older than she was.

Dad had bought the 182 locally from a retiring pilot he knew, in fact the family often met up with he and his wife at breakfast fly-outs. He had bought it new in about 1990 and enjoyed the power and capacity of it even though it was usually the two of them most of the time. It had enough power and range to take them to Oshkosh, and down to the Carolinas for the golf and beaches.

It seemed like a lot of airplane to some people, but Alex had grown up in it, and it was safe, familiar and well cared for.

One of the things that changed over time was the navigation and communications electronics. When Dad had bought it, the required ADS-B equipment was an expensive upgrade but made flying safer because you could “see” other aircraft on the screen, along with their altitude and direction and distance from you. But industry and science are never satisfied with a status quo. Back in 2020, she heard her Dad complain about the beginning of “autonomous” cars. “Who needs them?” he would always grumble, “Nobody I know has asked for them” and then he would go on about the need to be able to make your own decisions based on the road around you, he would follow that up with stories about his first Mustang, like the car in the Bullet movie. Then he would go on and talk about driving around Boston, and Washington, and that all real men were proud of their abilities to drive on their own.

Dad’s gone now, and the world has accepted autonomous cars and trucks, and many are greatly relieved of the obligation of “driving”. It has been a number of years since Alex graduated from College. Her life as a young accountant keeps her busy, but not too busy to make plans to go out to the airport, check the old 182 out, and do some flight prepping for the Memorial Day weekend flight to Cape Cod. This trip she’ll be taking Bart and his wife along, with Mom in tow. They are stretching the 3-day weekend into 4 days, and she needs to file her proposed flight plan with the NAAA for approval. On the computer form she files is a space for the make and model of the autonomous system she has onboard, and then check off whether she’ll be HF or Auto (Hand Flying or Autonomous). It’s a left over from the days when most pilots preferred to be in charge. When she checks off “HF”, she often gets a follow-up response asking if she checked off HF in error. It’s official public policy from the NAAA to discourage those old yahoo pilots who think they can fly it better than the computers and the satellites.

As this is one of her last trips in which she thinks Mom may be able to fly with them, she verifies that Yes, she is going to fly the airplane, weather permitting, both ways. She completed the flight plans on file, and then went back to work and packing for the weekend. Luckily, the little cottage in Yarmouth that Mom and Dad had bought so long ago had all the stuff they need except some clean clothes.

She was thinking about her Dad, and the question about the Autonomous flying. He conformed to the spending of money for the required autonomous equipment upgrade, but then always added: “That’s the day I stop flying when I can’t fly my own plane”. Well for better or worse, Dad passed away before he had no choice. She read in the NAAOPA (North American Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association) newsletter that fewer and fewer pilots opted to fly by hand and was glad she trained and got her ticket back in the old days. Now, she is questioned when she chooses to hand fly.

On Memorial Day Weekend in 2047, the flight preparation and weather were positive for her safe VFR flight up to Yarmouth on Cape Cod. She flew at 5500 feet above ground, skirting around New York Center as directed, then passing over Rhode Island eastward towards the Cape. The old Boston Center had long ago been combined with the controllers of New York Center, and as she was reporting her position (although they already knew) just south of Yarmouth and turning Northward to the pattern for the airport, the Controller commented that they were waiting for her at Yarmouth, because they wanted to welcome the last hand flying pilot after her touchdown.

Her dad would have been proud of her approach and touchdown, but then she has so much new equipment onboard that it gets easier every time. The “heads up” displayed on the windscreen was neat. The automatic landing system brought the plane in by the book, but the plane was hers again as soon as it touched down. Her Mom said: “Nice landing” and added that her Dad would have been upset by her welcome as the last hand flyer in North America. “Autonomous flying” he would have said: “Who asked for it”.

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Mike “Sky-hawk” Sehl

## A Long Day of Flying

Allow me to start my story with a bit of background. I've been interested in aviation ever since I took my first flight with a couple of friends at Morrisville Airport at the age of 10. During my working career I had the opportunity to work at Carson Helicopters in Bucks County as a painter and eventually as a Non-Destructive Testing inspector. For a few months, while living in Illinois, I began doing ground school and learning to plot a course based on triangulation of winds versus ground course. Finally, at the age of 56, I started flight lessons at Heritage Field. Work got in the way, as it often does, and it took me six years to finally earn my Private Pilot certificate. About a year later I had the opportunity to fly N3341L, a Beech Sierra, and instantly knew this airplane was a great platform for me to achieve my Instrument rating and Commercial certificate. Not long after that the plane was for sale and I was able to purchase it at a below market price. Over the course of the next year I used it for flights in the local area taking my wife Sue out for breakfast at Sky Manor and dinner at Woodbine NJ.



Sue and I often vacation on Marco Island in Florida, where her parents live, and I've considered doing that flight numerous times during my training and subsequent flying. In June of last year Sue had to fly to Florida to attend to her mother and I told her that if the weather cooperated I would fly the Sierra down and we could go for some flights in the area as time permitted. She left on a commercial flight on Tuesday and on the following Saturday the weather was clear enough for me to try a 1,200-mile cross country flight.

It was under nearly perfect VFR conditions when I took off from Pottstown Municipal and headed south to follow the Delmarva peninsula on the first leg of my journey. On the recommendation of Zack, Chief Flight Instructor at Fly Elite, I'd planned for a halfway stop at Moncks Corner, SC (KMKS). He and I had agreed to talk at my stop for a weather and flight conditions update. My flight path was set and filed for Municipal N47-Modena (MXE)-Snow Hill (SWL)-Cape Charles (CCV)-Kingston (ISO)-Wilmington (ILM)-Berkeley County (KMKS). I picked up VFR advisories from Philly Approach and I was on my way south. At 8,500 MSL and at 75% cruise it would be 4.5 hours flight time. On the way over Virginia I saw a large lake and looked at my flight path on Foreflight and recognized the lake as Lake Drummond, a VFR reporting point for flights into Norfolk. I laughed, remembering this from studying for my written exam using the King's School videos, and managed to grab a photo to share with others. About the same time, I heard another pilot request the status of the GAMECOCK A Military Operations Area and he was told it was 'cold'. I called Center and told them that if the MOA was cold, I'd like to 'cut the corner and proceed direct KMKS. ATC approved and I deleted ILM from my flight path. Not another half-hour later the high clouds began dropping down and I requested 6,500 MSL. Twenty minutes later I realized I was going to have to drop down to 4,500 and I began to wonder about my fuel margin at the lower altitude. Rather than take any risk I once again called Air Traffic Control and changed my destination from KMKS to KCPC Columbus County, NC. There I found cheap avgas and a friendly staff of one. Yes, it's a small General Aviation airport, the kind we all love to visit.

After a quick break I was on the phone with Zack and we discussed building thunderstorms near my planned route from south of Savannah, GA over Jacksonville, FL. I decided, with some friendly advice, to change to a more westerly heading until I was around the storms and stop at X60 Williston, Florida, a former B-25 training airbase. This would add an hour to my flight and necessitate another fuel stop. The second leg now looked like KCPC-Charleston (CHS)-Savannah(SAV)-Waycross(AYS) and finally a turn due south to Williston. It was a hot, June afternoon when I landed at X60. A much larger airport with a staff of two, and a cold bottle of water greeted me on arrival. A quick check-in call to Zack and half-hour later I was back into the muggy air for my third and final leg. To ensure I stayed out of the busy Tampa/St. Petersburg airspace I used Lakeland (LAL) to Fort Meyers (RSW) and at 6 PM I touched down at Marco Island. The staff there set

me up with a tie-down spot and help with my luggage. And finally, at the end of a 12 hour day with 9.5 hours of flight time under my belt, there was Sue waiting to take me to a well-deserved seafood dinner. She still thinks I'm crazy for doing the flight all in one day, and she's probably right, but it was a great experience, and an even better learning opportunity. A week and a half later, the return flight wasn't quite as long, and less of an adventure, but that story will have to wait.

John Green



Here is picture of John and his Sierra from a dog rescue he did in Sept. for NARPS  
(Noah's Animal Rescue Project and Shelter)



*Don't have your cool PAOP letter opener/spinner yet? What are you waiting for? You need one of these! They're fun! Just drop an email or a call directly to the President and he will see that you receive your sanitized spinner right away!*