



# FLIGHTLINE

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## SouthEast Section Newsletter

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## Governor's Corner Welcome Back to Another Year

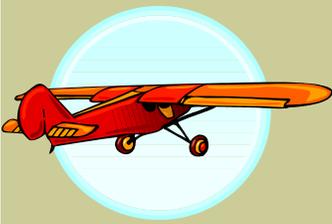


Welcome back from a summer of fun! Many Chapters are meeting for the first time since summer's inception and getting geared up for a fun time this fall and winter.

Speaking of fun in the fall.....be sure to register for SE Section , if you have not already. The early registration date has passed, but be sure to register and reserve your rooms at the Homeward Suites by September 12th. Chapter Chairs will have their own "Council Meeting" at 1700 Friday. Also, Bring any items you want to donate to the SE Section Silent Auction. You will have a great time in my Chapter's home base of Fort Myers, FL. We call it Paradise! For further information and registration see attached registration form with this email.

Don't forget to sell your chapter's raffle tickets for the iPad2. It is a tax deductible sale and it will help SE Section with its budget. The winner will be announced at the SE Section meeting, Oct 15. They sell at 1 for \$5.00 and 5 for \$20.00. Selling tickets can be fun. Just remind the person you are trying to sell to, Christmas is around the corner, and it would make a great gift for themselves or someone else. Use a positive phrase like "Would you like to buy some chances for an iPad2? It would make a great Christmas gift for someone else or yourself. Pilots can certainly use it with one of the aviation apps that are available for the iPad." I have Foreflight on mine, and love it! I liked the imagery it had, while I watched Hurricane "Irene" make her way up the East Coast. It was better than some others I have used. But there are other Aviation Apps available, too.

The next raffle will be an aviation quilt that we all participate in. Each Chapter is expected to make 2 squares for the quilt, and Vice Governor, Terry Carbonell will put it together, for us. The squares are to be 12.5 inches square. For further details, contact Terry 239 633 0077 or email her godusty@hotmail.com.



Terry is working with a Bahamian merchant to make a new Aviation material. She is interested in seeing how many would be interested in purchasing the fabric. If you are interested, in the least, let her know.

Blue Skies and Tail Winds,

*Judy* :-)

## **Florida Suncoast Chapter**

From FL Suncoast Newsletter

### **Laura Gao Completes Instrument Rating!**

#### **IFR Training: a Journey to Be a Better Pilot and Better Self**

I passed my IFR check ride on June 30th. When congratulations came in from friends and families, I sat in my office and took a moment to reflect upon this period of 6 months of training.

##### The Seed

Everything started on April 23, 2010, the day I got my private license. The encouraging and friendly examiner Joe Puglia handed my temporary PPL paper, "Congratulations on getting your license to learn!" Then he added a question, "When are you going to start your instrument training?" I looked at him, not sure how to answer. Seriously, I just got my private license. Do I really have to start a higher rating right away? Why do I have to do it? Can I really do it? I made up a number and told Joe that I would consider learning to fly instrument after I accumulated 150 hours of flight time. That was a huge number to me at that time, as I had a meager 50 some hours in my log book.

##### The Catalyst

Christmas time of 2010, my friends Terry and Ellen were organizing a party for 99s Paradise Coast Chapter. My husband Matt and I were invited. However, the day of our departure, heavy fog loomed at our airport Pilot Country (X05) at two hundred feet. Dissipation would not happen till we were sure to miss the party. The only way to get out was to fly instrument rules. Luckily, Matt is instrument rated and he filed an IFR flight plan. A few minutes later, we were on top of the clouds at 5000 feet, looking at blue sky with golden sun beam showing down. What a different world! And what a freedom! As I was all amazed and got fueled up by the desire to get an instrument rating, I expressed my passion. Wise Matt put a cooling mask for my head right away. "My dear, instrument rating is not to help you fly in any kind of weather, but to help you become a better pilot and know when to fly and when not. You will get better aviating, navigating and communicating skills. But more importantly, you will also learn the limitation of yourself and your airplane." Right there and then, I was enlightened by Matt and transformed my "want" a rating to "need" a rating. "Yes, I need the rating to be a safer and better pilot." I assured him.

##### The Journey

It turned out to be a good time to start instrument training. Winter in Florida is very conducive to flight training. My instructor Mr. Don Richardson, a seasoned flight instructor as well as a veteran snow bird was down here in Florida. Don is 82-year-old, the sharpest 82-year-old I

ever met in my life. As an instructor, he is knowledgeable and a great master of teaching techniques. As a friend, he is really compassionate and empathetic. He called me his “granddaughter” and shared many things with me, including his love for flying and teaching, and a sweet tooth for chocolate and dessert.

Just like my attempt to start private training in December 2010, I needed to make a few extra steps as a Chinese citizen to go through TSA’s Threat Assessment before I was allowed to train. Whilst awaiting TSA’s approval, Don started to help me fly more precisely and work on the radio shyness. Everything was still VFR, but the tolerance of deviation was intentionally set to be very small.

On January 12, the journey officially began. My IFR written was out of way by then. Very soon, I realized that acquiring IFR flying skills was similar to solving a jigsaw puzzle. You pick up pieces of knowledge first and apply them to the flight as a whole. But sometimes, piece to piece connection may not be easy and may not even make sense till the “Eureka” moment arrives. When I just thought I was ready for one task, another one unexpectedly would strike me and exposed my weak link.

I can never forget the day I flew to Orlando Executive with Don. Jets in front of and behind me, I must apply full power to get there and quickly descend for the landing. My Mooney is not a good girl for shedding off airspeed. I did everything I could to slow down, including slipping. I still landed hot and long. All of sudden, I was tearing up. The pressure got me. I was very unhappy about my performance or even myself. Quickly, Don recognized my internal turmoil and gave me a good antidote: Everyone has to go through such a process. You are no exception. That was a wake-up call. Unreasonable high perception or low perception of ourselves leads us nowhere. Instrument training is a process. Whether you like it or not, you will have to sweat or even cry to get through. Patience and perseverance are our friends to the success. The decision to buy second-hand ASA PCATD flight simulator was the best one I made for the IFR training. It is a direct solution to make sure that I understand every procedure well before putting them into practice. It was not very expensive compared to the investment on actual airplane flying. But the comfort at home with no pressure and pause at any moment to get a question answered is great.



*Laura, with Instructor Mr. Don Richardson ,in front of her Mooney, after a lesson.*

Comm1 Radio software, both IFR communication and Clearance Delivery made talk really easy with ATC. They are always sweet and helpful. They will do what they can to accommodate your request for approach practices unless the wind and traffic is affirmatively against your intention. If you are not sure about any instruction, ask them to "Say again!" It's better to appear green but correct than macho and wrong.

Around the beginning of May, I was quite ready in the skills, but Don had to go back to Maine. Looking for a good instructor to finish me off was almost the most challenging thing I experienced in the training. An instructor friend agreed to do the finishing up but had to de-commit as his knee had to be replaced. It was a bit grilling, watching my skill perishing in that 4 weeks.

For a moment, I was wondering if I would ever get my instrument rating at all. The self-doubt was easily cured with "I can do it. Just hang on there." Fortunately, Jim Spears, a wonderful instructor that taught Matt his PPL, stepped in and after a few more hours with him, I was all set for the check ride.

### Big Day

After a hearty breakfast at home, I started my final preparation before the exam. Doppler Radar was showing mostly yellow and red cells from Crystal River all the way to south of Venice, from the coast to the east of Lakeland. Pilot Country was right in the middle a big red cell.

DPE Mr. Richard Hirsch drove all the way from Lakeland to Pilot Country for my exam. It was very kind of him to do so. We spent 2.3 hours for the oral and then as the rain seemed to lessen, we got in the airplane. It was a real instrument rating check-ride. 1.2 hours were in actual IMC. Good part of the story is that I didn't have to wear goggles much. The down side was that I couldn't even finish shooting all the approaches at Lakeland (KLAL). A naughty thunder shower decided to sit on the inbound course of ILS Rwy 5 approach. I did the ILS approach at Tampa Executive (KVDF). Coming back to Pilot Country was in pouring shower rain for the last 10 miles. Visibility was barely 1.5 miles. Ceiling was right around 1500 feet. I went visual for the landing and we got down safe.

Just like my private license, I understand that this rating, again, is just another step to further learning. Thanks to the wisdom IFR training endowed me though there will be more challenges along the path, I am confident, patient and resilient to keep going.

## Alabama Chapter

Taken from AL Newsletter

Nancy Swanner made 5 flights and flew 10 children plus some parents at the Young Eagles Day, July 31, at DCU. It was hot and bumpy but a lot of fun! These flights, Nancy found, had taken her to a new "height". She was notified, by EAA, she has flown over 100 kids in the Young Eagles program!  
Congratulations, Nancy!



Some of the Young Eagles on Nancy's flights

## Paradise Coast and Goldcoast Chapters

Written by Terry Carbonell, SES VG

### Small Hope Bay Resort, Andros, Bahamas

We held our breath until we made the touchdown: not because of any piloting or mechanical issue but because we did not want to say or do anything to jinx getting our final stamp for the Pilot Challenge. As Vern chirped in the landing, we breathed a sigh of relief and high 5'ed our accomplishment! Now we can relax and enjoy the weekend.

The cab fetched Vince and Donna along with Vern and I for the short ride to the Small Hope Bay Resort. The Resort is right on the water with a fresh sea breeze blowing all day long. The ground are well kept and raked sand. We knew instantly we were home when Renaldo greeted us with: "The first thing is to come to the bar, relax and have a drink." This resort is all inclusive with an open bar filled with alcoholic and non-alcoholic concoctions and things to make concoctions. Kate made me a "Wild Mama" - a new concoction with mango chunks, pineapple and coconut... non-alcoholic, of course. Renaldo finished our tour of the grounds and showed us to our rooms. All of the rooms are appointed with the Androsia [www.androsia.com](http://www.androsia.com) fabrics - bedspreads, curtains, decorations, etc. We settled in for lunch waiting for Tamra and Ron to arrive before we set off on bicycles to the Androsia Factory and Shop. We knew the factory was closed and we were quite disappointed to miss the tour; but the shop was full of the Androsia products - all batik fabrics made right there on Andros. This is a one-of-a-kind fabric shop.



We headed back to the resort after our retail therapy excursion for some "chillaxing"; as the Small Hope Bay folks call it. We decided on a scuba dive for the next day but since none of us had been diving for a while, we by-passed the group dive in favor of a refresher and a no-brainer 15' dive in the shallow reef nearby.

The water was perfect for our dive - both at the beach where we did the refresher and in the shallows for the dive - a warm 86 degrees. We pattered along behind Frederico, our instructor/guide, looking at the Trumpet Fish (we were on Trumper Reef), snapper, Parrotfish, Christmas tree worms and some of the biggest lobster I have ever seen (save for that female I caught and had to release in the Keys several years back). We all finished with the confidence to dive the Blue Hole to 100' after lunch.

This was my first Blue Hole dive and this one was spectacular. We descended over a lush coral garden amidst a school of Atlantic Spade Fish, gathered at the rim then continued our descent through the hole. We dropped into a crevice where we could see perfectly well with the light from above as we peered into the darkening water below us. This Blue Hole had a ceiling collapse so we were able to remain with no overhead environment yet see the seemingly bottomless hole below us. This is a live Blue Hole where the fresh water still intermingles with the sea water. On days where the tide is just right, the retreating fresh water leaves white strings, that we endearingly called "Snot" that are sulphur eating bacteria that disintegrate immediately upon contact. University of Miami scientists have tried to capture the "Snot"; but it will not survive the trip back to the lab so it remains largely a mystery but one

worth a personal investigation. Unfortunately for us, the tides were not right for "snot"; viewing but we were quite content with the standard Blue Hole. We finished the dive with a safety stop meandering through the coral gardens enroute to the standard safety stops on the way back up to the boat. Wow: what a great dive!



Left Tamra Sheffman, FL Goldcoast Chapter and her 491/2, Ron, in the background, and right, Terry Carbonell, Paradise Coast Chapter, SE Section Vice Governor, and her 49 1/2 Vern in the background, in the Bahamas.

Exhausted but happy we came back, showered and headed back for dinner. We started each evening with appetizers with, among other things, really, really good conch fritters. The conch DID NOT just make a 50 yard dash through the batter - it was actually sticky enough to grab the conch for a tasty snack. All of the meals were outstanding but this one got me good. There was rum cake for dessert. I can recall trips to Grand Cayman for their special rum cake which I really enjoyed. I decided to have a lighter dinner of a cabbage, mushroom and onion mix, then go straight to the rum cake. What I did not realize was that the raisins were soaked in the rum. As I was munching away, I commented to Vern that I seemed to feel the cake "going to my head";. About 30 minutes later, I was convinced of it and actually got drunk off the slice of rum cake. It would seem my tolerance for alcohol

is zero!! I made it an early evening after watching the dive video as I was in need of sleep to shake the foggy feeling.

Sunday morning came and I was refreshed and ready to go but certainly not ready to leave. The staff at Small Hope Bay were all so friendly and made you feel as if you were their lifelong friends coming for a visit. The accommodations were rustic but clean and comfortable - you lacked nothing. We headed off to the airport with Tamra - Vince and Donna staying behind now that Vince has the faster plane. Tamra and Ron took off for San Andros in their quest for more Pilot Challenge stamps and Vern and I were heading for home in N739MM - our borrowed Cessna 172. All was great until we hit the customs snag: the blue phone at the airport could not reach ANY customs office. We were more than 45 minutes. I finally emailed Jeff at the resort who got a call off to Customs for us. Right before we were ready to leave, a local customs agent, Mr. Andrews gave us his phone to call so we could confirm our arrival and out squawk code - we discovered that the US agent gave Vern the wrong code! Finally in the air we had a quick flight - tailwinds all the way - and cleared customs at Kendall Tamiami before the final leg to LaBelle.

## **Southeast Section Fall Meeting** **Fort Myers, FL**

Come join us in Paradise for a fun weekend in Sunny Fort Myers, FL. We have a fun weekend planned at the Homeward Suites. The price is right and includes a hot buffet breakfast each morning. We'll have fun at our indoor Luau and it's so casual, we are encouraging pajamas as attire! So mark your calendars now. See email attached registration. See you at "The Pajama Party in Paradise".