

DRONE FLYERS CLUB

The Villages, FL



Meeting Minutes of August 15, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: The August 15, 2024 meeting was called to order at 18:28 hours. In the absence of President Wiley, John Hawley, our Membership Director, officiated this evening.

Hawley welcomed all members and guests in attendance. The new members this evening were Steve Huene, Laura Guy, and Eric McCrackin. Visitors this evening were Gail Iscutart, Mark Ellis, Ed Latimer, and Martha Shoup.

There were 23 members. 3 new members, and 4 guests in attendance. Our membership now consists of 139 members.

Awarded Vests: Ted Southworth and Mike Farrell were presented their FAA 107 vests. Congratulations!

Hawley presented a recent Ken Norton Video on the proposed “drone ban” bill that has been reintroduced. Important points of this bill include:

- The Senate and House now have amended their bills to eliminate sticking points and the two bills are now similar.
- DJI, Autel and Zoom Robotics drones are now on the list of drones that may be banned. It appears the goal is to eliminate all China produced drones.
- The bill is silent in regard to other electronic items (telephones) that we believe to be more of a threat than drones.
- DJI drones are equipped with GEO Fencing which eliminates the possibility of DJI drones from being flown in restricted areas, eliminating the potential use for spying on sensitive areas.
- Passage of this bill will result in a drone shortage as American manufacturing capacity is mainly devoted to commercial drones.
- Wants government to have oversight on which drones are “safe” or “unsafe”
- Lack of evidence to support bill.
- Feels this is an attempt to support American made drones that are less quality/capable.

House and Senate, if this bill passed would be bad news for American drone flyers as there is no equal quality or capable drone.

Recommends the club write letters to our elected officials opposing the bill.

CLUB OFFICERS

President’s Report: In the absence of President Wiley there was no report.

Treasurer’s Report: Treasurer Peggy Garvin presented the August 2024 Treasurer’s Report:

Opening Balance:	\$3, 353.70	
Revenue:	Dues	\$ 80.00
	50/50 Drawing:	32.00
	Stickers:	10.00

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Total Revenue		\$122.00
Expenses:	\$472.77	
Name Badge	\$	37.45
Vest	\$	35.67
Total Expenses	:	\$ 63.12

Balance: \$3,412.58

Motion and second to accept the August 15, 2024 Treasurers report as presented. Motion approved by voice vote.

Mentorship program: Garvin stated that we need to establish a membership program. The purpose of the program would be 1) to assist newer members in selecting suitable drones for their skill level, 2) Assisting all members learning to fly newly purchased drones, and 3) Helping all members to avoid disappointment when flying their drones. Garvin requested all members interested in serving as a mentor to contact her.

Secretaries Report: Secretary Randy Justus reported the July 11, 2024 meeting minutes had been posted on our website shortly after the July meeting. No comments or suggested changes were received. Justus requested a motion be made to accept the minutes as posted on our website.

Motion and second to approve the July 11, 2024, minutes. Motion approved by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS: John Hawley reported on the assistance the Club gave to the SoZo Kids event. Hawley and Justus attended on behalf of the Drone Flyers Club and took aerial and still photos for the SoZo Kids club to use in their fund-raising efforts. SoZo kids provides shoes, backpacks, school supplies and clothing as well as other services such as haircuts and vision screening to the under-privileged children living in the Ocala National Forest. This recent event attracted nearly 1,700 children and was a total success.

New member Ed Latimer thanked the Club for their support of the SoZo Kids event and stated there are approximately 50,000 persons that live in the Ocala National Forest.

Hawley confirmed that we had contacted the FAA and the Ocala National Forest Rangers prior to the event to confirm our mission. Fortunately the site where the event was held was not in the National Forest and did not require FAA approval.

MEMBER VIDEOS:

- Peggy Garvin presented a video from her recent travels. This included flights in the Great Smokey Mountains in North Carolina, the Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina, and the Berkshire Mountains in Maine. Great videos of the dense forests and spectacular areas in America!. Blue Ridge, Georgia: mountains, lakes, Berkshire Mountains, MA,

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- Bill Elder presented a video on his new Avata drone. Bill presented outstanding navigation and flight skills as flew obstacles and loops at the Soaring Eagle complex here in The Villages. Well done Bill!
- Wise presented a short video he recently made at The Villages monthly Lifestyle Expo. The video was flown indoors (not over people!) and was a great draw for attracting interest in the Club.

MEMBER DISCUSSION:

Hawley reported we are currently looking for new and different places to fly. While we will continue to use Soaring Eagle and Edna's, it would be fun for the club to occasionally fly at new locations. Members are encouraged to suggest new places in The Villages they would be interesting in flying at.

LIFESTYLE EXPO: The next Lifestyle Expo will be held on September 13 and will be at the Ezel Recreation Center. The Expo is always the 2nd Friday of each month and is designed to generate interest in the numerous clubs in The Villages. We need volunteers to help staff the Club's booth. We will be staffing for two shifts, one morning (8:30-11:45), and one afternoon (11:45-4:00). Reminder: a free lunch is provided for members staffing the tables at the Expo. Please contact Melanie if you can assist and represent the Club at the next Expo.

SAFETY OFFICER:

Safety Officer Wise presented the monthly safety briefing (the briefing is available for viewing on our Club Website (<https://www.droneflyersthevillagesfl.com/>). Please take time to review this important safety information provided by our Safety Officer each month and before you fly. This information will assist the pilot in being up to date on changes and help the Club in meeting our goals of zero injuries and zero accidents.

Highlights of this month's report included information regarding:

- Importance of take-off and landing procedures (The drone is always facing away from the operator for take-off and landing).
- The Pilot Institute partnership: Many high-quality programs, some free and some requiring a fee, are available from the Pilot Institute. This includes Part 107 training and training on use and capabilities of many types of drones.
- Friendly reminder: All drone pilots need to take and complete the "TRUST Exam" from the FAA. This is a free exam and you can retake as many times as necessary. Remember to print out and save your certificate and carry it with you when flying.

DRONES FOR SALE: Members are able to view, list and sell drones to other members by visiting our Club website (<https://www.droneflyersthevillagesfl.com/>).

COMMISARY (CLUB ITEMS FOR SALE):

www.droneflyersthevillagesfl.com droneflyersclubtv@gmail.com villages-drone-club@googlegroups.com

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- Please see Peggy Garvin should you need Study Books, Club Hats, Club Stickers, Name Tags, etc.

CRASH OF THE MONTH: There were no crashes reported by members this month. Well done!

FLYING DAY REMINDERS:

- Soaring Eagle: Tuesdays, 08:00 – 12:00 (Soaring Eagle closed for maintenance thru August)
- Edna's/Hog Eye Path: Thursdays, 08:00 – 12:00
- As an replacement for August 20, we will be flying at Sunset Point. This is located off the bridge on Morse Avenue, just north of Sumter Landing. This is golf car or walking accessible only! Same time, different place!
- We continue to determine other alternate sites to use monthly. If you have a suggestion, please contact one of the Club officers with your suggestion.

50/50 DRAWING: The lucky winner of tonight's 50/50 drawing for \$33.00 was Gerald Dulcamara. Congratulations Gerald.

NEXT MEETING(S):

- **Business Meeting:** The next business meeting is scheduled for **September 19, 2024**, at 18:30 hours (*3rd Thursday*). Meeting will be held at the Rohan Recreation Center.
- **Training Session:** The August 22 training session is cancelled. The next training session will be on **September 26, 2024** at 18:30 hours at the Rohan Recreation Center.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no additional business being brought forward, John Hawley adjourned the August 15, 2024, Drone Club Meeting was adjourned at 19:45 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Justus

Randy Justus, Secretary

