

## Chapter 93 Young Eagles Event: “It’s a small world...”

Once again, it was up to mother nature as to the success of a Chapter 93 event as we gathered at Blackhawk Airport (87Y) on Saturday, June 6th. With rain in the forecast for later that morning, some 10 Chapter 93 members waited for the first Young Eagles to arrive. We had four aircraft ready with pilots and once the kids did arrive, we got busy giving rides. Of the parents I talked with, many commented on what a great event and opportunity this was for their children and could not stop smiling while talking about it. A couple of kids changed their minds at the last minute about a ride and were content sitting in a plane and learning about the controls and instrument functions. I bet they’ll be back for a ride at the next event!

I had one such young man, an 8-year-old who wasn’t quite certain about a ride, but as he spent time talking with other pilots, he thought he ought to at least sit in the plane and talk with me about the ride: How high we would fly? Would it be bumpy? Is it noisy? And, how long would we be up? I mentioned that if he wanted to go, we could take off and if he did not like it we could certainly come right back to the pattern and land. (The ride for the day was about 20 minutes!) He agreed and away we went. As we taxied out, the questions started again (all very good questions!). He commented as we held for takeoff, “I saw you in this plane earlier today here as my mom and I watched from the road and you waved at us before taking off.” Once we took off and before we left the pattern I asked him how it was going and he said, “THIS IS GREAT, but let’s not go too high...”

As I leveled off at “ride altitude” I told him that this is how high we are going and again asked if he was okay with things. He said he was fine and then asked more questions. As we flew over his home town, he was able to spot his grade school and commented; “Now I’ve really got something to put in my journal on Monday!” We tried to find his house but could not. I think he was having some fun now.

Back on the ground he had all smiles and “thumbs up” for mom and could not stop talking about the ride. As I signed his Young Eagles Certificate, he could hardly pick it up as he was loaded down with past issues of *Sport Aviation*. I shook his hand and thanked him for coming by. And as a famous radio man would say, “And now, The Rest Of The Story!”

Tuesday afternoon as I sat at the PC at work with my back to the office door, someone came in and said, “Hey Don that was sure nice of you to give my son a plane ride on Saturday. He really enjoyed it and hasn’t stopped talking about it since!” Turns out that this Young Eagle is the son of one of my co-workers and they did not realize the pilot’s connection with dad’s work until they got home and dad saw the certificate and read the name. “It is a small world!” - *Don Ripp*