

The Nor'Easter

Newsletter of the North East Tribe of the International Comanche Society

Spring 2018
March-April-May



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From the Tribe Chief

Dear Northeast Comancheros:

A warm welcome to our many new members! The Northeast fly-in season is here at last, and the latest ICS reports show the Northeast Tribe is growing (at a time when other tribes are shrinking). This is a tribute to our members, volunteers, and volunteer officers, who have hung together through the recent difficulties and stayed focused on the Northeast Tribe's missions: training of pilots and mechanics, succession planning, and general aviation support.

Below you will find an overview of old and new fly-ins, the inaugural group-buy results from the prop balancing and shoulder harness programs launched last year, as well as two new group-buys.

Safety issues

As Chair of the ICS Safety Committee, here is a quick note on the sobering topic of recent Comanche accident statistics and what we are doing about them.

The Committee had been analyzing NTSB statistics which showed a concerning recent uptick in Comanche accidents in 2016. Almost all were preventable accidents, with concentrations in fuel management and, of all things, instructional flights. Then the unthinkable happened: 5 Piper Comanche accidents in the one week of Sun N Fun - 6 fatalities, 3 airframes lost forever, 2 sets of Q-tipped props - and those are only the ones we happened to hear about. The Northeast Tribe had already been working on the idea of short-format Mini-Clinics fly-ins. We had the help of several CFIs with CPPP experience, expert guidance from the original CPPP program creator, and a hallmark Northeast conference call with over a dozen enthusiastic participants who supported and helped shape the idea. We are launching this year! More on that in the Group Buy section and article below.

Northeast Tribe Fly-Ins

The [Northeast Fly-in](#) season is finally fully here! By popular request we now have several weekend fly-ins in addition to our usual lunch get-togethers. We are highlighting Northeast's long coastline and history with both a return to the ever-popular Nantucket Weekend, including day sailing, ice cream, shopping, beaches, and a tour of this historical island, a 5-day September Windjammer Sail off the coast of Maine which is a breathtaking time to see the famous coast from the deck of a sailing ship, and the joint Outer Banks Coastal Carolina Lighthouse Tour which just took place and was fabulous! Check out the [NE Fly-in schedule](#) and use the [registration form](#) to indicate your interest. We will add you to the distribution list for that event so that you stay can informed.

Northeast Tribe Group-Buy programs

Last year we added several [Group-buy Programs](#). They were so popular that we are repeating one and are adding others. Here is the update on group buys:

- *Shoulder Harnesses - Success!* The shoulder harness initiative resulted in over two dozen Comanches being outfitted with new shoulder harness restraints! Recent FAA wings seminars have made no bones (no pun intended!) about what a critical difference these have made to unplanned off-airport landings.

Congratulations to the dozens who took advantage and saved hundreds, and many thanks to both Alpha Aviation and Phill-Air for discounting their products in order to support our fleet. Although we quipped "The life you save may be your own!" we were actually dead serious (no pun). As we are still receiving interest, we are working on finalizing an extension to the discount. While it won't be quite as good a deal as the suppliers could only hold off on materials increases so long, we expect to continue some form of discount for at least another month. If you are interested, please email myself or Allen Murray at allenmurray@mindspring.com

- Prop Balancing Clinic: comments from last year's participants at Gullwing Aviation, include "we completely stopped getting cracks!" "immediately smoother" "I wasn't sure at first, I was used to operating at 2300rpm, now everything is smoother than ever at all RPMs!" We are repeating it again this year, same place, same \$8 all you can eat EAA benefit breakfast, many thanks again to Mitch Haubert who is still renovating his "barn twinkie". Final date will be in the Calendar, stay tuned
- Transponder Check Clinic and ADS-B: Another new clinic this year is an ADS-B lecture and *discount transponder cert* clinic for \$100 flat rate VFR, \$300 for the full IFR cert (including pitot static, altimeter, transponder). Furthermore they will give us Comanches a "no pass no pay!". It's happening at Green Mountain Avionics, located at the repaved and about-to-reopen Middlebury Airport (6B0) in Vermont. We hope to combine this event with the Airport Grand Reopening (date TBA). Bill Hanf used to work at Heritage Aero with the famed Cliff Wilewski, and after losing several avionics shops recently it is good to have a new one opening up. They also have experience installing Autopilots, including Garmin, STEC, and (wait for it) the Trio! There are also several A&Ps and, due to the Heritage connection, have unusual interest in older aircraft.
- Mini-Clinics: I am most excited about the mini-clinics because Northeast is about Training. I am still working on the safety study update with Nathanael Palmer, as chief statistician David Kenney has unfortunately left AOPA's Air Safety Institute. The first analysis of the last 10 years is alarming. We had a shocking spike in PA24 accidents in 2016 and not a single one was a mechanical. I am very happy we are doing these mini-lessons and raising awareness of the value of the Comanche-focused weekend CPPP and CPTP clinics (all of them). A Group-buy mini-clinic is a short, targeted flying lesson on a particular topic. The pilot is in the left seat of course, but other students ride in the back. They then swap up for the next lesson and everybody learns! Pilots who are shy are fine to say so. Topics may include airspeed control, landings, in-flight gear troubleshooting, etc. See the article below!

- Autopilots:

Existing autopilots:

Altimatic III: one common cause of erratic behavior is that Piper's connectors may have loosened over time. If your autopilot altitude hold tends to result in a temp hold followed by a sudden descent this might be that type of problem. These connectors can be tightened or replaced. There are 18 of them in the glide slope intercept models and 14 in those without. Avionics shops experienced with these older autopilots can tell you if your behavior fits that model and can do the work.

STC or 337 Status of New autopilots in established use in experimental fleet:

Trio: They have hired Hans Neubert to do the install kit design for the Trio. Hans agreed with George Ahlsten's early analysis that a capstan will be required. Because the changes would not implicate their software and controller they are optimistic that we can add the revised system on the existing STC without having to do a new application which, in the current FAA environment, may be more difficult.

Tru Trak: there is a rumor that the Atlanta FSDO issued a 337. Still awaiting confirmation.

Dynon: rumor that someone (the Aussies?) are working on an install kit.

All of the above are expected to be less than \$15,000 installed. And of course, for those with \$25k to spend, there is the long established STEC and Garmin...

Northeast Tribe Web Site

Thanks to Pete Morse we have an elegant and streamlined [ICS-NE webpage](#) and searchable Fly-in Schedule that makes it easy to find key events such as Fly-ins and Clinics, and key Global events such as the ICS convention and Oshkosh. There is also a collection of Tribe-related documents, Comanche safety topics and archived *Nor'Easter* newsletters.

Comanche Facebook Group

The Piper Comanche Facebook group has grown from under 200 members almost 2 years ago to over 1500. It is an upbeat place where people trade Comanche operation and maintenance tips, jokes, photos and destinations, make new friends, and occasionally rediscover old ones. It is run by a dedicated group of volunteer moderators who deliberately strive to keep freewheeling exchanges relevant to all topics Comanche occurring in an atmosphere of integrity and mutual respect. They have volunteered to help us add a Northeast Specific Facebook page which we see as critical for our growing group of younger pilots who look to Facebook for events announcements. Many of the moderators are current and former ICS members and supporters who feel that the ICS, as defined by its mission statement and bylaws, is a needed and invaluable asset to the Comanche community.

Communications

We made some changes designed to make the northeast more modern and appealing, and to serve the changing needs of the Northeast tribe. It seems to be working. We are now growing slowly but steadily again (the only tribe that is doing so at the moment, but we are already helping our fellow tribes and expect that to change for them too). We can now start slowing down on new initiatives and begin stabilizing things.

We held new prop balancing clinics and shoulder harness initiative and the new multi-tribe weekend fly-ins to Quebec Canada and Carolina Outer Banks. The Windjammer Sailing trip off the Maine coast is new this year. The \$8 all you can eat EAA breakfast and prop balancing clinic at Gullwing Aviation in Reedsville, PA was a huge success and will be held again in 2018. Those of you close to the southeast border may wish to take advantage of a second one now being scheduled for the Ocala area! Another new clinic this year is an ADS-B lecture and discount transponder check clinic to be held in Middlebury VT at Green Mountain Avionics. This new fly-in format seems to be getting real buy-in. We continue to look for educational and group buy opportunities that combine social, learning, saving, safety, and eating! Keep an eye on [the fly-in schedule](#) as they will be added shortly.

A new election process is being circulated for discussion. In the past our election announcements have variously been done in the *Nor'easter*, by email, and the *Comanche Flyer* Calendar. Going forward we will standardize by making all election announcements in the *Winter Nor'Easter*. See the article below for this year's election.

Please let us know what else you would like, what has worked well, what could be improved, and anything else you would like us to know and do. We can't promise miracles, but we are the only tribe that has shown significant growth. It is clear that our positive changes and ideas are coming directly from you.

Tailwinds!

CJ Stumpf, NE Tribe Chief

"The Dunker" experience at Survival Systems USA

By Zachary J. Grant

Last fall, a couple of us decided to take on a project that was not necessary, nor was it free, but we thought it might be educational, a challenge, and if it only saves our lives once, it's probably worth it.

We decided to take a trip to Survival Systems USA, otherwise known as "The Dunker". We signed up for the two-day course and were joined by other classmates who were primarily EMS and rescue helicopter pilots and crews, as their companies deemed this to be essential training for their operational environment.

First things first. Learn the basics in the classroom. After a morning of classroom instruction on survival and extrication techniques for escaping a submerged aircraft, as well as lessons on hypothermia and other physiology, we transitioned to the pool for a little hands-on training. Familiarity with and practice getting out of the simulator when high and dry was quickly shown to bear little similarity to doing the same process after "crashing" into the water, waiting for the



violent motion to stop, taking a last breath as the water fills in around you, finding the door release handles, opening the door, releasing seatbelts, swimming through the exit and finally reaching the surface, all while holding your breath. Subsequent training included using rescue breathing air bottles to extend the time you could be submerged. Further training included open water survival, deploying a life raft, basic first aid, and a full simulated night open water rescue with helicopter downwash, wind, waves and torrential rain while clamoring into the rescue basket and being winched up.

Was it fun? It was, in the way a lifesaving course is fun. Was it a challenge? Yes! Being a strong swimmer with some SCUBA or other open underwater experience (think surfing etc.) are a major plus. Was it worthwhile? Absolutely. As with all safety and rescue education, whether you ever need to use it, it makes you much more aware of the things that are important should bad things happen. We all fly over water to some extent. Some fly over it more than others. I pay a little more attention to my surroundings, modes of egress and tools available to me when I'm over water now after this class.

New: Comanche Mini Clinics

Mini-lesson Group-buy Fly-ins aka Mini-Clinics!

Who has ever wished they could tune up that one little skill with a genuine expert? Mini-Clinics are a menu of targeted flight training topics, such as approach speed control or fuel management, designed to fit into a 40-minute flying session of Comanche-expert-instructor + student + observer(s) plus 20 minutes to debrief.

The Inaugural Lunch Lecture will be “The top five ways to fly your Comanche more safely.” Following the instructor presentation over lunch, the instructor will teach two or three 1-hour lessons, flying in an owner’s airplane, with one or two interested members in the back to share the learning, if the pilot doesn’t mind. The idea is for each participating pilot to have a 45-minute lesson and to also get to ride in the back during another pilot’s lesson.

This sounds fun, but we are not kidding around. This exposure to the expertise of a Comanche-instructor is vitally important. Comanches have some peculiarities (not to mention the pilots, who also are known to have a few peculiarities). These peculiarities are our strengths, such as remarkably long-range fuel tanks and electro-mechanical landing gear that is incredibly strong and reliable. While our engineering avoids many common problems, it does predispose us to a few others.

Instructor unfamiliarity breeds accidents, and the accident statistics show that a remarkable number of accidents happen with full aux tanks and empty mains, or on training flights with instructors unfamiliar with the aircraft. The recent 6 fatalities in a Comanche in Scottsdale is an example. On a hot day the plane was overloaded. It was an accident that could and should have been avoided! Comanche pilots **MUST** learn to elevate a few normally good habits to the status of religion. It’s quick, it’s easy, and the life or airframe you save may be your own. They aren’t making any more of you or your Comanche, so we want you both to fly as safely and as long as possible.

Students can pick one of these Targeted Topics to start. As this is a new approach, the list may change:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1) Landings | 3) Stalls | 5) Fuel management |
| 2) Airspeed control | 4) Power settings and leaning | 6) New pilot intro |

The initial Mini-Clinics will be held with Fly-ins ([see the fly-in schedule](#) and look for *). Your one-on-one session (or up to 3 on 1!) can be set up for either before or after lunch, generally after. If interested, just [register](#) for the fly-in as usual, put a note in the comments, and we will reach out to you to schedule. We welcome your regular instructor to share the Comanche-specific love as well and will give them precedence as an observer.

Potential Mini-Clinic locations include Sky Acres (44N), LaGrangeville NY. It has a good restaurant overlooking the runway and is ideally situated for people to fly the Hudson River corridor for an unforgettable view of Manhattan. We can do this as a group, if we want, after lunch. And they have the cheapest fuel in the NYC/CT area.) There is also Barnes Airport (KBAF) in Westfield MA, also with a good restaurant, low cost fuel and nearby access to the Hudson Corridor. Stay tuned for further developments.

Bio: The inaugural clinic instructor will be Northeast’s own CFI Malcolm Dickinson, who a PA24-260B, N9284P. Some of you have met him and his two young sons at AOPA Groton or at our NE fly-ins. Malcolm did his Comanche training with Larry Larkin and has been a Comanche instructor for 23 years. He has taught at six CPPP clinics, [delete 3 in the Northeast,] and as we were designing the program, his name came up repeatedly as a good one. Mike Stich has been an instructor for decades and serves as chief instructor for the CPPP program.

Thank you to both Malcolm and Mike for helping to get this program started!

ICS-NE Elections

In the last NE elections, which closed before the Cleveland convention, the current Tribe officers were unopposed. The practice in past years is that the officers continue to serve, assuming that they are willing, until they are replaced. All officers expressed their willingness to continue in their offices.

Because of the mess created by the cancelled elections of the past year we have been working on a clearly defined way to elect Tribe Officers. The Northeast Tribe election process, as currently proposed, can be seen at [/NE Comanche Tribe Election Process.pdf](#). Election ballots for 2018-19 will be available on the NE website in late July, after the end of a nomination period and timed for voting to close before the August ICS Convention in Scotland.

Applications are now open for Tribe Officers. You can apply for yourself or for another NE Tribe member by submitting an [/ICS-NE Officer App Form](#). Question responses for all applicants will be collected and posted for the members to review, and the names placed on the election ballot. The positions of Fly-In Coordinator and Webmaster are appointed and will not be on the ballot.

The roles of each tribe officer can be reviewed at [/ICS-NE_Tribe Officer Roles](#). If you're interested in an officer position in the future but not sure you want to take it on right now, or even if you just have ideas or would like to help, let us know! We will be glad to include you in Tribe planning, Tribe decision-making, and continued innovations and improvements. We welcome your participation in Tribe activities, so email us if you want to be more involved.

ICS-NE Fly-Ins

The fly-in schedule for 2018 is posted on the NE website. You will see some old favorites listed for 2018, as well as some new destinations. Here are some of the highlights coming up.

- In June we will participate in the annual Piper Sentimental Journey event, flying to Piper Memorial Field ([KLHV](#)) in Lock Haven PA to celebrate 65 years of Comanches. This is a Saturday only fly-in.
- Our Tribe Annual Meeting will be held at Sky Manor in Pittstown NJ ([N40](#)) in August to take care of Tribe business and conclude our long-awaited elections.
- In September we are working on a weekend getaway to Nantucket MA ([KACK](#)), an often-requested repeat event. We also are coordinating with other ICS Tribes for a 5-day Windjammer Cruise out of Rockland ME ([KRKD](#)) on the [schooner American Eagle](#).

Here is the current proposed list for 2018. Listings *in red* are non-NE events.

Date	Apt Id	Name	Location	Restaurant	Program
Jan - Feb	--	- no fly-ins planned -	--	--	
Mar 24 (25)	JGG	Williamsburg-Jamestown	Williamsburg, VA	Charlie's (FBO)	luncheon
April 27-29	EWN	Coastal Carolina Reg.	Newbern, NC	various	Outer Banks weekend
May 26 (27)	N89	Resnick Airport	Ellenville, NY	Italian	luncheon
23-Jun	LHV	Wm. Piper Memorial	Lock Haven, PA	Village Tavern	luncheon/museum
July 21 (22)	2B3	Parlin Field	Newport, NH	local area	luncheon
<i>July 23-29</i>	<i>OSH</i>	<i>Oshkosh AirVenture 2018</i>	<i>Oshkosh, WI</i>		<i>Oshkosh AirVenture 2018</i>
<i>Aug 14-18</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>ICS Convention</i>	<i>Edinburgh, UK</i>	<i>hosted by EU Tribe</i>	<i>2018 ICS Convention</i>
Aug 25 (26)	N40	Sky Manor	Pittstown, NJ	Sky Café	luncheon/Annual meeting
Sept 14-16	ACK	Nantucket Memorial	Nantucket, MA	various	weekend fly-in
Sept 21-25	RKD	Rockland Airport	Rockland, ME	American Eagle	Windjammer Cruise

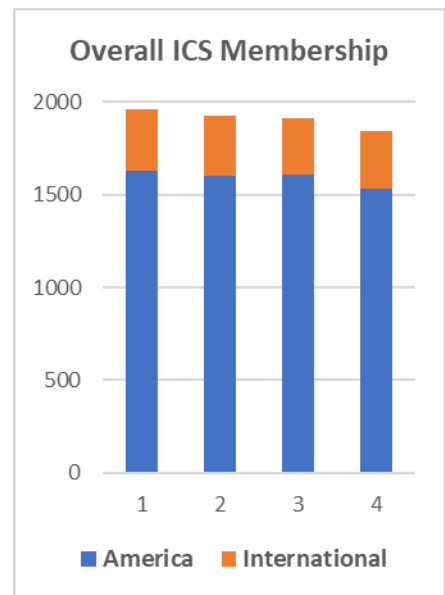
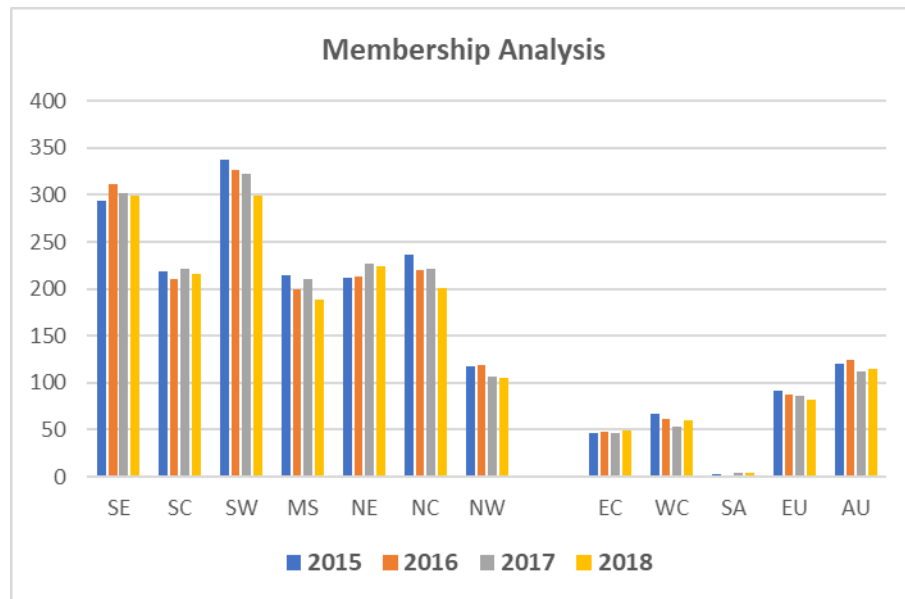
Oct 20 (21)	LNS	Lancaster	Lancaster, PA	Fiorertino's	luncheon
Nov 17 (18)	GED	Delaware Coastal	Georgetown, DE	Arena's at the Airport	luncheon
Dec	--	- no fly-in planned -			

Lots of things to do and places to go. As always, you can see this full list any time on our NE Tribe website at [/ICS-NE_FlyinSchedule](#) and register using the [/ICS-NE_FlyIn_RegForm](#). An invitation email will go out to the Tribe a couple of weeks before each event.

Pete Morse, NE Fly-In Coordinator

ICS Membership Analysis

These charts below show the population of the ICS Tribes over the past four years. Most Tribes show a decline in numbers, some are relatively stable, and only the Northeast Tribe shows growth. Good job NE'ers!



2017-2018 NE Officer Contacts			
Tribe Chief:	CJ Stumpf	cjstumpf@gmail.com	617-816-8766
Asst. Tribe Chief:	Ron Ward	ronandlynn33@gmail.com	585-223-2177
Scribe:	Pete Morse	piper32p@gmail.com	401-636-1046
Treasurer:	Chris Jorheim	cjorheim@atlanticbb.net	814-946-8098
Fly-In Coordinators:	Pete Morse	piper32p@gmail.com	401-636-1046
Website provider:	Pete Morse	piper32p@gmail.com	401-636-1046

ICS-NE website links for your convenience:

- ICS-NE main page: http://www.quietcornerbands.org/Flight/ICS-NE/ICS-NE_page.htm
- Documents page: http://www.quietcornerbands.org/Flight/ICS-NE/ICS-NE_DocLinks.htm
- Fly-in sign-up form: http://www.quietcornerbands.org/Forms/ICS-NE_FlyIn_RegForm.htm

If you have any Comanche related technical questions, contact these ICS Maintenance Resource Advisors

- **Zach Grant** cell phone: 317-201-4293 Email: L1011jock@sbcglobal.net
- **Cliff Wilewski** cell phone: 815-979-7785 Email: cliff@heritageaero.com