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People You Don't Know... ... who have affected your life

It's Saturday, January 26, as I write this column. Today I stopped at the Skiplane Fly-In at EAA's Pioneer Airport to share some chili and friendship with EAA friends. Then I popped in on the SportAir Workshops to see what was happening and invite the attendees to share their stories about their experiences here. While there, Earl Lawrence told me that Larry Werth passed away earlier today. Most of you have probably never heard of Larry, but I'll assure you if you're flying a light-sport aircraft (LSA) or thinking of purchasing one, he's affected your life.

Larry was a longtime FAA employee. His latest assignment was with the Small Airplane Directorate in Kansas City, overseeing the approval of LSA standards and special light-sport aircraft. My observation was that he believed the sport pilot/light-sport aircraft rule was good for aviation and for pilots. And, as a government employee who worked for us taxpayers, he dedicated his work life to making it happen.

Larry was too young to die. I don't know his age...somewhere in his early 60s probably. I met with Larry in Sebring, Florida, during the ASTM International light-sport aircraft standards meetings and at the U.S. Sport Aviation Expo. If you read the report I filed from Sebring on www.EAA.org, you'll find a quote from Larry about the activities of the


meetings. In mid-January, he was a member of the FAA group who came to EAA headquarters for the EAA/FAA Recreational Aviation Summit to discuss how EAA and the FAA could work together to make recreational flying easier.

Larry is one of those people who made the sport pilot and light-sport aircraft rule work. I don't know how much of his personal time he devoted to making it easier for you to buy, fly, or build a light-sport aircraft, but I know he was at many meetings during non-business times. Did the FAA compensate him with other time off? I don't know. I doubt that it mattered to Larry. He wanted this rule to work.

There are many others who've done likewise. I wish I could list them all. They know who they

are...Sue, Earl, Bob, Tom, Dan, Phil, Jim, Kim, Pat, Ron, Mike, Scott, Adam, and many more who've served and continue to serve above and beyond. In every endeavor that makes life better for others, there are some who go unnoticed. Still we owe them our thanks.

People like Larry Werth make the sport pilot/light-sport aircraft rule happen in the trenches. He was a wonderful advocate for our sport. May his family understand that what he valued in addition to them was important to other people. He made the lives of many fliers better. He epitomized the phrase, a good public servant. May his family be comforted.

And, may we all take the time to think about what others do for us and appreciate it...before it's too late. 



Larry Werth addressed the members the ASTM LSA Standards Committee recently.

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