

Mount Vernon Airport reports passing of local aviator

Ed Knaus died on Thursday, Nov. 24

BY TRAVIS MORSE
SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MOUNT VERNON — Mount Vernon Outland Airport was saddened to report the passing of local aviator Ed Knaus on Thursday, Nov. 24.

According to an airport Facebook post, Knaus was one of the most gifted and knowledgeable local aviators and could “read the fine print better than anyone.” Airport Director Chris Collins authored the Facebook post.

“When a new or updated FAR (Federal Aviation Regulation) appeared, Ed was the resource local aviators contacted for a ruling,”

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Submitted Photo

LOCAL AVIATOR PASSES — Mount Vernon Outland Airport has reported the passing of local aviator Ed Knaus of Texico, **BACK ROW CENTER.**

Aviator:

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Collins stated in the post. “Along with instructing, Ed flew pipeline patrols, charter, and corporate missions for Tate’s Flying Service at KSLO (Airport in Salem).”

Knaus also spent over a decade flying in and out of Mount Vernon Airport (KMVN) in L5, a State Police Cessna 182 “Skylane,” conducting air/speed checks on I-57/I-64, the post states. That occurred from 1978 to 1987, Collins said. In addition, Knaus flew 236 EAA Young Eagle Missions at KMVN and KSLO before retiring from aviation a few years ago.

Knaus, a Texico resident, passed away at the age of 78 at SSM Health Good Samaritan Hospital in Mount Vernon, his obituary states.

“Ed was a very special man,” Collins said Tuesday. “He inspired a lot of people.”

One of those people was Rodney Mullinax, also of Texico, who worked with Knaus frequently over the years to learn about aviation. It started with Mullinax earning his private pilot certificate through training with Knaus. Then after that, Mullinax furthered his training and gained his instrument rating, also under the instruction of Knaus. Then finally a couple of years later, Mullinax worked with Knaus to learn how to become a flight instructor.

“He was very meticulous and methodical in everything that he did,” Mullinax said of Knaus. “And in aviation, that is a wonderful thing to have. He didn’t want me to overlook any of the small details and he ingrained it in my head rather thoroughly. ... If you feel something is wrong, do another scan, check the panel again. Don’t just let it go by the wayside and continue forward. He was very concerned for my safety and it showed in the way that he taught.”

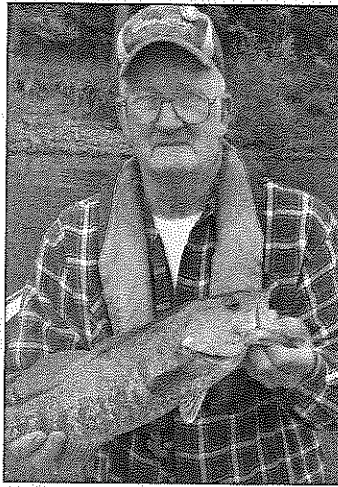
And Knaus’ lessons have continued to be beneficial, Mullinax said. Mullinax and his wife started a not-for-profit where they assist missionaries in the country of Haiti. Mullinax has flown there utilizing the skills Knaus taught him.

“I use aviation as a hobby but it goes a little bit beyond a hobby,” Mullinax said. “The things he taught me — navigation, communication, all the necessary items I would need to make these trips out of the country over the ocean. ... His legacy continues in that way.”

Per Ed Knaus’ wishes, he will be cremated and a private service will be held at a later date, his obituary states.

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Edgar Knaus

TEXICO — Edgar F. Knaus Jr., 78, of Texico, died at 1:42 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 24, 2022, at SSM Health Good Samaritan Hospital in Mount Vernon.

He was born Aug. 3, 1944, in Springfield, to Kathryn (Tinlin) and Edgar F. Knaus. He married Donna Jean (Bridges) Knaus on June 8, 1968 in Neoga.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Knaus is survived by his son-in-law, Alan Keele; sisters Joyce McAfee-Sebring of Springfield, and Shannon (Duane) Woods of Tallahassee, Florida; brothers Joel (Dobbie) Gibson of Allen, Texas, and Mike (Bonnie) Gibson of Rochester, Indiana; brother-in-law, Don (JonJee) Keller of Doraville, Georgia; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his daughter, Lana (Knaus) Keele; son, Lee Knaus; brother, Bob Gibson; parents and step-mother; and grandparents, Clyde and Christine Knaus, who raised him.

Mr. Knaus worked construction, served 2 years in the US Army, retired as a Master Sergeant from Illinois State Police, farmed and flew charter for Tate's Flying Service. He was a member of the National Fraternal Order of Police, Retired State Police Association of Illinois, Mount Vernon Elks, and Mount Vernon Sportsman Club. Mr. Knaus enjoyed the outdoors, hunting, fishing and camping. He loved catching fish to share with all his friends and neighbors. Mr. Knaus was a woodworker making bowls, cutting boards, Veteran flag cases and bluebird houses, all gifted to friends. He never saw a stranger and everyone he met was a potential friend.

Per Mr. Knaus' wishes, he will be cremated and a private service will be held at a later date.

Memorials may be made in his honor to Mount Vernon Elks Lodge 819 to be used for Veteran's flag cases and will be accepted at the Hughey Funeral Home at any time.