



EAA Chapter 166

Hartford, Connecticut

October 2026



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Steve Socolosky

Hello EAA166 members and student members!

Our next meeting, will be held on Saturday, October 31st, 2026, at 10 AM, up in our meeting room in Hangar 1 at Hartford Jet Center.

Thanks to all of you who attended our last meeting! We had over 30 student and adult members.

Our special guest speaker this month will be Dr. Robert Dodenhoff, MD, AME, who will be discussing FAA Medical certification for teenagers. If you have a daughter or son interested in becoming a pilot, Dr. Dodenhoff will provide the facts of the FAA requirements for medical certification, which is required by the FAA in order to obtain a Student Pilot certificate, and allows that person to pilot an aircraft solo.

We are now taking reservations for our Annual Awards Dinner, which will be held on Saturday, Nov. 14, from noon to 3 PM, at Terrazza's in Portland, CT. Please see the flyer below and please sign up soon! Our Treasurer, Brenda Rossignol, was able to get us all set up when at the last moment, our previous venue closed. Thank you, Brenda!

Also, please note that we will be holding our elections for EAA 166 chapter officers and other positions at our dinner. As I announced two years ago, I will be stepping away from the President's position, so please let us know if you are interested in the President, Vice, President, Treasurer or Secretary positions. We also need contributions to our chapter newsletter.

That's it for now, I hope to see you all on Saturday, October 31st and at our Annual Awards Dinner on Nov 14th.

Thank you and BLUE SKIES!
Steve

NEXT MEETING

October 31, 2026
10:00am

Hartford Jet Center
Hangar 1
Brainard Airport

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EAA Chapter 166



EAA 166



@EAA166

Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome: More Than a Museum

by Mike Cassell

There's something special about seeing an antique airplane in a museum, but there's something entirely different about hearing its engine come to life and watching it take to the skies. That's what makes Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome, located in New York's scenic Hudson Valley, such a unique destination. Our family recently made the trip, and we discovered that it's much more than just an aviation museum. It's a place where history comes alive, with something for just about everyone to enjoy.

My wife Melissa and I made the trip with our two children, Joe and Haylie, who are both student members of EAA Chapter 166. While aviation was certainly the main attraction for me, one of the things I appreciated most was that the experience wasn't limited to airplane enthusiasts. Between the historic aircraft, entertaining airshow performances, period atmosphere, and beautiful surroundings, there was plenty to keep the entire family interested.

Keeping Early Aviation Alive

Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome was founded by Cole Palen, an aviation enthusiast with a passion for preserving the aircraft and spirit of early flight. Beginning in the late 1950s, Palen collected and restored antique airplanes, eventually establishing an aerodrome where these remarkable machines could do what they were originally built to do, and that's to fly.

Today, the aerodrome continues that tradition, preserving and operating aircraft from aviation's earliest years through the Golden Age of flight. Its collection includes original aircraft, restorations, and reproductions representing the pioneering days of aviation and World War I.

For anyone who appreciates aviation history, it's an incredible opportunity to see these machines outside the confines of a traditional museum. These aren't simply static displays. Many of these aircraft are maintained in flying condition and regularly take to the skies. Visitors can experience the sights, sounds, and excitement of early aviation much as spectators would have generations ago.



The Spirit of St. Louis replica, left, honoring Lindbergh's historic 1927 transatlantic flight. A 1909 Bleriot XI—America's oldest regularly-flying aircraft, right.

More Than Just An Airshow

One of the things that makes Old Rhinebeck special is its approach to entertainment. The flying demonstrations are accompanied by period-themed performances and a lighthearted atmosphere that make the experience enjoyable even for visitors who couldn't tell a Fokker from a Sopwith.

The aircraft themselves are fascinating. Compared with modern general aviation airplanes, their open cockpits, fabric-covered structures, exposed engines, and relatively simple systems are reminders of just how far aviation has progressed.

As someone who has recently become more involved in general aviation, I found myself appreciating not only the history but also the ingenuity and craftsmanship that went into building and flying these early machines. It's one thing to read about aviation pioneers. It's another to watch airplanes representative of their era operating right in front of you. The image at the top is a German Fokker and a French SPAD prepared for a dogfight.



Almost Taking To The Skies

One of the highlights of our visit was seeing the New Standard biplane used for passenger rides, shown below. The aerodrome offers visitors an opportunity to experience open-cockpit flying in a vintage-style aircraft, something you don't encounter every day. Joe and I seriously considered taking a ride together. At \$150 per person for a 15-minute flight, it wasn't an inexpensive experience, but the opportunity was certainly tempting!

Between the available flight times, the cost, and a little hesitation about taking our first open-cockpit flight, we ultimately decided to save the experience for another visit. We figured it would be something special to look forward to next season.

I have to admit, as someone who once felt pretty intimidated by the thought of flying in small airplanes, the fact that I was even considering an open-cockpit biplane ride was a milestone in itself. My recent experiences



flying with fellow EAA members have certainly helped me develop a greater appreciation for general aviation, and I'm looking forward to continuing that journey. Besides, now Joe and I have a pretty good excuse to go back!

Whole-Family Fun

Perhaps my biggest takeaway from the visit was how accessible the experience is for families. You don't have to be a pilot, aircraft builder, or aviation history buff to enjoy spending an afternoon at Old Rhinebeck.

For younger visitors, the airshow brings history to life in a way that books and exhibits simply can't. For adults, there's a wonderful sense of nostalgia and an appreciation for the determination and creativity of aviation's early pioneers. And for those of us who love airplanes, there's no shortage of interesting machinery to admire.

It also reminded me of something I've come to appreciate through my involvement with EAA Chapter 166: aviation has a unique ability to bring people together across generations and backgrounds.

Whether it's introducing a youngster to flight through the Young Eagles program, helping maintain an aircraft, or preserving a piece of aviation history, these experiences help keep the spirit of aviation alive. Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome does exactly that.

If you're looking for a worthwhile aviation-themed family outing within driving distance of Connecticut, I'd highly recommend adding Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome to your list. Even if everyone in your family doesn't share your enthusiasm for airplanes, there's a good chance they'll leave with a greater appreciation for aviation's remarkable history.

And who knows? Maybe next season, Joe and I will finally climb aboard that New Standard biplane!



EAA Chapter 166 Presents:

ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

We are excited to invite you to
our upcoming awards banquet!

When?

Saturday, November 14th,
2026
From 12pm - 3pm

Where?

Terrazza's Restaurant
9 Rose Hill Road
Portland, CT

Cost

\$40 Per Person
Checks can be mailed to
Brenda Rossignol:
33 Farrell Road,
Portland, CT 06480

Please note the food will be served
Family Style



Aerospace Academy At Home

Join us for Aerospace Academy at Home, a new digital learning program that brings aerospace history, science, and technology right to your door.

NEAM Corner ...

Here's what's going on at the New England Air Museum

Check out the content on
our YouTube channel!



EAA166 Hartford, Connecticut

@eaa166hartfordconnecticut8 · 355 subscribers · 21 videos

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EAA 166 Young Eagles Rally Fall 2026

by Steve Socolosky

Thanks to all EAA 166 members and students members who helped organize and execute another safe and successful Young Eagles Rally on Oct. 19, 2026! We had many Betances STEM Middle School Students who experienced the thrill of flight!

We cannot thank our Young Eagles Pilots, ground volunteers and Lindsey and Mandy of Hartford Jet Center enough for making this all happen! Of course, Mr. Darryl Beauford, Brainard Airport's ATC Manager, always keeps us safe! This is never easy, yet we are able to fly and provide experiences which will always be remembered!

Earlier that week, we began scrambling to move our rally from Saturday to Sunday when high winds and low clouds looked more like a reality—and that was five days out! Even with all the little hurdles and a few larger ones (such as EAA's digital signature part of registration being down and ATC being short-staffed), we adjusted and were able to fly. Thank you again, to all those EAA 166 volunteers who helped make it happen! Some photos below, and check out the EAA 166 and Been Flyin Facebook pages for more.



History Corner: Air Markings

by Bill Barry

Long before there was a magenta line to follow on a cockpit flight display, pilots flying low and slow depended on ground references to find their way. Perhaps you remember seeing old pictures of town names and airport directions painted on the tops of buildings, like the one in Willington, Connecticut (credit to CT State Archives) pictured to the right. I certainly do. But, did you know that those markings weren't just random individual efforts? They were the result of a coordinated national effort to help early American pilots navigate the skies

In May 1928 the "Airways Marking Conference" was held in Wichita, Kansas. By June the U.S. Department of Commerce had not only established the Airway Marking Committee, but had issued a bulletin that urged air marking the roofs of major buildings and included recommendations about how to do it. The idea caught on quickly and soon it was not just federal agencies involved, but states and a wide variety of aviation-minded civic groups. For example, in 1931 Connecticut passed a law that required marking state buildings. The American Legion, Exchange Clubs, the Boy Scouts, and the recently formed women pilot's group the Ninety-Nines were among the groups active in promoting and carrying out air marking efforts. In July 1932 the Department of Commerce issued an updated

16-page Air Marking bulletin that urged "...every city, town, and hamlet..." to paint markings that would "...indicate the direction and distance to the nearest landing field, the size of the field and the general equipment." The bulletin included details about the types and colors of paint to be used, the size of the lettering, and a set of standardized symbols. It also recommended that towns discourage the use of roofs for advertising signs which "...may be confused with official air markings." This work at the Bureau of Air Commerce was led by pioneering women aviator Blanche Noyes. By the mid-1930s the state of Connecticut had over 350 air markers; a small proportion of the 10,000+ spread all over the country. Yet, strangely enough, most of these were gone by early 1942. .

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, everyone realized that these aerial signposts could be used against us by

enemy aircraft. People were especially concerned about German Zeppelins that had already been flying over the U.S. (Remember the Hindenburg disaster of 1937?) The federal government ordered that all air marking within 150 miles of the U.S. coastlines be removed. Once again citizens around the country pitched in to undo the work they had done in the last decade. For example, the Smith College Flying Club bicycled out to LaFleur Field (now Northampton Airport, 7B2) in the snow in January 1942 to paint over the arrows pointing to the runway, photo at the left credit to Smith College Special Collections.



After the war, air marking was resumed, but with much less enthusiasm. In Connecticut there were less than 100 air markings on buildings by late 1947. That same year federal funding for the air marking effort was ended. Blanche Noyes and those in the Air Marking Group of the Bureau of Air Commerce tried to encourage civic groups to continue the effort. But, by this point airplanes were flying higher, faster, and with improved navigational equipment. Air marking was not as important as it had been a decade earlier. The only major civic group to continue raising money for, and organizing volunteers to paint air markings, was the Ninety-Nines. Eighty years later, the Ninety-Nines still do this work as part of their support for aviation. You have the Ninety-Nines to thank for those beautiful blue and white compass roses that you will find painted on many airports around the country, including the compass rose painted on the pavement at Meriden Markham Municipal Airport. Check it out when you fly there or over it. That's the US Department of Commerce Aeronautics Bulletin No. 4, July 1, 1932 (source: Archive.gov)

AIR-MARKING INSIGNIA

As air travel increases, there will doubtless be a growing tendency to use available roof space for advertising signs, particularly along the air routes. It is recommended that such practice be discouraged to the end that roof markings may be limited, so far as possible, to those that are strictly an aid to air navigation. In localities where roofs carry advertising signs that may be confused with official air markings, there will be need for a distinctive mark or symbol of simple design to use in connection with the air markings to distinguish them from the advertising signs. Especially will this be true in cases where the name of the city or town may be used alone, without either the meridian marker or airport pointer or when these markings may be on separate roofs. Where such an identification mark is needed, it is recommended that a bull's-eye of the proportions

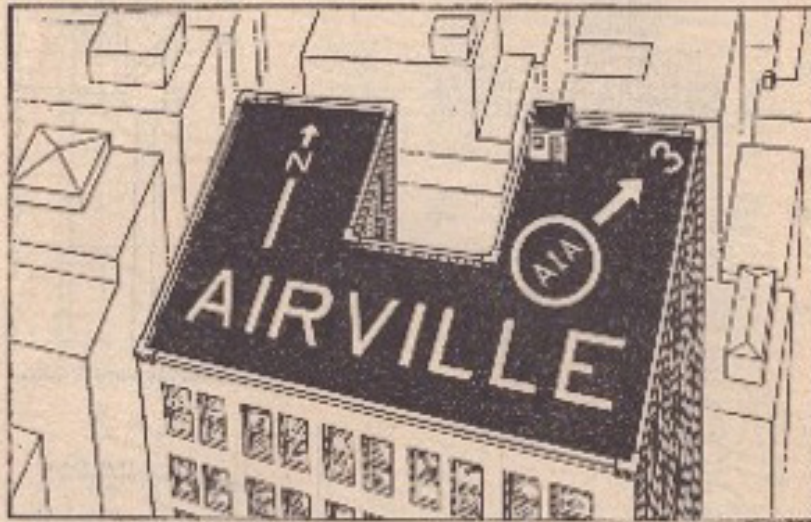


FIGURE 3.—Typical air marking, including name of city or town, meridian marker, and airport pointer

shown in Figure 3 (f) be placed near the lower left-hand corner of the name of the city. The over-all diameter of this bull's-eye should preferably be equal to or slightly greater than the height of the lettering used in the name.

LOCATION OF MARKINGS

It is important that air markings be placed on the most outstanding buildings or structures when suitable roof space is available, special care being exercised to select the roofs so that the effectiveness of the markings will not be interfered with by smoke. The name of the city, together with a meridian marker and an airport pointer, as shown in Figure 3, should be placed on one or more suitable roofs near the center of the city for the smaller cities and towns and at or near the center of each section of the city for the larger cities. It is also very helpful if such markings are placed at railroad

Flight Advisor: Insurance For Pilots

by Ken Katz and Larry Anglisano

Insurance is a serious matter for all pilots. Lack of insurance coverage can result in devastating financial losses for pilots if they damage an airplane, a passenger is injured or killed, or some other person or their property suffers damage caused by the airplane that the pilot is flying. Consider the following questions:

- Who is covered by the insurance? If you are flying an airplane owned by somebody else, whether that be another pilot, a flying club, flight school, or an FBO, are you covered? Or is only the owner covered, and the insurance company will attempt to recover damages from you if it is forced to pay out to the owner or a third party?
- Is the coverage adequate to cover likely losses?
- If you own the airplane and another pilot flies it, are you covered? Does the other pilot meet the requirements of coverage?
- Do your pilot certificates, currency, training, and medical certification meet the requirements of coverage? Remember that even if you have appropriate medical certification, if you are ill, injured or taking certain medications, you may still be prohibited from flying. In that case, is your insurance coverage still applicable?
- Does your aircraft meet the requirements of the coverage, in terms of model, category, and class? Is it airworthy, which has a specific meaning in the regulations? Is it in compliance with ADs and is the annual inspection valid and current? Is its registration valid and current? If your aircraft has an Experimental certification, does the insurance cover it?
- Is the aircraft used in compliance with the policy? Is your piloting in compliance with the policy? For example, does the policy cover flight instruction?

As for tips for staying insured (and keeping your rates as low as possible), consider earning new ratings and train as often as possible. This shows your insurer that you are serious about keeping your skills sharp and learning new ones. Loyalty matters, especially with a long (and positive) history with one company. This is important as pilots age especially when reaching 70 years of age, which insurers consider to be a higher risk. If you drop your coverage with an insurer willing to renew your policy, you might find that other companies might not take you on, or for a much higher premium.

Last, be realistic about insurance coverage when shopping for and building aircraft. Always get quotes for coverage before striking a deal—especially for retracts, twins and high-performance aircraft both certified and experimental. Senior pilots might consider stepping down to a less complex machine so they can at least continue to fly with the insurance coverage they need.

Student Member Spotlight: James Capasso

Hi, my name is James Capasso, and I want to share this story about how I found EAA 166 and how I really got into aviation.

It pretty much all started when I was heading for a flight down to Florida for this new vacation that we were going to try. We flew Delta Airlines, and as I was boarding the plane, the pilots asked me, “Hey, do you want to come check out the flight deck?” And I was like, “Sure.” I knew nothing about aviation at the time.

So, when I went up into the flight deck, the captain let me sit in the left seat and gave me his pilot hat to put on for a picture. After that, I started watching aviation videos here and there, and that’s when I found Microsoft Flight Simulator 2020 through YouTube videos. I then got the sim, played it for a while, and that’s when my mom surprised me with a discovery flight with Learn2FlyCT at Brainard Airport. After going with Learn2FlyCT, both my flight instructor and Aaron’s father suggested EAA 166, and that’s how I got into this chapter.

Then I took my first Young Eagles flight in the well-known Carbon Cirrus SR22. After that, I went up with Mr. Socolosky in N103CT. Then I got Sporty’s Private Pilot course because I was a Young Eagle. I later completed the online course, got my free flight lesson with Premier Flight in Warrior N76M. After that, I started building up my hours. I took my first flight with Been Flyin in N73N, and have been building my hours with this flight school. I currently have 5.1 hours, and it’s probably going to be more than that very soon.

I love being able to help out with whatever I can when it comes to aviation!

—James Capasso, EAA 166



Me 0.000003 seconds after getting a flying Tesla Roadster

