



EAA Chapter 166

Hartford, Connecticut

January 2024



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Steve Socolosky

Happy New Year to all our EAA Members and Student Members!

Our first meeting this year, will be held on SATURDAY, JANUARY 27th at 10:00 AM, up in our EAA 166 CHAPTER MEETING ROOM IN H1 and we'll be having a special guest speaker pilot who flew for a living, for many years, in Alaska!

We held our traditional Directors meeting to plan our meeting dates, special events and ways to better organize and operate our Chapter. As we've been doing for the past few years, we had three of our Student Members attend and offer input and take on tasks, such as promoting us on social media. Thanks to our Student Members!

Speaking of special events, I must mention our hosting of EAA's Leadership Boot Camp on Saturday, February 10, at the New England Air Museum. It'll be happening soon and if you'd like to help, please let us know. You can also sign up to attend, if you'd like. Click [HERE](#).

We'll also be holding our February 24th Chapter meeting at the New England Air Museum, so please come and check out this fantastic resource in our back yard TWICE in February!

We've applied for our 5th Ray Scholarship and will know by the end of February if EAA 166 will receive \$11,000.00 to help another aspiring young pilot! Stay tuned! We already have some interested candidates!

Our RV-12 is progressing nicely, and despite a few unexpected Service Bulletins, we hope to have it flying by the end of this year!

Finally, DUES ARE DUE, please! \$20

See you all on Saturday, January 27th!

Thank you and BLUE SKIES!

Steve

NEXT MEETING

**January 27,
2024, 10:00am**

EAA 166 Meeting Room

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EAA Chapter 166



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Next meeting's guest speaker Mike Falconeri



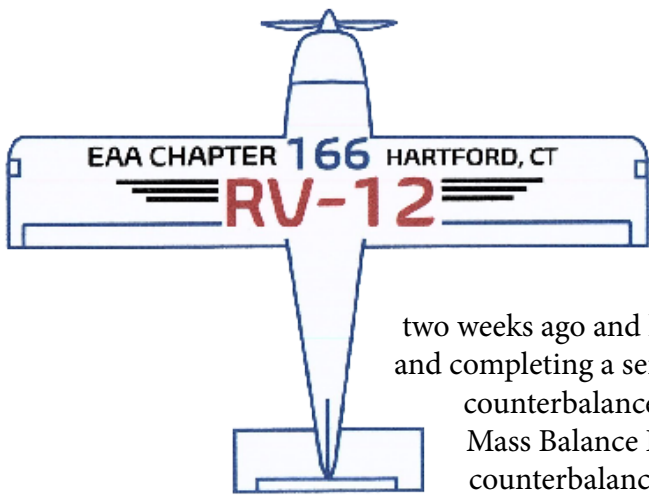
Director's Meeting



Did you fly an interesting route this month? Land for a good \$100 hamburger? We want to hear about it! Submit a photo or short story to aranglisano@gmail.com for your activity to be featured in our monthly newsletter column, Member Activity!

Member **John Glennon** flew to Hagerstown, MD (KHGR) last Spring to visit Antietam's Battlefield and Harper's Ferry. Here's his story:

"We flew IFR due to the proximity of Camp David. We set up to arrive straight-in on Rwy 20 and saw the runway a long way out. There were numerous gliders flying along a ridgeline about 10 miles north of the airport, some with transponders, some apparently not. We parked with Rider Air FBO and were treated very well. Airplane was tied down safely. Fuel price was OK. We rented a car from the FBO - all went well. Touring was well worth it. Tons of history and beautiful scenery. Fairly easy to mentally recreate the battle(s). The trip home was also IFR due to reduced visibility and ceilings. We recommend this trip to anyone interested in Civil War history. The airport and FBO get good marks from us."



EAA I66 RV-12 BUILD UPDATE

During the month of December, the RV-12 Build Team took a well-deserved break. The team resumed build activity

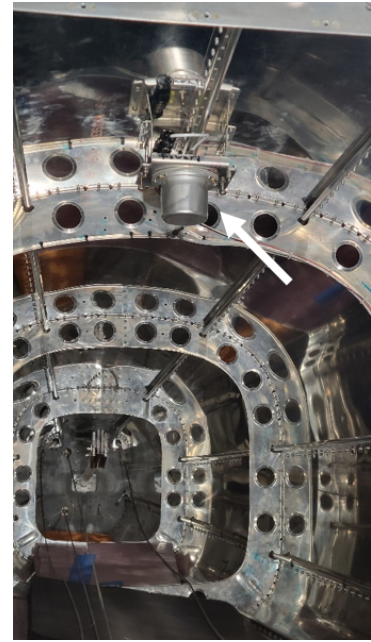
two weeks ago and has made good progress by installing the magnetometer and completing a service bulletin modification associated with the stabilator counterbalance arm. This service bulleting (SB-00067) titled “Stabilator Mass Balance Reinforcement,” addresses potential fatigue failure of the mass counterbalance arm (P/N WD-1223). The SB involves the addition of reinforcing

straps to either side of the stabilator balance weights to prevent fatigue failure and separation of the mass balance weights from counterbalance arm. This SB required removal of the counterbalance arm from the aircraft, followed by match drilling six rivet holes in the counterbalance arm, then installation of reinforcing straps as shown right.

Over the next few weeks, we will install the cabin floor panels, seats, and then start installation of the main landing gear.

If you wish to join the build team, we every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in Hangar 2 at 6:00 p.m. All prospective RV-12 build team participants must be members in good standing of EAA Chapter 166. Please contact me at rick.montero@sbcglobal.net, if you are interested in participating in our build activity.

Rick Montero, EAA166 RV-12 Build Team Leader
All photos courtesy Rick Montero



Left: showing service bulletin (SB-00067) modifications made to the Stabilator Counterbalance Arm to add reinforcing straps that help prevent fatigue failure. Right: Magnetometer (arrow) installed within the tailcone.



Kai Trenkner match drilling rivet holes in the stabilator counterbalance arm while being guided by Ron Jones. This modification was required by Service Bulletin SB-00067.



Tuesday and Thursday build team members. From left: Seth, Steve, Rick, Ron, Kai (front center), Mark, David, and Will.



Wednesday build team members. From Left: Mike, Ryan, Trevor, Josh, Stella, and Ricardo.

Check out the latest build updates on our YouTube channel!



EAA166 Hartford, Connecticut

@eaa166hartfordconnecticut8 · 355 subscribers · 21 videos

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Want a Van's? Pony Up for Price Bumps

by *Larry Anglisano*

REALITY CHECK

Unless you've been living in a cave the past few months you know that Van's Aircraft filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in early December 2023. Later that month, the judge approved the use of the company's cash on hand to run the business day to day, while accepting outside funding from founder Dick VanGrunsven's family trust. The firm Hamstreet & Associates was brought in to untangle the web of financial instability caused by years of cash mismanagement, made worse by selling kits at low profit margins.

The first order of business was changing the corporate governance, followed by the realization that indeed, Van's Aircraft has a lot of value, but with cash flow issues that are unsustainable for continued day-to-day operations. Thankfully for the large fleet of RVs (over 11,000 flying) and the owners and builders who fly them, turns out the company was a good candidate for Chapter 11 reorganization. Part of that plan requires immediate price increases—substantial ones—for small parts and major kits. That didn't go over well.

As an aside, let's put this into perspective, especially for those building high-performance Van's models. Go to Cirrus for one of its new SR models and the company will unapologetically collect well north of \$1 million of your hard-earned dough. Moreover, it has raised prices steadily nearly every production year, while struggling to meet impressive demands for both the SR20 and SR22 piston singles. In my estimation, we should build experimental kit aircraft for regulatory freedoms—not necessarily for cheap prices.

Back to Van's—Chapter 11 reorganization is far from inexpensive because the creditors' committees and their lawyers must be paid for by the debtor. Worth mentioning is that Van's is being reworked under subchapter V of Chapter 11 because sub-fives eliminate creditor's committees, cut legal costs and use a single committee to help an ailing company come up with a plan to recover quickly (within 90 days). Under sub-V, the customer base is actually better off because the company is able to pay creditors (there are a lot when it comes to airplane manufacturing—even in kit form) what is left over in the reorganization.



The flagship RV-15 project will proceed, if not slowly, as the company reorganizes its operations.

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But the grumbling among the Van's customer base began when the company notified them that prices were going up, asking them to approve new purchase agreements. Under the bankruptcy code, a company is allowed to terminate or modify a contract, but only if the other party agrees. Obviously, there were a lot of existing contracts for parts and full kits, and Van's has the Ombudsman Motion, which allows it to modify those contracts. If the customer doesn't agree, it has a claim. Apparently, 60 percent of the first 550 customers agreed to renew their contract at revised prices and terms. There are roughly 1500 customers for kits alone and the company is working out a plan for those who ordered engines, avionics and propellers—all third-party components. The deadline for customers to respond before their contracts are unilaterally cancelled is January 30, 2024.

For those who decline the new agreements, the company mentioned April 2024 as the approximate timeframe for coming up with some kind of reimbursement plan for those who are out of pocket on undelivered components. In general, it could take nearly five years to be paid back—in cash or equity. That alone could be reason to suck it up and accept the price bump, while realizing that raising prices is something Van's should have done years ago.



View the New England Air Museum events calendar [HERE](#).

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

EXPLORE THE SKIES!

New England Air Museum is home to an ever changing roster of events – ranging in focus from children, to students and adults. Please explore our featured upcoming events below!



Flights of Family Fun!

Saturdays & Sundays, 10:30AM - 2:30PM

From Story Time and Flight Science Demonstrations to hands-on Build & Fly Challenges and Family Tours, enjoy family-friendly drop-in programs. Included with general admission and subject to change.





Bush Flyin'!