



EAA Chapter 166

Hartford, Connecticut

March 2025



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NEXT MEETING

**March 29,
2025, 10:00am**

**Chapter Meeting
Room in H1**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Steve Socolosky

Hi to all our EAA 66 Members and Student Members!

Our third meeting this year, will be held on SATURDAY, MARCH 29nd at 10:00 AM, up in our EAA 166 CHAPTER MEETING ROOM IN H1! Please join us and bring a friend or two or three!

While many Folks ask me when we'll be meeting out at my hangar, especially with some of the 60-degree plus days we've had lately, we all know better and will duck inside again this month!

GREAT NEWS! EAA 166 has selected its SIXTH RAY SCHOLAR! Our Ray Scholar Coordinator, Rick Montero, will be officially awarding EAA 166 Student Member, Justin Hotchkiss, the Ray Aviation Scholarship, at this month's meeting. Justin became a Young Eagle with us a few years ago and has become a "regular" (along with his parents!) and is always willing to help and always willing to learn more about flying! Here's another reason to attend this month's meeting as we congratulate Justin on his aviation journey!

The New England Air Museum is holding its annual "Space Expo" event on Saturday, April 26th! If you would like to help promote Young Eagles at this very fun and cool event, please contact our Young Eagles Coordinator, Jody Long. Unfortunately, for our team that will be at NEAM promoting Young Eagles and other EAA 166 Members, it's the same day as our meeting. Maybe attend our meeting, then head on up to NEAM! It's a great annual event and runs until 3 PM.

Our RV-12 is getting closer to being ready to 'slip the surly bonds . . .' The RV-12 Build Team, under Leader, Rick Montero, is working on some delicate and tedious tasks as they keep moving forward! Check out Rick's update below!

Finally, DUES ARE DUE, please! EAA Chapter 166 Annual Dues: \$20

See you all on Saturday, March 29th!
Thank you and BLUE SKIES!
Steve



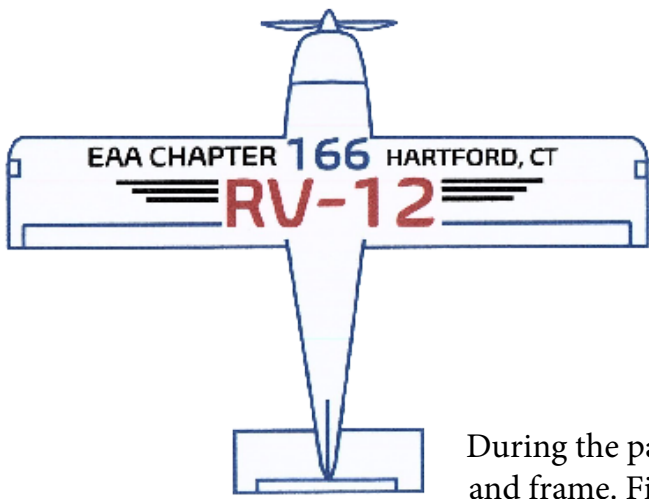
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EAA 166



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EAA 166 RV-12 BUILD UPDATE

update and photos from Rick Montero

During the past month, the Build Team started installation of the canopy and frame. First, the canopy frame was drilled and then bolted to the airframe and its gas struts (pneumatic lift pistons) were also installed.

The side angle brackets were also match drilled and riveted to the canopy frame. These brackets serve as attach points for the canopy. The canopy was then positioned onto the frame and match drilled into the forward and rear frame bows.

Over the next month, the team will trim the canopy to get the correct fit to the frame and complete all match drilling that is required. The team will also start work to fabricate the fiberglass canopy fairing and permanently install the aft window.

Since the last update, our RV-12 was registered with the FAA and assigned a Tail Number, which is N234LF. Registering the aircraft is one of the prerequisites prior to certification.

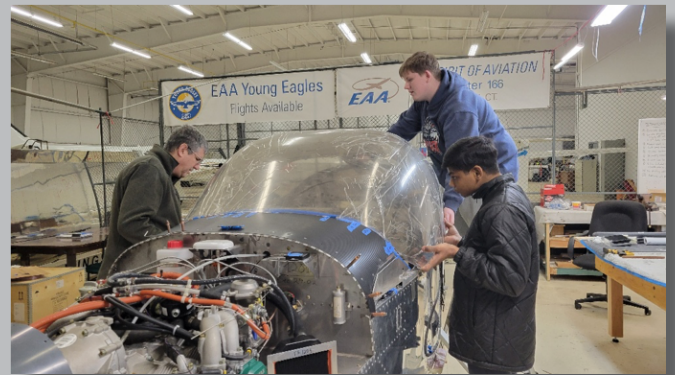
The RV-12 Build Team meets every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m. Anyone interested in visiting a build session should please contact Rick Montero at rick.montero@sbcglobal.net.

Rick Montero
EAA Chapter 166 RV-12 Build Team Leader



Nate riveting the attach angles to the canopy frame while being assisted by Steve and Ed.

Photo Credit: Rick Montero



Ken, Ryan, and Pugal fitting the canopy onto the canopy frame. Photo Credit: Rick Montero

Check out the latest build updates on our YouTube channel!



EAA166 Hartford, Connecticut

@eaa166hartfordconnecticut8 · 355 subscribers · 21 videos

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Jude (left) and Nate (right) deburring the canopy attach angle brackets.
Photo Credit: Rick Montero



Fabrizia (right) match drilling attachment holes through the canopy into the forward bow while assisted by Rick. Photo Credit: Joe Kline



Ryan (Left) and Pugal (right) drilling pilot holes into the forward canopy bow. Photo Credit: Rick Montero



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

SPACE EXPO 2025

Saturday, April 26, 2025 9AM -3PM

Save the date for this year's Space Expo! This special event will feature guests from our region's aerospace industry, activities for children and families, and much more! More info to come!





Did you fly an interesting route this month? Land for a good \$100 hamburger? We want to hear about it! Submit any photos to [THIS NEW DROPBOX](#) to be featured in our monthly newsletter column, Member Activity!



Chris O'Connell standing next to the beautiful Comp Air 6 he is building. Rick and Mark recently helped Chris weigh his airplane using the Chapter 166 scales. Photo Credit: Rick Montero

Several members of EAA Chapter 166 recently met at Maggie McFlys to thank Manu Ramesh (third from right) for her many contributions to our EAA Chapter and to wish her well as she starts a new life in Ohio. Manu – You will be missed! Photo Credit: Rick Montero





Van's RV-12: More Than a Trainer

by *Larry Anglisano*

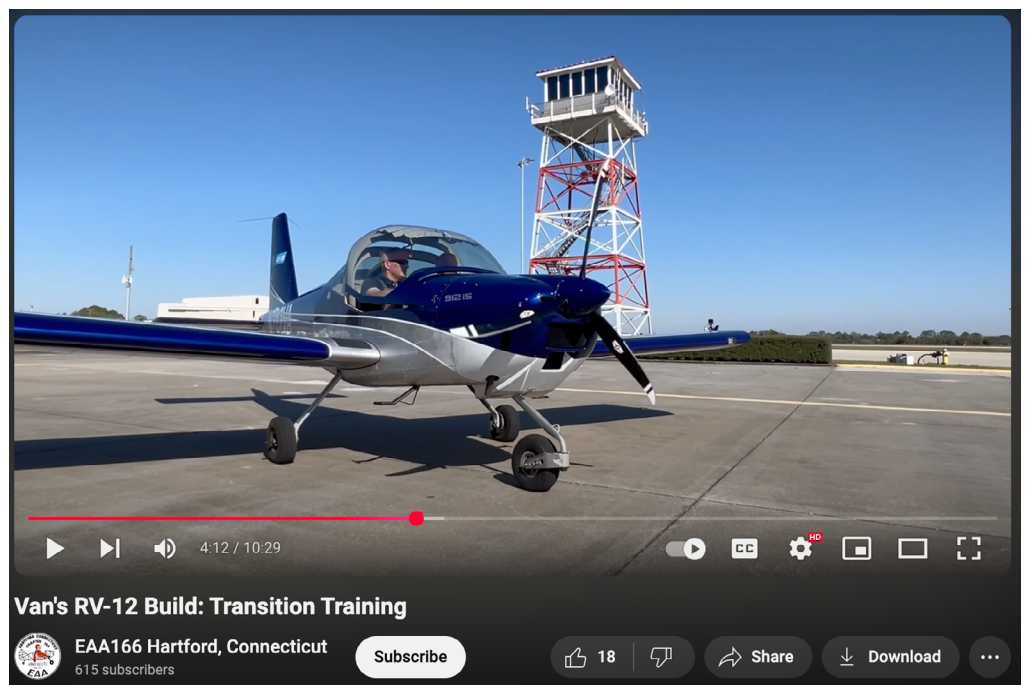
For all the reasons and more that I discovered flying a late-model Van's RV-12iS around Florida this past winter, the airplane certainly deserves

its recent reputation for being the modern two-place trainer. As a bonus, the airplane has no shortage of the Van's DNA that pilots of all walks have grown to love. That means crisp handling, sleek styling and simple systems—things that are hardly ever true of a trainer. Still, the plane's Rotax 912iS engine will take some getting used to for those who grew up with Lycoming and Continentals. But despite the small learning curve, I think the 100 HP powerplant makes the RV-12 even better. It's really a perfect match for the airframe.

No, at 1320 pounds gross weight, around the runway the RV-12 is perhaps not as forgiving as a Cessna 150, Piper Tomahawk or even a Diamond DA-20 in the hands of ham-fisted pilots—of any experience. But that's why any pilot stepping down or up into the RV-12 series needs high-quality training from someone who understands the marque. One training facility worth a visit is Sebring Aviation in Florida. It specializes in LSA training, plus the infamous multiengine seaplane rating course in the Lockwood Aircam on floats.

And so in anticipation to flying the Lindbergh Flyers RV-12 kit that's nearing completion and with cameras rolling, fellow EAA 166 member Rick Montero and I got it done—successfully transitioning to the RV-12 in just a couple of flight hours. In the end it was more than just an endorsement in the logbook, it was an experience that confirms that a training aircraft can serve double duty as a go-anywhere technically advanced platform.

Click to watch
the full video.



Flight Testing: Parachute or Not?

by Ken Katz

Should you wear a parachute while conducting flight tests of your experimental or kit-built aircraft? This is an interesting question, and like many things in flight testing, the answer is “it depends”.

It should start with you thinking about why you might want to egress the aircraft with a parachute. Three scenarios are (1) catastrophic structural failure (2) unrecoverable loss of control (3) electrical or engine/fuel fire. Another possible scenario is loss of propulsion, when there is no good place to glide the airplane to a forced landing.

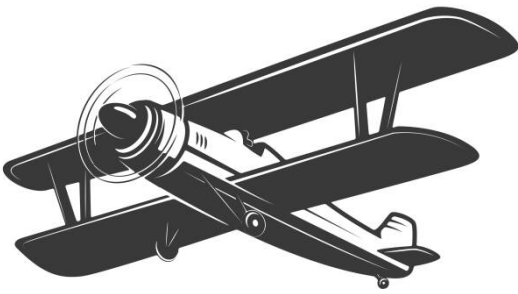
To some extent, the loss of propulsion risk may be mitigated by conducting flight testing over an area which contains airports within gliding distance or suitable terrain for a safe forced landing. In all cases, the bailing out is only an option if the aircraft is at sufficient altitude for the pilot to egress the aircraft, deploy the parachute, have its canopy inflate, and retard descent before contacting the ground.

The decision to wear a parachute requires careful analysis of the aircraft. Is there the ability to open a door or canopy in flight? Can the door or canopy be modified for flight testing with a jettison capability? How will the pilot move himself/herself from the seat to the exit? Not only do these things need to be done during steady flight, but they need to be done with the G-forces and angular velocities that may be experienced after loss of control.

Another consideration is that while wearing a parachute, the pilot may not fit in the crew station, which in most general aviation aircraft is not sized or designed for the pilot to wear a parachute. Finally, it would be a very bad thing if the test pilot were to successfully egress the aircraft, only to be injured or killed when the path of egress resulted in the pilot impacting the tail or some other part of the aircraft.

As you can see, while there are potential safety benefits to wearing a parachute during flight testing, the decision to do so needs to be accompanied by an analysis of the feasibility of safely and successfully doing so.





EAA i66 History Corner

by Bill Barry

On March 22, 1956, a runaway propeller nearly spelled disaster for a flight test at Edwards Air Force Base in California. The National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA – the predecessor of NASA) was planning to conduct a Mach 2 test with the D-558-2 Skyrocket flown by Jack McKay. The Skyrocket was carried aloft by a P2B-1S (a Navy version of the B-29), but when they reached the drop altitude the number 4 engine of the P2B failed. Pilot Stan Butchart feathered the prop, but after stopping, the prop unfeathered itself and began to spin again. Butchart feathered the propeller two more times, but it continued to unfeather and spin uncontrollably. At their speed and altitude, the propeller was spinning so fast that centrifugal force would eventually tear the blades off the prop. (This was a known, and very dangerous, problem in the B-29.) While this was happening, Jack McKay, who was strapped into the Skyrocket realized that he had a problem and told the P2B crew not to drop him. But, Butchart, knowing that propeller blades would soon be flying and could hit his plane pulled the emergency jettison handle for the Skyrocket. McKay successfully dumped his rocket fuel and glided to a safe landing on the Edwards lakebed. Just 10 to 15 seconds after McKay was dropped the number 4 propeller disintegrated. One of the blades passed through the number 3 engine, sliced through the fuselage, and hit the number 2 engine. If Butchart hadn't jettisoned McKay the blade would have hit the Skyrocket on its way through the fuselage. This would likely have ignited the rocket fuel in the Skyrocket, causing an explosion that would have destroyed both craft.



Douglas D-558-II Skyrocket being dropped from Boeing P2B-1S.



Boeing P2B-1S after landing at Edwards Air Force Base on March 22, 1956.



Research Test Pilot
Stan Butchart

But, Butchart and his crew weren't out of danger. Not only were the number 3 and 4 engines out of commission, but the propeller blade passing through the P2B had severed the aileron cables to Butchart's yoke leaving him with no control. The copilot's aileron cables had also been damaged and were difficult to use. The copilot was a Navy veteran, but had just begun work at the NACA High Speed Flight Station (now Armstrong Flight Research Center) the previous July. Despite the loss of two engines on one side and the damaged controls, the copilot was able to retain control and got the P2B back safely on the ground. That copilot would be the first person to land on the Moon 13 years later – Neil Armstrong.



Research Test
Pilot Neil
Armstrong

Stan Butchart was a research test pilot for the NACA and NASA from 1951 to 1976; for the last 10 years he was Director of Flight Operations. The P2B also flew again, but only after 5 months of repairs.

Source: "Probing the Sky" by Curtis Peebles.



Women's History Month