



EAA Chapter 166

Hartford, Connecticut

June 2025



WHAT'S INSIDE...

President's Message ...page 2

RV-12 Build Update ...page 3

Young Eagles Day ...page 5

Member Activity ...page 6

NEAM Corner ...page 6

History Corner ...page 7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Steve Socolosky

Hello EAA 166 Members and Student Members!

COOKOUT! Our June meeting, will be held on SATURDAY, JUNE 28th at 10:00 AM, at my hangar, RAIN or SHINE! It's become an EAA 166 tradition! Please bring a little something to share AND a CHAIR! The Chapter will provide coffee, water and a grill if you'd like to bring something to cook. We will keep the business part brief and spend more time hanging out and maybe even do a little bit of flying or at least have a few aircraft for you to take a close-up look or sit in.

This will be our last meeting before Oshkosh, so please remember that there is NO MEETING in July. We are looking forward to meeting up at Oshkosh with many from our Chapter, especially because on Sunday, July 27, at 10:00 AM, Joe Gauthier will be Memorialized at a special Service and a plaque will be placed on EAA's Memorial Wall in Joe's honor. Joe's wife, Carol, and their daughters, will be attending, along with other family members and many from the EAA Community.

We'll be discussing the potential of having a few Members brainstorm extending more learning opportunities for our Student Members, beyond Young Eagles. EAA has created a new optional position called Youth Program Coordinator(s), who can help with this idea. There is plenty of potential and like everything, requires people and time.

Our RV-12 is ALIVE! Please check out Larry's video and RV-12 Build Team Leader, Rick Montero's explanation, linked in our newsletter!

Our Young Eagles Rally was successful, in spite of being rained out and rescheduled. Our Young Eagles Coordinator Judy Long, along with everyone who helped, adjusted superbly, when everything moved over one day! It takes a tremendous amount of time and energy, supplied by all involved, to make a Young Eagles Rally happen and happen SAFELY! We did it again and thank you to EVERYONE! Check out another fine video by Larry in the newsletter.

See you all on Saturday, June 28th!
Thank you and BLUE SKIES!
Steve

See [HERE](#) last month's meeting minutes

NEXT MEETING

**June 28, 2025,
10:00am**

**Steve's Hangar
Cookout!**

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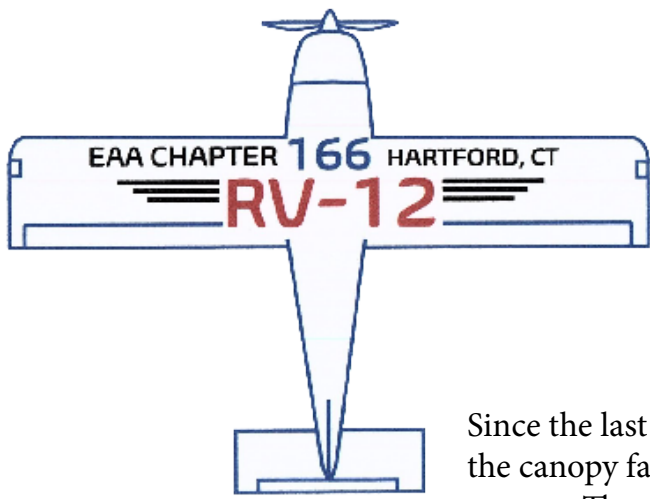
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EAA 166 RV-12 BUILD UPDATE

update and photos from Rick Montero

Since the last update, the build team has completed the fabrication of the canopy fairing by laying up the fiberglass that spans the front of the canopy. The entire fairing has now been sanded smooth. The fairing work that remains is just some minor cosmetic work to give the canopy fairing a factory finish appearance. This will require adding a polyester filler (i.e., Bondo type filler) to the surface and sanding it smooth. This will complete the fairing fabrication.

After the canopy fairing was fabricated, the wings were mounted so the airplane could be relocated to Rick's T-hangar for engine work. The Lindbergh Flyers Flying Club, hired an A&P Mechanic (Arian Foldan) to open the gearbox to inspect for corrosion. The gearbox still looked brand new even after sitting in storage for over five years! We then added oil and coolant to the engine and with Arian's help, performed the oil purge procedure to get oil into the hydraulic valve lifters. Arian then started the engine, synchronized the dual carburetors and adjusted the idle RPM. Getting the engine started was a major milestone for our build team and the culmination of over five years of work by our team! This was followed a day later by another major milestone, which was our first taxi test to condition the brakes and calibrate the ADAHRS (Air Data Attitude Heading Reference System) unit. Be sure to check out the videos of these major milestone events as recorded by Larry Anglisano.

After the taxi test, the cowling was removed to inspect for leaks. A minor oil leak was found and fixed and the carburetor idle was adjusted. The next activity for the team is to perform a weight and balance, perform the Production Acceptance Procedures (PAP) as defined by Van's Aircraft, and then apply for airworthiness certification.

In [this video](#), Rick Montero and Larry Anglisano talk through the setup, adjustments and all the work that's required of a Rotax 912ULS in the Van's RV-12. A special thanks to the folks at Lockwood Aviation in Sebring, Florida, and Rotax engine pro Arian Folden, for sharing their knowledge and assistance.



Check out the latest build updates on our YouTube channel!



EAA166 Hartford, Connecticut

@eaa166hartfordconnecticut8 · 355 subscribers · 21 videos

More about this channel >

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Since our build activity is complete, all future build team sessions have been cancelled. Anyone interested in viewing the RV-12 should please contact Rick Montero at rick.montero@sbcglobal.net.

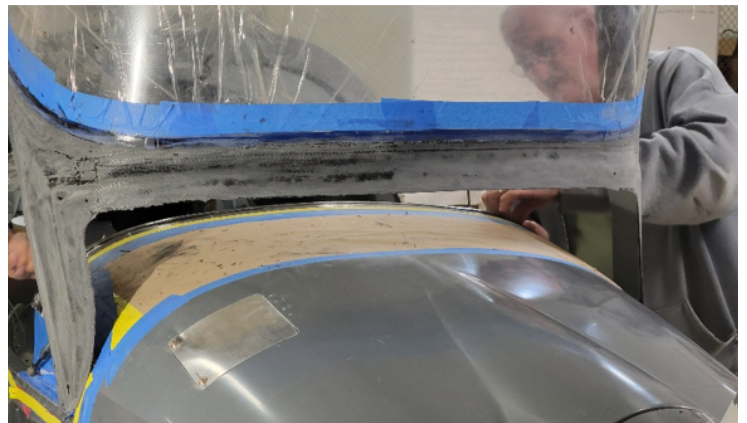
Rick Montero
EAA Chapter 166 RV-12 Build Team
Leader



The RV-12 during the first engine start. Larry and Arian are monitoring the engine parameters during the run.



Mark and Steve laying fiberglass strips to fabricate the canopy fairing.



The canopy fairing after layup and cure was complete. The fairing was still rough shape and needed trim and finishing.



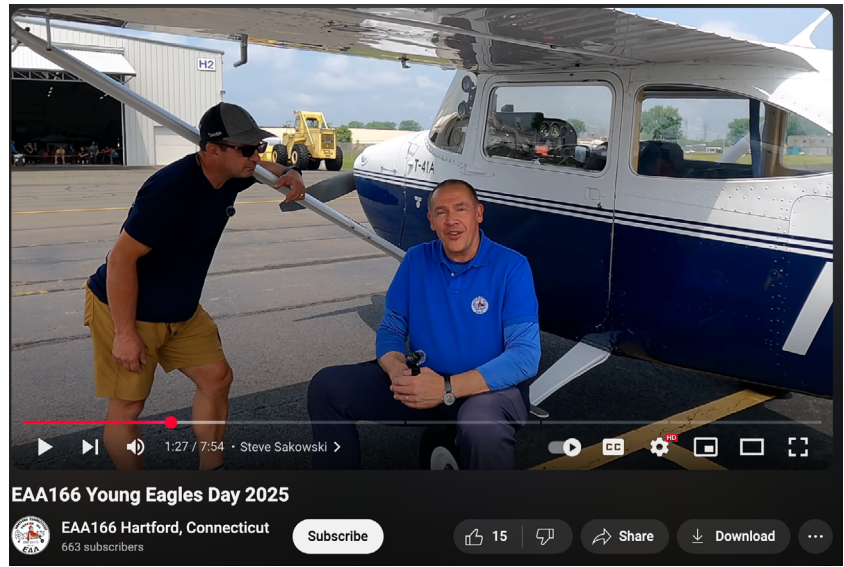
The RV-12 being moved to its new home at the T-Hangars



The gearbox internals look pristine even after five years of storage!

Young Eagles Day!

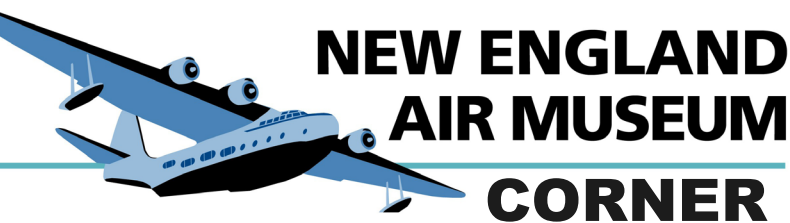
Flying Young Eagles not only introduces youngsters to general aviation, but it strengthens the chapter, while proving to the community that the local airport is home to a dedicated group of volunteers. EAA166 at Brainard Airport in Hartford has been long recognized by EAA as a standout chapter that flies an impressive number of Young Eagles. In [this video](#), EAA166 member Larry Anglisano puts a spotlight on some of these volunteers, plus a couple of the aircraft that made it all happen on Young Eagle's Day 2025.





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

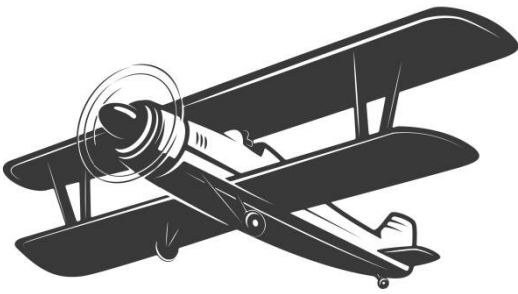
Previous Ray Scholar, Logan Vidal and Steve fly Downtown!



AEROSPACE ACADEMY CAMP
SUMMER 2025

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EAA i66 History Corner

by Bill Barry

On June 9, 1944, at 2:08 pm an F6F-5 Hellcat (Bureau Number 58829) took off from Grumman Field in Bethpage, NY. The plane was fresh out of the factory and was being flown on an acceptance flight. Thirty one minutes later, while flying at 8,000 feet over Long Island Sound, the test pilot called back to base to announce that the engine was on fire. Directing the Hellcat into a descent toward the Connecticut shore, the pilot stayed with the plane until flames spread into the cockpit. Just 3 minutes after the fire broke out the pilot bailed out at 1,500 feet while flying along the shoreline. The plane crashed into a swamp near a house in Norwalk. No one on the ground was hurt and the pilot landed unharmed about a mile away. After calmly walking to a nearby house, the pilot called in a report about what happened. Grumman sent a seaplane to retrieve the pilot, who returned to test flight work the next morning. The Hellcat burned so completely that the cause of the fire was never determined.



A restored F6F-5 Hellcat
(Source: Flying Heritage Collection photo
by Jim Larsen)

While this may seem like a typical World War II accident story, the twist here is that the test pilot was 27 year-old Elizabeth Hooker. Ms. Hooker was one of three women who served as test pilots for Grumman during the war. With so many men serving in the military during the war, Grumman began hiring women to work in their Bethpage, Long Island factory in March 1942. By the end of 1943, 8,000 women were working at Grumman – 30% of the workforce. As Grumman ramped up production of the new F6F Hellcat in 1943, the head of Testing and Flight Operations, Bud Gillies, realized that he desperately needed more test pilots. Each of the planes coming off the line needed 2 to 3 test flights before acceptance by the Navy. The pace of test operations was brutal. At the peak of production in 1944 a new Hellcat rolled off the production line every hour. One month (March 1945) they produced 644 Hellcats. To keep up, Grumman test pilots worked 10 hour shifts, flying up to 8 flights per day. There simply weren't enough (male) test pilots to keep up.



Grumman test pilots Barbara Kibbee Jayne, Elizabeth Hooker, and Teddy Kenyon.
(Source: Cradle of Aviation Museum collection)



Part of a 1944 Life Magazine advertisement
(Source: J.L. Blum collection)

Bud Gillies was well aware of the skills of women pilots of the era. His wife Betty Gillies had begun flying in 1928. She was president of the Ninety-Nines from 1939-1941. In fact, she was one of the first to sign up for Women's Auxiliary Flying Squadron (later merged into the WASPs) in 1942. Late that year Bud started hiring women pilots for various support tasks at Grumman. The next year, he shifted Elizabeth Hooker, Barbara Kibbee Jayne, and Cecil 'Teddy' Kenyon from courier flying to test flight duties. Some of the (male) test pilots objected, but Gillies invited the press out to Bethpage to meet his new test pilots. They quickly became media darlings. One of them, Teddy Kenyon, wound up featured in a Camel cigarette ad (see below).

Elizabeth Hooker had soloed at age 15 with less than 6 hours of flight instruction in her logbook. She was the president of the Smith College Flying Club and after graduating from Smith in 1939 she enrolled in the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPTP). Overcoming attempts by the Army to ban women from CPTP, she not only earned a string of ratings but wound up as a CPTP instructor pilot in Easton, MD. In December 1942, Bud Gillies hired her as an instrument instructor and Link Trainer operator for Grumman. Less than a year later she was featured in a Movietone newsreel describing her cool handling of a Hellcat landing gear extension problem. Handling a burning airplane in June 1944 apparently didn't faze her very much. The New York Times report on the accident noted that Ms. Hooker was unharmed, except for "singd eyebrows."

Like the other women test pilots (and all but 3 women on the production line), Elizabeth Hooker was laid off by Grumman at the end of World War II. She got married in 1945, and had 4 children. She eventually outlived 3 husbands and died in California in 2010 at the age of 94.



It's SUMMER! Let's go to the beach!