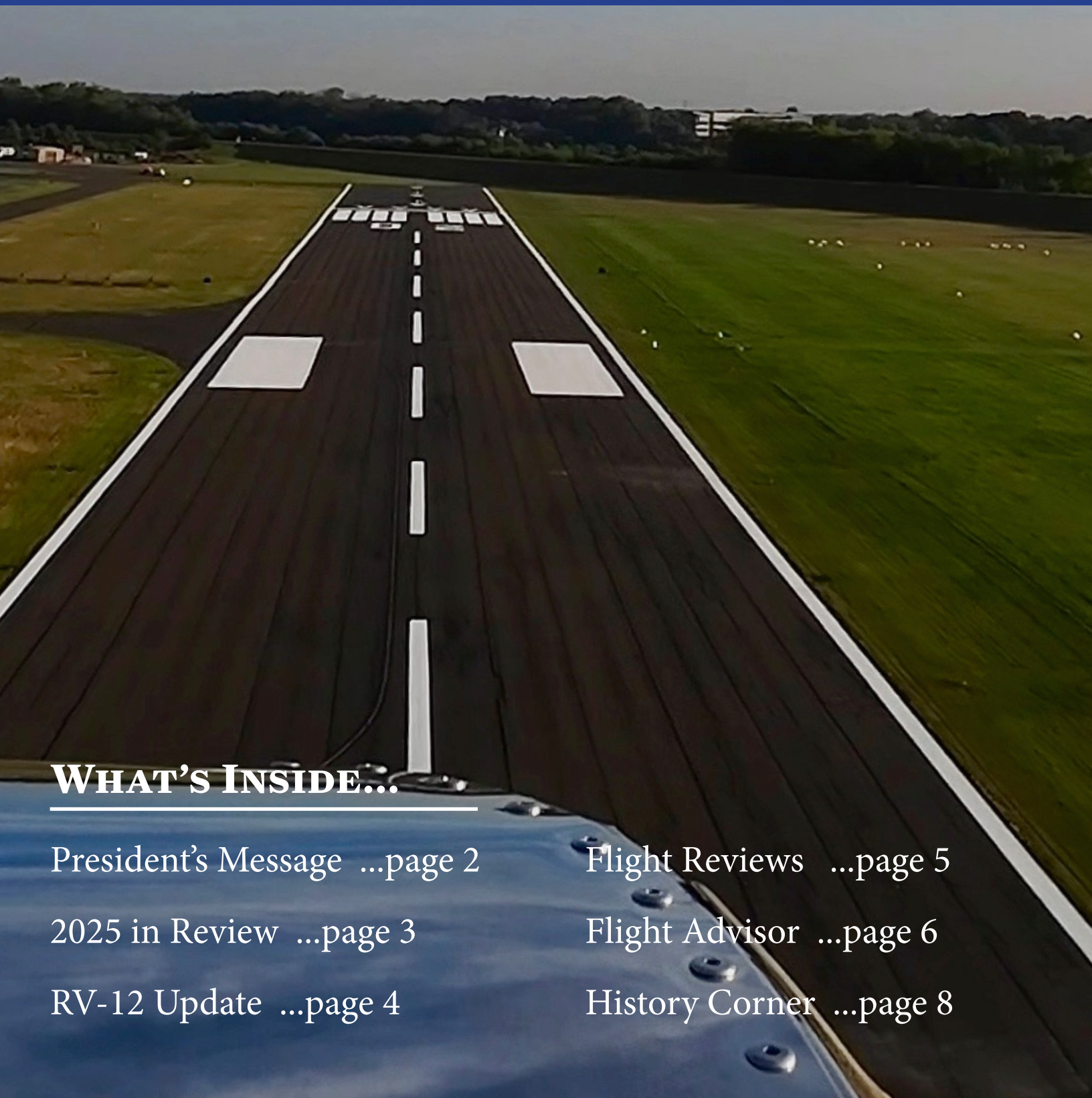
EAA Chapter 166

Hartford, Connecticut

December 2025



What's Inside...

NEXT MEETING

January 31, 2026, 10:00am

New England Air Museum

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Steve Socolosky

Hello EAA 166 Members and Student Members,

Here's our SPECIAL FIRST FLIGHT EDITION, when on this day in 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright made their first flight in their homebuilt aircraft at Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina! Look what's happened since!

Our next meeting will be Saturday, January 31st, 2026, at 10:00 AM, at the New England Air Museum! Please enter at the main entrance and pay admission (unless you are already a Museum Member) and after the meeting, you can visit the largest air museum in New England!

As 2025 winds down for us here at Chapter 166, our Newsletter Editor, Ashley Anglisano, will be transferring her duties over to her father, Larry Anglisano. I hope your father has learned a few things from you, Ashley! We cannot thank Ashley enough for all she has done in bringing her professional skills and personal touch to project what we're about here at Chapter 166! Since February 2021, Ashley has always come through and helped keep our newsletter fresh and on time! Thank you very much, Ashley! Please read more from Ashley, later in the newsletter.

Last month, at our Annual Awards Dinner, we celebrated the FIRST FLIGHTS of TWO aircraft in our Chapter. Mark Welch's beautiful RV-10 and our very own Chapter Project plane, our RV-12, now owned and flown by the Lindbergh Flyers! Also, elections were held with John Baleshiski as Vice President, Brenda Rossignol as Treasurer and Fabrizia and Keshet Spadaccini as Co-Secretaries.

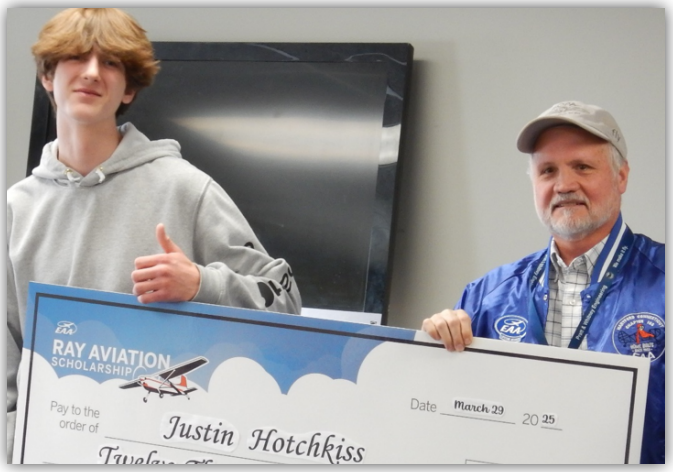
Our latest Ray Scholar, Justin Hotchkiss, passed his FAA written exam and is on his way to his check ride!

That's it for now! Enjoy the rest of 2025 and we hope to see you all on Saturday, January 31st, at the New England Air Museum!

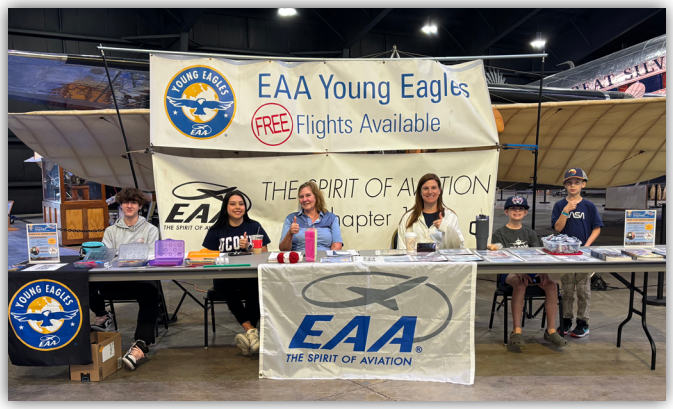
Thank you and BLUE Skies!
Steve

Looking Back: 2025 in Review at EAA 166

January: Mark Welch flies his homebuilt RV-10!

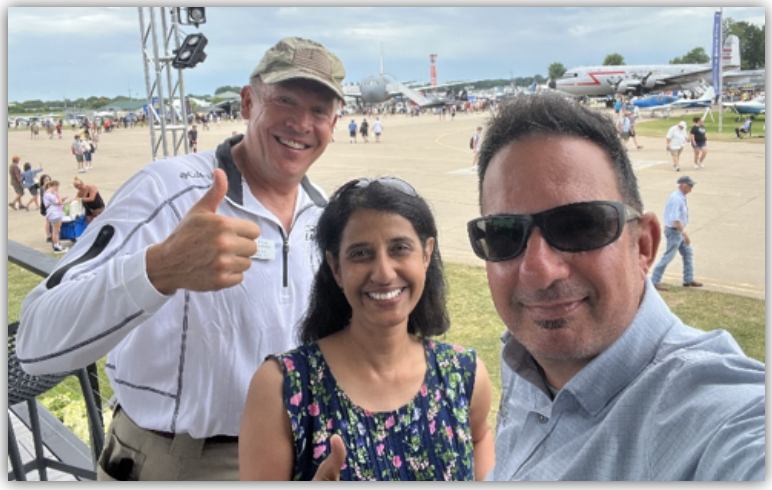


April: EAA 166's sixth Ray Scholar: Justin Hotchkiss

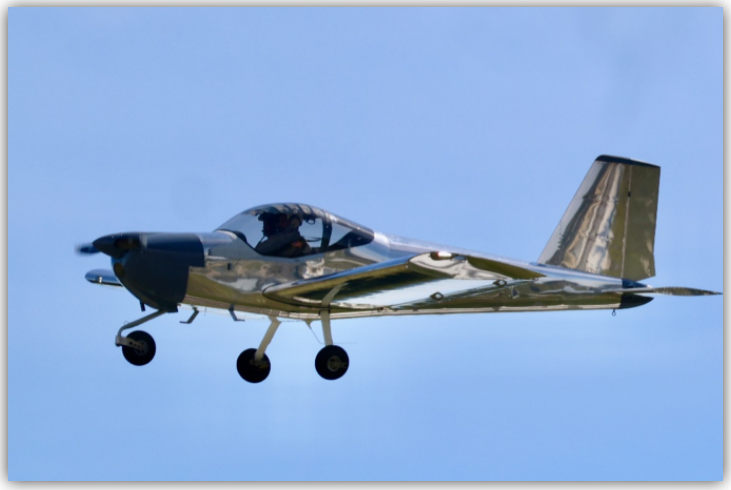


May: EAA 166 tables at the New England Air Museum

June: EAA 166 hosts Young Eagles Rally

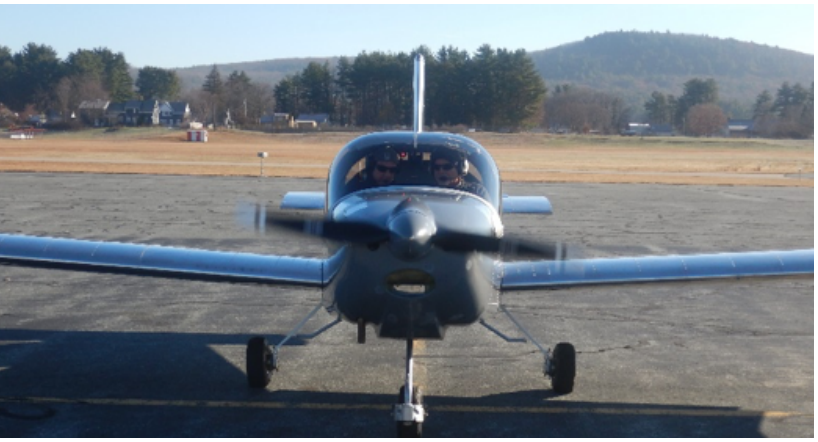


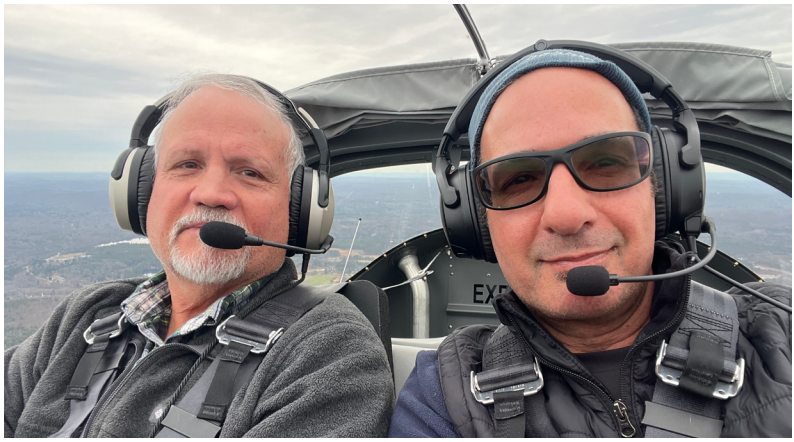
July: At AirVenture 2025, EAA 166 members catch up



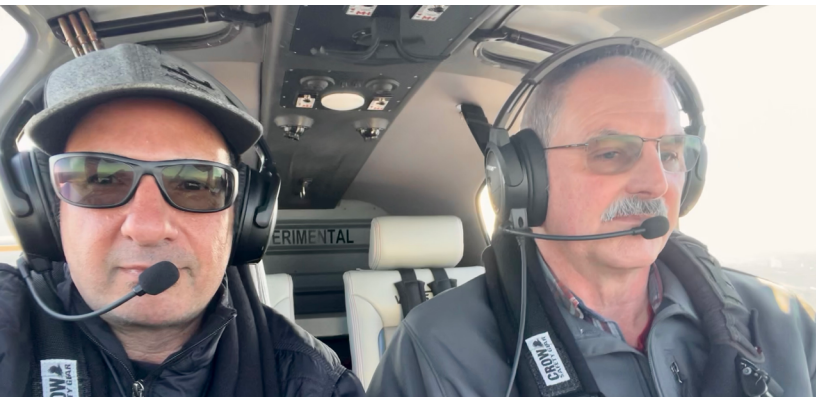
September: The Lindberg Flyers' RV-12 takes its first flight!

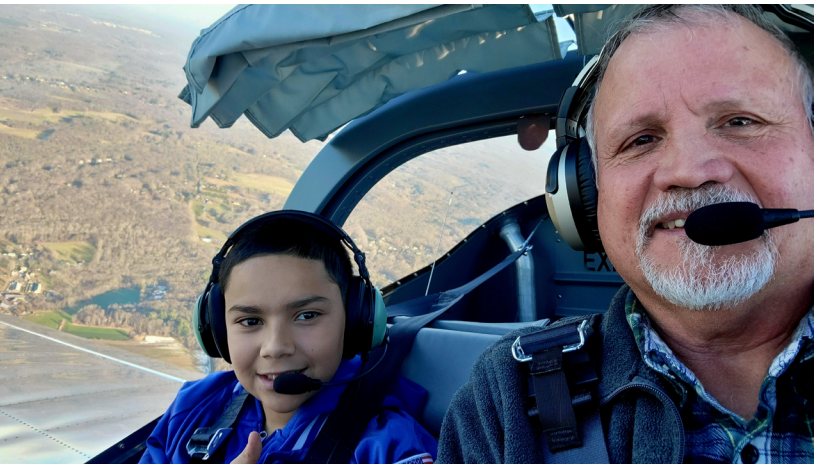
EAA 166 RV-12 UPDATE

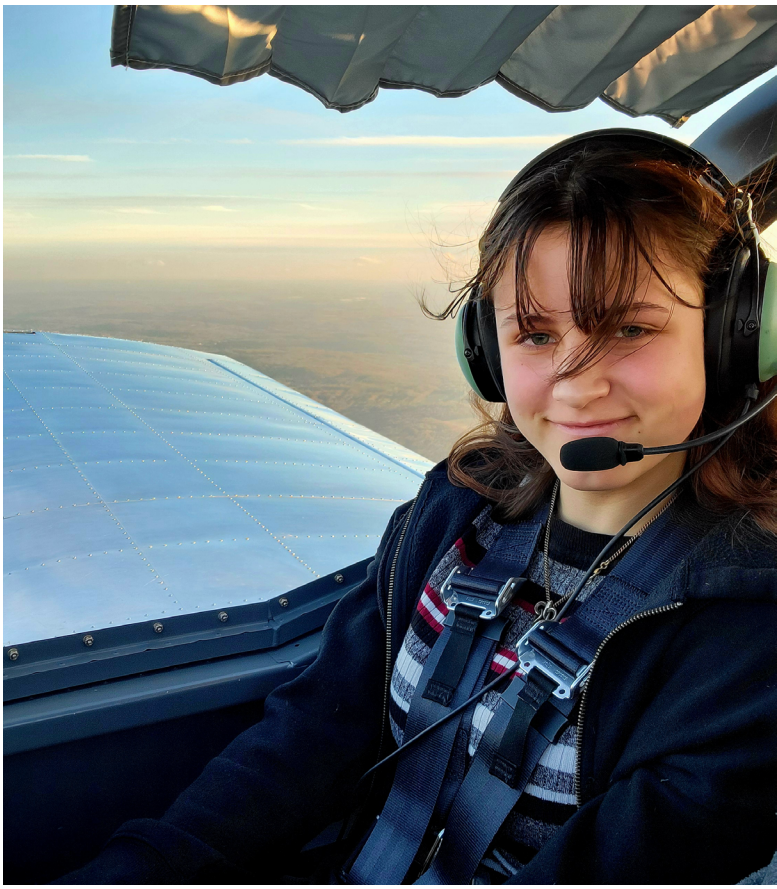




The RV-12 has gotten some great flight time, including its first cross-country flight to Keene, NH for breakfast! Student members who helped build the RV-12 have gotten some flight time, too. Plus, Mark Welch has been flying his RV-10 quite a bit, pictured below.







Flight Reviews: Making Them Work For You

by Larry Anglisano

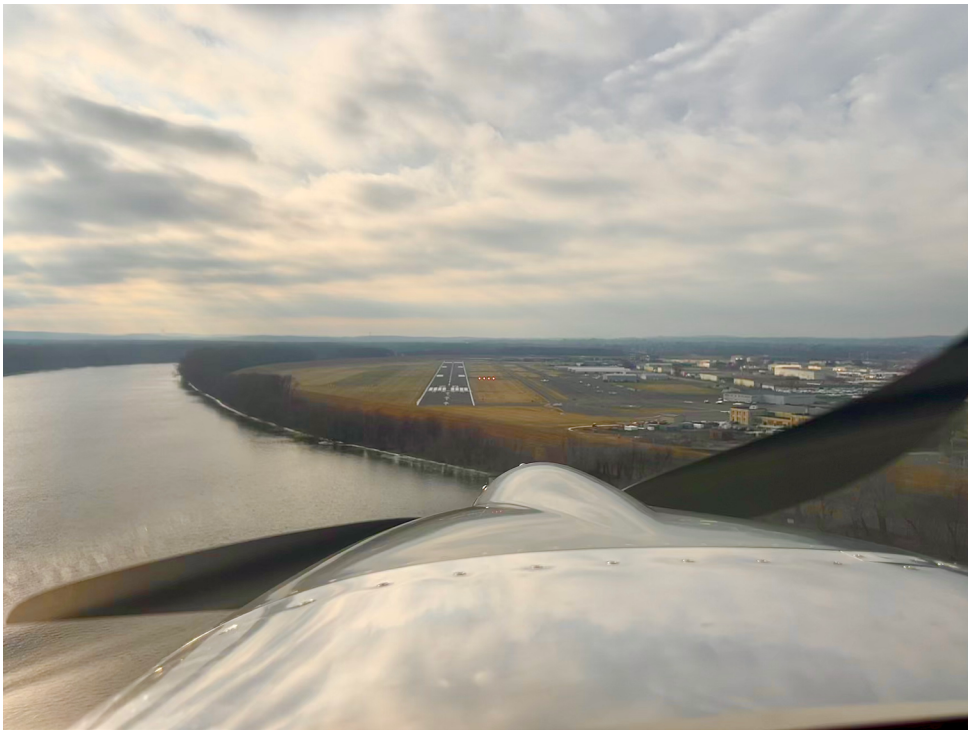
They used to be called Biennial Flight Reviews because they're required by the FAA's Part 61.56 recurrent training requirement every 24 calendar months, but now they're called Flight Reviews. The name has changed but the requirement is the same: Fly with an instructor every two years (and complete at least one hour of ground review) and if all goes well, you'll be signed off as being competent to act as pilot in command. Studies have consistently shown that frequent recurrent training is hugely valuable for pilots, and it's a major portion of the reason why the accident rate for airlines, air charter, fractionals and business flying is so low.

I go above and beyond and try to complete a Flight Review every year instead of every two years, but this year I stretched it longer than I general like. And as usual, the anticipation of the big day caused unreasonable amounts of agita and some tossing and turning in my bed simply because I want to do very well during the review. The way I see it, you're showing the instructor that you're safe, skilled, and worthy of carrying passengers. My goal on the ride is simple: Show good command of the aircraft but also use the exercise as a learning experience. And the learning experience should start long before you show up to fly by having a real conversation with yourself about areas in your flying that need work. Moreover, coming into your Flight Review cold is going to cost you more because you are going to spend time with the instructor sorting out your background and what will be accomplished during the flight review — stuff that could have been taken care of ahead of time.

The Way YOU Fly

Since I'll be flying the Van's RV-12 a lot, I chose it for the Flight Review, and for the ground portion, had a plan in place for reviewing how I'll operate it. I gave my instructor advanced notice of what I wanted to accomplish and why. If I were to mold the Flight Review around flying a Cirrus as I've done in the past, my approach to the ground (and flight) portion would be completely different. And that's the key: Have a solid plan in place so the Flight Review works for how you will be flying.

I started my review on my own by completing a handful of online programs within the FAA Wings Pilot Proficiency Program, which was a good way to kick off some rust when it came to specific areas that I felt were important to my flying. This included cranking down on tips for making stabilized approaches, aeronautical decision making, and avoiding airspace and airport surface blunders. From this material, I made a list of key points that I wanted to review during the ground portion.



Checkride Insights

While there are all kinds of Flight Review prep programs for sale, one manual that I found extremely useful comes from Pilot Workshops, with $49 *Checkride Insights* for the Private Pilot. It's a collaboration with Sporty's that goes well beyond what you'll find in the FAA's Airman Certification Standards (ACS) not only because it spells out the knowledge and flying skills you're expected to demonstrate on a checkride, but it's unique and insightful for also having expert annotations throughout the book. In addition to the ACS material, the no-nonsense guidance from designated pilot examiners and chief flight instructors is intended to reduce checkride anxiety and gives the reader a candid, firsthand look at what examiners are looking for on the private pilot checkride.

Checkride Insights gathers all the material an applicant should review for a private pilot checkride and marks it up with specific comments that the PilotWorkshops authors had with flight instructors and the examiners who give checkrides. I found the material and overall presentation engaging and useful because it starts with the actual FAA text (in black and white) for the private pilot ACS on the upper left of each page, and as you read through the FAA text there are colored note flags with a number after some of the elements. The number flag has a matching annotation placed on the same page using the same number and color, and the comments in the matching annotation are directly related to the elements marked by a number in the ACS. I think the manual is a worthy addition to every pilot's library.

Last, don't think of the Flight Review as a dreaded chore. Use it to your advantage. With the right approach, you'll walk away not only with a logbook endorsement proving that you have the right stuff, but also with more confidence, a sharper skill set, and a new list of things to work on in your flying.

Learning More About How Aircraft Fly

by Kenneth P. Katz
EAA Chapter 166 Flight Advisor

It's a fact—you don't need to be an aerospace engineer to fly an airplane. You do need to have a basic understanding of aerodynamics, but the truth is that in practical application, a little bit of that knowledge goes a long way. However, when test flying an experimental homebuilt aircraft, you are very much a test pilot. Professional test pilots who are trained in institutions like the US Air Force Test Pilot School require a degree in engineering, physics or mathematics to be eligible for admission. The curriculum at these schools is not only flying. It includes a year of graduate level engineering academics in the classroom. There are some great resources available which can be used by people who build and flight test their own aircraft to learn similar material.

Pilot's Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge (FAA-H-8083-25C)
Federal Aviation Administration
Https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/handbooks_manuals/aviation/phak

The Pilot's Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge (PHAK) contains an excellent overview of a wide variety of technical topics, including aircraft structure, systems and propulsion, instrumentation, flight controls, and aerodynamics. It's not an engineering textbook, so the treatment of the subject avoids the extensive use of mathematics.

Aerodynamics for Naval Aviators (00-80T-80)
Naval Air Systems Command
Https://www.faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/regulations_policies/handbooks_manuals/aviation/00-80T-80.pdf

Aerodynamics for Naval Aviators was written for student naval aviators, so in some way it is a military counterpart to the PHAK. It is very in-depth and thorough. Equations are sprinkled throughout the book but the use of calculus and higher math is avoided. Much of the book is highly relevant to general aviation. The coverage of things like jet engines and supersonic flight won't be very applicable to your RV-12 flight testing, but they certainly are interesting!

Introduction to Aerospace Flight Vehicles
J. Gordon Leishman
Https://eaglepubs.erau.edu/introductiontoaerospaceflightvehicles/

Professor Leishman's work is used as the introductory aerospace engineering textbook at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. It is free, online, very well written and illustrated, and contains some interesting historical information for context and background. The math that is used in the book is suitable for the intended audience of college sophmores majoring in engineering. Even then, most of the math is just high school-level algebra with a bit of trigonometry--you can ignore the relatively small amount of calculus and still understand the vast majority of what is covered. This textbook is truly enormous and comprehensive, and you could spend years studying it. Many of the chapters have a direct relationship to what we do as general aviation pilots. Reading this textbook while connecting it to what we do in the cockpit will be an illuminating experience.

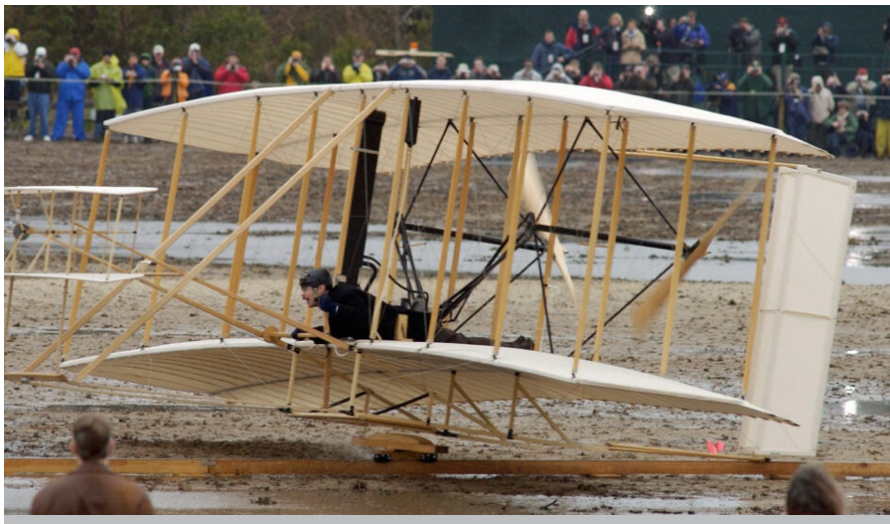
Beginner's Guide to Aeronautics
NASA Glenn Research Center
Https://www1.grc.nasa.gov/beginners-guide-to-aeronautics/

NASA has created a wonderful website to explain aeronautics, with many interactive simulations. For example, what really causes lift? Most pilots think that they know, but a lot of what people think that they know about this subject is incorrect or overly simplified. Take a look at https://www1.grc.nasa.gov/beginners-guide-to-aeronautics/learn-about-aerodynamics/#lift for an excellent explanation of what actually creates lift. This website is definitely worth a look.

The resources exist for the test pilot of a homebuilt aircraft or any interested general aviation pilot willing to invest some time to educate themselves about aerodynamics and other aerospace engineering subjects to a nearly professional level.

EAA 166 History Corner

by Bill Barry

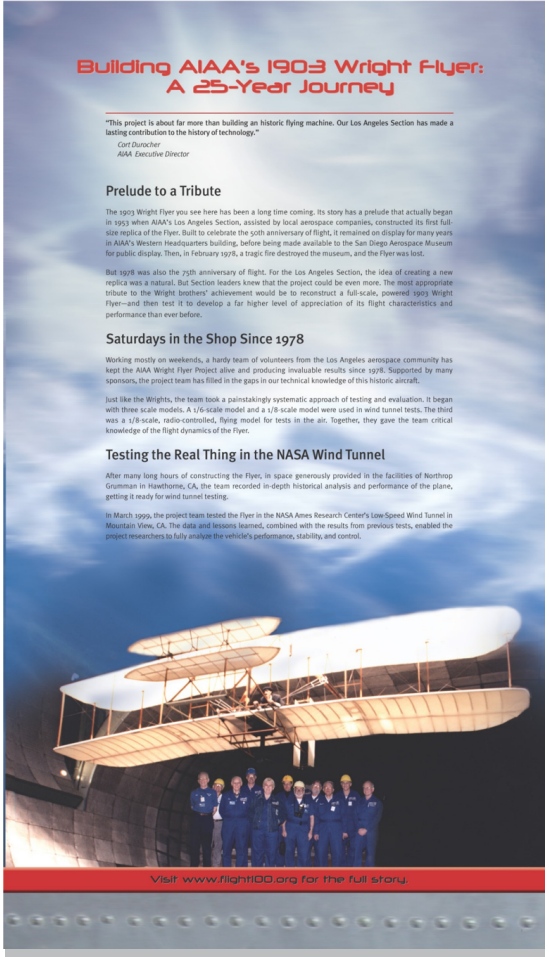


Reproduction Wright Flyer makes an unsuccessful flight attempt at the Centennial of Flight celebration, December 17, 2003. (Source: U. S. Air Force)

While the 1903 Wright Flyer never flew in Connecticut, an interesting replica paid a long visit for the centennial of flight celebrations in 2003. There were a number of replicas of the Wright Flyer built for the centennial, several of which jockeyed for the chance to re-enact the first flight at the big centennial event in Kitty Hawk, NC. A group called "The Wright Experience" won the bid and built three flyable replicas. One of them successfully flew test missions before the centennial, but on the day of the event, rain and a lack of wind kept their Flyer on the ground. The Wright Experience had major support from the EAA and the Ford Motor Company. The replica they built that attempted to fly at the centennial event is now on display at the Ford Museum in Michigan. The other Wright Experience replicas are on display at the Wright Brothers National Memorial at Kitty Hawk, and at the Museum of Flight in Seattle.

One of The Wright Experience's competitors for the centennial re-enactment, was the Los Angeles Section of the American Institute for Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA). You may not think of the AIAA as a group interested in airplane building, but these folks had a long history with the Wright Flyer. It began with the 50th anniversary of flight, when a group of aerospace companies commissioned the building of a non-flying Wright Flyer replica. After the anniversary events in 1953, this replica was donated to the AIAA regional headquarters in Southern California. It was displayed in the lobby there until AIAA closed the regional headquarters in 1970. AIAA loaned the replica to the San Diego Aerospace Museum. Eight years later there was a fire that destroyed the Flyer and the museum building it was in. As the owner, AIAA collected the insurance payout and, since it happened to be the 75th anniversary year of the Wright's first flight, used the funds to underwrite the construction of a new replica Flyer.

Using the plans released by the Smithsonian in 1950, volunteers from the Los Angeles Section of the AIAA began working on this replica in 1979. Working on Saturdays, and having to interpret the incomplete Smithsonian plans, it took the L.A. Section of AIAA 20 years to complete the

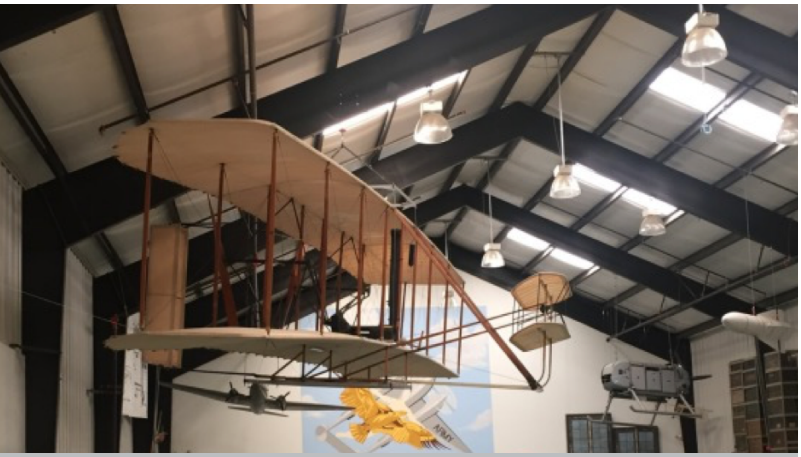


One of the 12 explanatory panels from the AIAA Wright Flyer Centennial Tour. Note the picture of the replica in a NASA Ames Research Center wind tunnel. (Source: AIAA)

project. While this replica was not planned to be flyable, after it was completed in 1999 it was shipped to NASA's Ames Research Facility where it underwent wind tunnel testing. Those tests produced some interesting data, that the L.A. Section of AIAA used to make "minor" changes to the Flyer design so that they could build a more stable and flyable replica. Their plan at that point was to build a flying replica (much more quickly) for tests at Edwards Air Force Base in 2002 and then fly it at the big Kitty Hawk centennial event in 2003. That effort was ultimately pre-empted by The Wright Experience and their replicas.

While AIAA started work on the flyable replica, the 1999 replica was retired to the FAA Flight Deck Museum in Lawndale, CA. As the centennial approached, AIAA decided to use the replica completed in 1999 for educational purposes. For 15 months, starting in late September 2002, this replica Flyer crossed the country on the 10 stop "AIAA Wright Flyer Centennial Tour." Most of the stops were for short-term events, like the Nellis Air Force Base Open House (October 2002), the Festival of Flight in Fayetteville, NC (May 2003), and the Dayton Air Show (July 2003). Two of the tour stops were for extended stays. One of those was at the Kennedy Space Center Visitors' Center and the other was at the New England Air Museum (NEAM). The 1999 AIAA Wright Flyer replica arrived at NEAM in late October 2002 and remained on display until February 2003. Maybe you saw it there. It was rolled into the big doors of the military hangar and a dozen large explanatory panels were put up around it. The replica's visit in Connecticut was the longest stop on its national tour. This replica's travels concluded where they began, at the FAA Flight Deck Museum in CA on the centennial; December 17, 2003. It remained on display there until 2018, when it was acquired by the March Field Museum in Riverside, CA. You can see it hanging there today.

AIAA Wright Flyer in the military hangar at the New England Air Museum (Source: AIAA)



The AIAA Wright Flyer replica now hanging in the March Field Air Museum. (Source: March Field Air Museum)

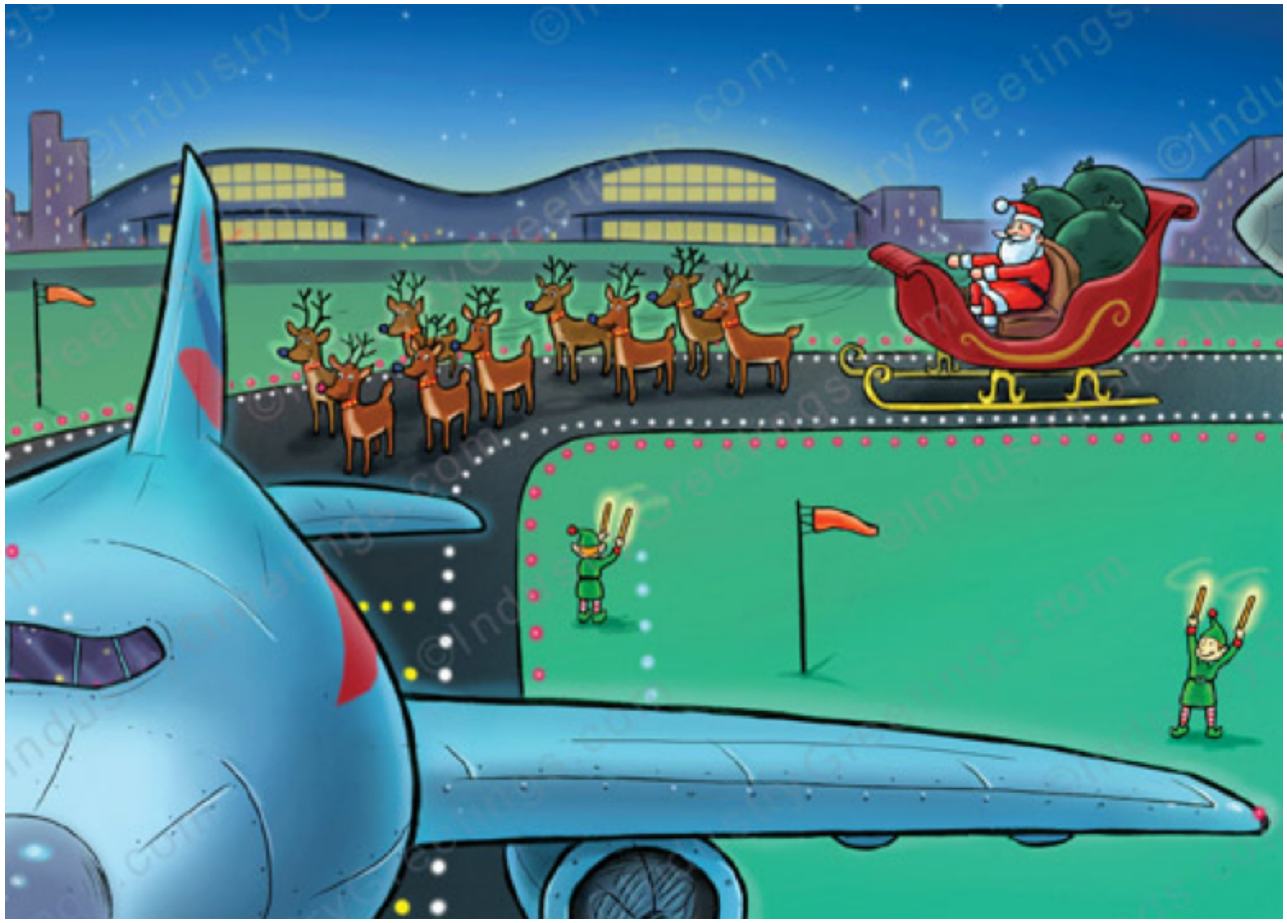
A note from the (Outgoing) Newsletter Editor

As I pull together my last EAA 166 newsletter, I can't help but reflect on my time supporting the chapter.

I remember the day I met Steve, and how inspired I felt by his love not just for our chapter, but moreso for the sport of aviation. We need more "Steves" in the aviation community: filled with passion, and committed to ensuring the next generation recognizes all the different outlets into aviation.

Thanks Steve, and all, who have let me make your words, stories, and photos look pretty on these pages. Where else do you get the chance to work so closely with build-experts, historians, and enthusiasts? I'm humbled at the opportunity, and look forward to watching the chapter's continued success.

- Ashley Anglisano



ATC: "Uh, Santa, line up and wait."