

# Links to Dreams



Volume 1, Issue 1

January 2024

## President's Comments:

Hello and Happy New Year, Dear Chapter members!

We have many reasons to celebrate 2023 as having been a great year for us. We transitioned from being a 'provisional' to a fully chartered Chapter and managed to promote socializing with our fellow members through our monthly Social Gatherings and events! These monthly get-togethers can include great presentations such as the one on aircraft homebuilding back in August, and in October we had a fantastic Fly-In "Flying Back in Time". Also, 2023 saw friends fulfill their dreams towards their pilot's license and owning an aircraft (check out our 'Featured Chapter Member' section), and some of us, 'rusty' pilots, got back to the left seat – me included!

2024 has even more fantastic events for you! Have a look at the News section of this Newsletter, for a glimpse at what our team at *Links to Dreams* is working on. Speaking of events, please join us on January 29<sup>th</sup> for our first Social Gathering of 2024.

You will not want to miss it! Arrive at 6:30 pm for some food and snacks and at 7:00 pm we will enjoy another great presentation introducing *Foreflight*, generously presented by our Treasurer Kirk Bauer. Let us know if you can make it. Email us at: [info@eaa1685.org](mailto:info@eaa1685.org).

We are your community of fellow passionate aviation enthusiasts. And we want to locally grow participation in aviation through EAA's various educational programs, and activities, promote and support recreational flying, and the "Gift of Flight". We aspire to build lasting friendships here at our lovely Baldwin County Regional Airport as we share the EAA and Oshkosh Spirit - year-round.

Thank you for being part of our very special community and also for helping us grow our public outreach. We will be looking forward to seeing you!

Kalina Milani

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**Our new website** is on the air! It has all the information on how to become a member of our Chapter and some very nice pictures of EAA's most charming lake Chapter, *Links to Dreams*, as well as nice memories of the October 2023 Fly-in event, "Flying Back in Time" on N42PW, a historic Boeing Stearman PT-27. Please visit <https://chapters.eaa.org/eaa1685>.

**Monthly meetings and Social Gatherings:** They happen at our airport every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month. Please note that our first meeting and social gathering of 2024 will happen on January 29<sup>th</sup>, (the fifth Monday). There will be a great presentation at this Social Gathering so make sure you save the date on your calendar! Please send us a note if you will be able to make it: [info@eaa1685.org](mailto:info@eaa1685.org).



**Aviation Weekend:** We are organizing a great aviation weekend for you, happening in the Spring of 2024. It will include a Fly-In and a very special presentation by an Army Special Operations Flight Lead, CW5 (Ret.) Doug Englen. Doug planned and executed the raid that captured and killed Osama Bin Laden. You will not want to miss it. Stay tuned for the dates!

**EAA Young Eagles Event:** Our first is being planned for this Summer. If you would like to volunteer to be a Young Eagles Pilot, please let us know by emailing us at: [info@eaa1685.org](mailto:info@eaa1685.org).

**Air Venture Oshkosh, WI:** July 22-28, 2024

## Member News:

As soon as the fantastic October Fly-in event with the historic Boeing Stearman PT-27 was over, that true American generous pilot, Retired Navy Lieutenant Commander Phil Webb became a brand-new member of our Chapter! He promised to be back to our lovely airport next Spring.

We had 2 groups of fellow members join forces and purchased their own C172s in 2023! Some are fulfilling their dreams of becoming a pilot, and others are polishing up their wings and going back to being current again. Part-ownership in a training aircraft has proven to be very rewarding. This is EAA's spirit of aviation at its best!



October 2023 EAA Chapter event with LCDR Phil Webb, USN, Ret, (far right) flew aviation enthusiasts in his PT-17.

## A Note from Treasurer Kirk Bauer:

Hello fellow Chapter members! I just want to give everyone a gentle reminder that our local chapter relies on your dues to fund operations. The EAA mothership does not provide any resources. Consequently, our chapter dues are separate from our payments to EAA. If you have not yet paid your dues for 2023 or 2024, you can do so using the following website: <https://square.link/u/WFzaZ7ji>  
Thank you all for your support!

## Did You Know?

That this Chapter can offer our members a free 6-month EAA general membership trial? It includes the full set of EAA membership benefits at no cost, and as newcomers, they will:

- Receive *EAA Sport Aviation* magazine
- Have access to the members-only area of EAA's website
- Obtain membership discounts on programs such as EAA SportAir Workshops, EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, and more.

That as a *Links to Dreams Young Eagles* participant, our young fliers will get access to:

- EAA's free student membership
- Academy of Model Aircrafts (AMA) membership
- Sporty's ground school
- Free first flight lesson
- Applying for an EAA flight training scholarship (up to \$10,000)

Please spread the word and help us bring our younger generation closer to aviation!



## Share Your Story!

Share your aviation story with us and help inspire others! Send your story to: [info@eaa1685.org](mailto:info@eaa1685.org) and you will be featured in one of our upcoming Newsletters soon. Remember, your aviation story may be just what someone else needed to hear to fulfill their dream in aviation.

## Featured Chapter Member

### “First Time” in a Lifetime

At some point in life, as the years transpire, you realize it’s difficult to ever reclaim that elusive “First Time” in much of anything. It’s easy to grow comfortable in your “achievements” in life, and reminisce on what it used to be like to chase success and taste fear, fit only for one’s lost youth and invincibility. But alas, on December 5, 2023, I shed the shackles of self-doubt, and lived the experience of one of the greatest “Firsts” I’ve ever known. On that cool December’s winter day, I soloed my first aircraft, my own aircraft, at that, and flew around the pattern like a bird that finally left the nest and got her wings. I was full of the best kind of everything: fear, exhilaration, trepidation and hope. Was I READY? Is anyone ever READY to pilot an aircraft on their own? Is anyone ever READY to take their own life or death into their lone inexperienced hands?

Truth be told, I WAS ready. Not in the cup of experience, but rather in the cup of confidence and desire for the taste of that elusive “First Time” that very few of us get to grasp in our later years in life. Sometimes, it’s the lure of fear, and that which make others roll their eyes at your dreams, that motivates you to achieve your greatest joys. If there is one lesson I could share with anyone wondering

if it’s too late to chase a dream, it is to say, “It’s never too late to remind yourself what it feels like to truly be alive.” It’s never too late to push yourself, challenge yourself, test yourself and dare yourself to accomplish what most would consider an exercise in futility or a chance at failure. It’s never too late to spread your wings and fly, risk defeat, and embrace that personal fear, known only to you.

Experiencing that elusive “First” of Solo Flight in our Cessna 172, out of KMLJ, can truly only be likened to, for me, the first time I ever left an airplane as a skydiver, 15 years and almost 1000 jumps ago. Embracing one’s own fear, head-on and head-first, inevitably leads us to the fullest of hearts, the greatest of strength, and the purest of experience this life has to offer. Aviation, whether it be leaping from a plane, piloting your own, or supporting a loved one who chases that dream, offers a world few will ever know they are missing. If you’re thinking of chasing that dream, don’t miss it! I have a long way to go before I reach that mountain top, but the journey is as sweet as the reward, and I’m excited to share my experiences and my heart with anyone who dares to chase their own “First Time.”

Never let go of what makes you feel alive!

Tara Parker  
“Links to Dreams—Chapter 1685”

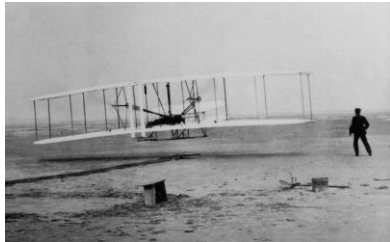


**Our Chapter Mission:** To grow participation in aviation by promoting and supporting recreational flying in our community and inspiring the next generation of pilots.



## Aviation History

Heavier than air flight began in Dec 1903 when the Wright Brothers flew their homebuilt aircraft at Kitty Hawk, NC.



About thirty years later production began on what is commonly known as the PT-17 Stearman. It was nowhere near the most advanced aircraft of its day but the 10,626 that were built were indicative of how quickly aviation was advancing.



In December, 1957 the Boeing 707, the first successful commercial jet airliner was introduced and followed about ten years later by the iconic Boeing 747. Meanwhile humans had gone into space and in 1969 Apollo 11 landed on the moon and returned the astronauts to earth safely.



In 2024 the number, variation, and complexity of aircraft is bewildering. Think for a moment what it takes to get all the aircraft in and out of Hartsfield International Airport in Atlanta. In 2022 93.6 million passengers passed through that airport alone. The logistics of such an accomplishment is staggering but it happens, year after year.

In 2023 SpaceX, a private company owned by Elon Musk, made 76 successful launches of orbital spacecraft delivering payloads for a wide array of customers. In other words, his company has made space travel far more affordable and common. One of his goals is to make humans an interplanetary species. Who could have dreamed where aviation would take us and what will aviation be like in another 30 years?

Contributed by Edward Shelor

## Would You Like To Be A Volunteer?

[Please let us know if you would like to be a volunteer, mentor, coordinator or presenter in any of these areas:](#)

Become a member of our Board of Directors (as: Web Editor, Membership Coordinator) -♦- Young Eagles Build and Fly -♦- Young Eagle & Eagle Flights -♦- Youth Builds -♦- Fly-ins, Cookouts, Pancake Breakfasts -♦- Homebuilding & Restoration Presenter -♦- EAA Safety Programs Flight Advisor, Technical Councilor -♦- EAA Aviation Education Seminars -♦- IMC / VMC Club