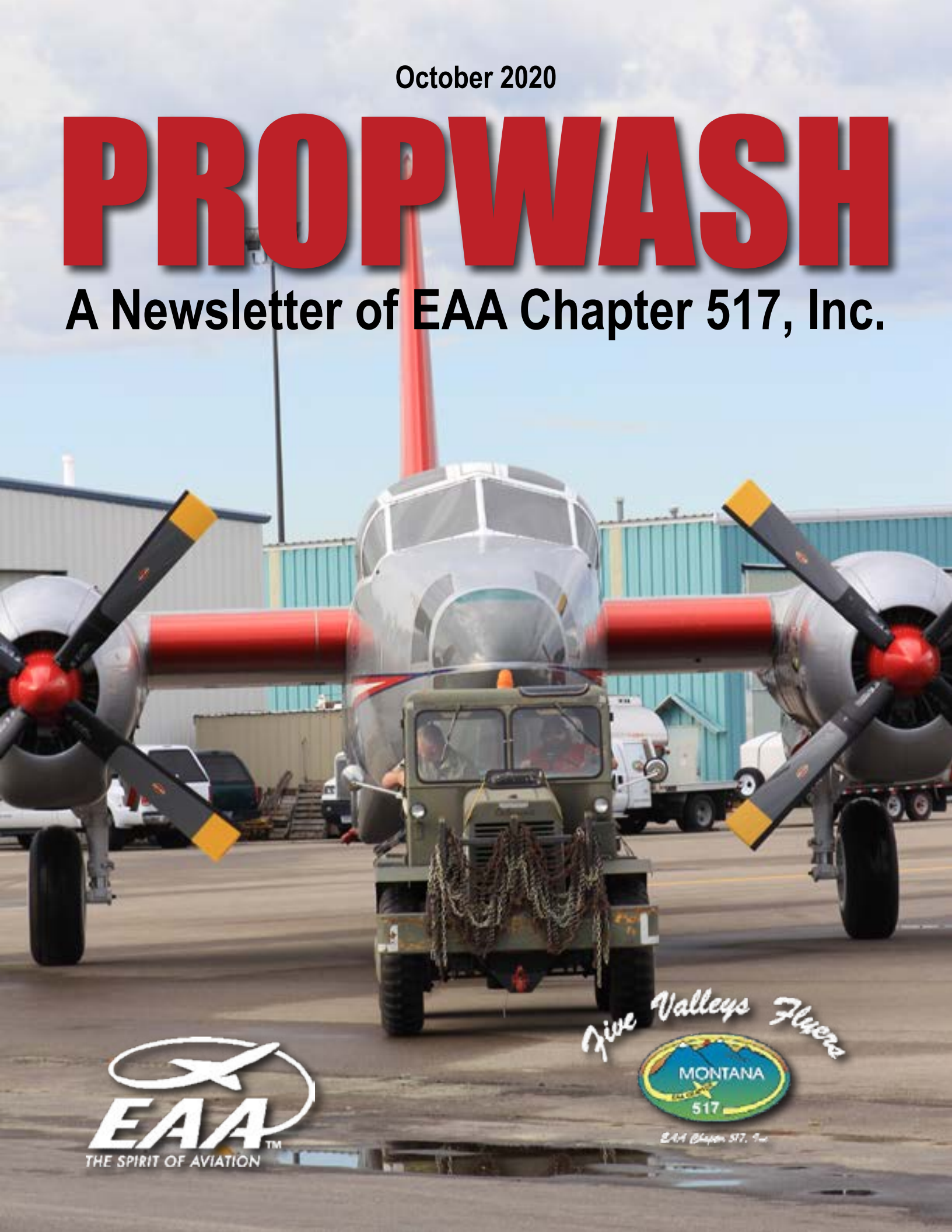


October 2020

# PROPWASH

A Newsletter of EAA Chapter 517, Inc.



*Five Valleys Flyers*



*EAA Chapter 517, Inc.*

# From the Chapter President



## JIM YOUNKIN

Greetings, All:

Our next Coffee & Donuts event will be on Saturday, October 3, from 8:30 to 11 a.m. at our EAA hangar. Last month our members and friends from the Bitterroot were not able to fly up for our Coffee & Donuts event because the visibility was very limited due to smoke from the wildfires. I think the weather this Saturday will be much better.

On September 21, we enjoyed a presentation by Missoula Airport Director Cris Jensen. Cris brought us up to date on the new terminal building project and answered our many questions about other activities going on at the airport. He also invited our Chapter members to take a guided tour of the new terminal, which some of us did on Friday, October 2. Thank you, Cris, for your presentation and invitation.

I may have mentioned this in a previous PROPWASH, but your EAA 517 Board of Directors is having an attorney specializing in nonprofit organizations review our Chapter Bylaws for compliance with current state and federal laws. A year ago the Board spent considerable



time going over our Bylaws ourselves, but some questions came up that we didn't have the answer for, so we decided it was time for some legal guidance. We hope to have the attorney's feedback to share with members by the time of our Annual Membership Meeting.

Here are some dates to put on your calendar: October 19, 7 p.m. – Program presenter will be Sherry Rossiter, who will do a PowerPoint presentation on The History of Women in Aviation, ending with her own experience as the first female helicopter pilot for the California Army National Guard; November 7, 8:30 – 11 a.m. – Our last Coffee &

Donuts event for 2020; November 16, Annual Membership Meeting & Chapter Election of President and Vice-President. The business meeting and election of officers will take place between 6-7 p.m., while attendees will be enjoying an assortment of pizza provided free of charge by the Chapter. At 7 p.m. this same evening, we will have a guest speaker talking about the B-52. (More info about the annual business meeting and the guest presentation will follow in the November PROPWASH.)

Until next month, fly safely and stay healthy!

*Jim*

# Ross Brutsman's Romanian IAR-823

By Steve Rossiter

The IAR-823 was designed and built in Romania as a military trainer. The first airplane was delivered in 1974, and the last was produced in 1983. A total of 78 aircraft were built. A follow up version was produced with a turbine engine. The airplane was used by the Romanian military, and a civil version of the IAR-823 was used by the Romanian Aero Club.

Ross recently purchased his airplane for travel between Montana and visiting family in the mid-west. However, he is also planning a trip to the Bahamas in the near future..

The IAR-823 by the numbers:

## General characteristics

- Crew: Pilot
- Capacity: 4 passengers
- Length: 27 ft. 0 in,
- Wingspan: 32 ft, 10 in,
- Height: 8 ft, 3 in,



- Wing area: 161.5 sq. ft.
- Empty weight: 1,984 lbs.
- Max takeoff weight: 3,307 lbs.
- Fuel capacity: 95 US gallons
- Powerplant: Lycoming IO-540-G1D5, 290 hp

## Performance

- Maximum speed: 190 mph, (170 kn) at sea level

- Cruise speed: 180 mph, (160 kn) (economy cruise, at 60% power)
- Stall speed: 61 mph, (53 kn) (flaps down, power off)
- Range: 1,100 miles, (970 nmi)
- Endurance: 6 hours
- Service ceiling: 18,400 ft.
- G limits: +6, -3G
- Rate of climb: 1,475 ft/min.

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## Founder's Innovation Prize Grand Championship Preview now open for registration

By EAA

Although the Founder's Innovation Prize Grand Championship was pushed back to 2021 due to COVID-19, 2020 will still feature some of EAA's most innovative members' solutions to reduce the number of fatal amateur-built accidents caused by loss of control. The virtual Founder's Innovation Prize Grand Championship Preview on Wednesday, September 23, will revisit some of the strongest entries from the past four years, and give

you a glimpse into next year's Founder's Innovation Prize Grand Championship as presentations from several participants will be featured.

Additionally, on Tuesday, September 22, So You Think You Can Make a 180 Back on Takeoff? An In-Depth Look at Engine Failure Options, an insightful presentation on the 180 turn back after an engine failure on takeoff, will premier. Test pilots and EAA safety committee members Charlie Precourt, Chris Glaeser, and Terry Lutz will provide instruction on the use of the EAA Flight Test Manual test cards for climb and glide that will enable you

to determine your own aircraft's capabilities should you find yourself in an engine failure scenario on takeoff. This presentation expands on the work of Rick Marshall published in the May edition of EAA Sport Aviation.

Registration info for both webinar-style virtual presentations can be found at [EAA.org/Webinars](http://EAA.org/Webinars). Both the Founder's Innovation Prize Grand Championship Preview and So You Think You Can Make a 180 Back on Takeoff? An In-Depth Look at Engine Failure Options begin at 7 p.m. Central time.

# Suspended in Midair



Courtesy Rick Lawrence (portrait), Shutterstock (4), archive.org (government document)

*Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the May 1975 edition of Reader's Digest.*

By Virginia Kelly

Almost 80 years after it unfolded in the sky over San Diego, a nearly impossible rescue mission remains one of the most daring feats in aeronautical history.

It began like any other May morning in California. The sky was blue, the sun hot. A slight breeze riffled the glistening waters of San Diego Bay. At the naval airbase on North Island, all was calm.

At 9:45 a.m., Walter Osipoff, a sandy-haired 23-year-old Marine second lieutenant from Akron, Ohio, boarded a DC-2 transport for a routine parachute jump. Lt. Bill Lowrey, a 34-year-old Navy test pilot from New Orleans, was already putting his observation plane through its paces. And John McCants, a husky 41-year-old aviation chief machinist's mate from Jordan, Montana, was checking out the

aircraft that he was scheduled to fly later.

Before the sun was high in the noonday sky, these three men would be linked forever in one of history's most spectacular midair rescues.

Osipoff was a seasoned parachutist, a former collegiate wrestling and gymnastics star. He had joined the National Guard and then the Marines in 1938. He had already made more than 20 jumps by May 15, 1941.

That morning, his DC-2 took off and headed for Kearney Mesa, where Osipoff would supervise practice jumps by 12 of his men.

Three separate canvas cylinders, containing ammunition and rifles, were also to be parachuted overboard as part of the exercise.

Nine of the men had already jumped when Osipoff, standing a few inches from the plane's door, started to toss out the last cargo container. Somehow the automatic-release cord of his backpack parachute became looped over the cylinder, and his chute was suddenly ripped open.

He tried to grab hold of the quickly billowing silk, but the next thing he knew he had been jerked from the plane – sucked out with such force that the impact of his body ripped a 2.5-foot gash in the DC-2's aluminum fuselage.

Instead of flowing free, Osipoff's open parachute now wrapped itself around the plane's tail wheel. The chute's chest strap and one leg strap had broken; only the second leg strap was still holding—and it had slipped down to Osipoff's ankle. One by one, 24 of the 28 lines between his precariously attached harness and the parachute snapped. He was now hanging some 12 feet below and 15 feet behind the tail of the plane. Four parachute shroud lines twisted around his left leg were all that kept him from being pitched to the earth.

Dangling there upside down, Osipoff had enough presence of mind to not try to release his emergency parachute. With the plane pulling him one way and the emergency chute pulling him another, he realized that he would be torn in half.



Courtesy National Archives (Photo No. 127-N-522950)

Lt. Col. John J. Capolino, a Philadelphia artist, painted this scene of Osipoff's rescue in the 1940s. It belongs to the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia.

Conscious all the while, he knew that he was hanging by one leg, spinning and bouncing—and he was aware that his ribs hurt. He did not know then that two ribs and three vertebrae had been fractured.

Inside the plane, the DC-2 crew struggled to pull Osipoff to safety, but they could not reach him. The aircraft was starting to run low on fuel, but an emergency landing with Osipoff dragging behind would certainly smash him to death. And pilot Harold Johnson had no radio contact with the ground.

To attract attention below, Johnson eased the transport down to 300 feet and started circling North Island. A few people at the base noticed the plane coming by every few minutes, but they assumed that it was towing some sort of target.

Meanwhile, Bill Lowrey had landed his plane and was walking toward his office when he glanced upward. He and John McCants, who was working nearby, saw at the same time the figure dangling from the plane. As the DC-2 circled once again, Lowrey yelled to McCants, "There's a man hanging on that line. Do you suppose we can get him?" McCants answered grimly, "We can try."

Lowrey shouted to his mechanics to get his plane ready for takeoff. It was an SOC-1, a two-seat, open-cockpit observation plane, less than 27 feet long. Recalled Lowrey afterward, "I didn't even know how much fuel it had." Turning to McCants, he said, "Let's go!"

Lowrey and McCants had never flown together before, but the two

men seemed to take it for granted that they were going to attempt the impossible. "There was only one decision to be made," Lowrey later said quietly, "and that was to go get him.

How, we didn't know. We had no time to plan."

Nor was there time to get through to their commanding officer and request permission for the flight. Lowrey simply told the tower, "Give me a green light. I'm taking off." At the last moment, a Marine ran out to the plane with a hunting knife – for cutting Osipoff loose – and dumped it in McCants's lap.

As the SOC-1 roared aloft, all activity around San Diego seemed to stop. Civilians crowded rooftops, children stopped playing at recess, and the men of North Island strained

their eyes upward.

With murmured prayers and pounding hearts, the watchers agonized through every move in the impossible mission.

Within minutes, Lowrey and McCants were under the transport, flying at 300 feet. They made five approaches, but the air proved too bumpy to try for a rescue. Since radio communication between the two planes was impossible, Lowrey hand-signalized Johnson to head out over the Pacific, where the air would be smoother, and they climbed to 3,000 feet. Johnson held his plane on a straight course and reduced speed to that of the smaller plane – 100 miles an hour.

Lowrey flew back and away from Osipoff, but level with him. McCants, who was in the open seat in back of Lowrey, saw that Osipoff was hanging by one foot and that blood was dripping from his helmet. Lowrey edged the plane closer with such precision that his maneuvers jibed with the swings of Osipoff's inert body.

His timing had to be exact so that Osipoff did not smash into the SOC-1's propeller.

Finally, Lowrey slipped his upper left wing under Osipoff's shroud lines, and McCants, standing upright

in the rear cockpit – with the plane still going 100 miles an hour 3,000 feet above the sea – lunged for Osipoff. He grabbed him at the waist, and Osipoff flung his arms around McCants's shoulders in a death grip.

McCants pulled Osipoff into the plane, but since it was only a two-seater, the next problem was where to put him. As Lowrey eased the SOC-1 forward to get some slack in the chute lines, McCants managed to stretch Osipoff's body across the top of the fuselage, with Osipoff's head in his lap.

Because McCants was using both hands to hold Osipoff in a vise, there was no way for him to cut the cords that still attached Osipoff to the DC-2. Lowrey then nosed his plane inch by inch closer to the transport and, with incredible precision, used his propeller to cut the shroud lines. After hanging for 33 minutes between life and death, Osipoff was finally free.

Lowrey had flown so close to the transport that he'd nicked a 12-inch gash in its tail. But now the parachute, abruptly detached along with the shroud lines, drifted downward and wrapped itself around Lowrey's rudder. That meant that Lowrey had to fly the SOC-1 without being able to control it properly and

with most of Osipoff's body still on the outside. Yet, five minutes later, Lowrey somehow managed to touch down at North Island, and the little plane rolled to a stop. Osipoff finally lost consciousness – but not before he heard sailors applauding the landing.

Later on, after lunch, Lowrey and McCants went back to their usual duties. Three weeks later, both men were flown to Washington, DC, where Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox awarded them the Distinguished Flying Cross for executing "one of the most brilliant and daring rescues in naval history."

Osipoff spent the next six months in the hospital. The following January, completely recovered and newly promoted to first lieutenant, he went back to parachute jumping. The morning he was to make his first jump after the accident, he was cool and laconic, as usual. His friends, though, were nervous. One after another, they went up to reassure him. Each volunteered to jump first so he could follow.

Osipoff grinned and shook his head. "The hell with that!" he said as he fastened his parachute. "I know damn well I'm going to make it." And he did.

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# EAA Wright Brothers Memorial Banquet moves to virtual format for 2020

By EAA

EAA's annual Wright Brothers Memorial Banquet, which has brought some of the world's top aviation personalities to Oshkosh for nearly 20 years, is moving to a virtual online format for this year's event on Thursday, December 10.

Apollo 13 commander James Lovell will be the special guest for the evening, which honors the 117th anniversary of the Wright brothers' first successful powered flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, on December 17, 1903. Capt. Lovell will be interviewed by Charlie Precourt, a former NASA space shuttle commander and member of EAA's board of directors, in a program that begins at 7 p.m. Central Time on December 10.

"As much as we would love having Capt. Lovell and EAA members all together at the EAA Aviation Museum as we've had for past Wright Brothers banquets, limits on large gatherings because of the COVID-19 pandemic have just made that impossible this year," said Jack J. Pelton, EAA's CEO and chairman of the board. "We are grateful, however, that Capt. Lovell has agreed to join us for an online streaming interview session where he'll talk about his aviation and spaceflight experiences."

This December 10 special event is free for all EAA members. EAA members must log in to their EAA.org web account and visit [EAA.org/WrightBrothers](http://EAA.org/WrightBrothers) to access the event. A recording of the event will also be available on demand for members to view at their convenience. Nonmembers may attend the event



by first purchasing a one-year EAA membership for \$40 at [EAA.org/Join](http://EAA.org/Join), and then creating a member web account at [EAA.org](http://EAA.org).

Capt. Lovell, a longtime EAA member and supporter of the organization's programs, grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He attended the U.S. Naval Academy and after graduation flew McDonnell F2H Banshee fighters off of the USS Shangri-La before attending test pilot school at NAS Patuxent River. In 1962 he applied for and was accepted into the second group of U.S. astronauts. The Mercury astronauts were known as the "Original Seven," while Lovell and his peers became the "New Nine."

Lovell's first space mission was Gemini 7 with fellow EAA member

Frank Borman, followed by Gemini 12, in which he and Buzz Aldrin worked on extravehicular activities and docking. In December 1968, Lovell was command module pilot alongside Borman and Bill Anders on Apollo 8, which was the first manned mission to orbit the moon. Lovell planned to return to the moon in April 1970, as the commander of Apollo 13.

With Lovell's crewmates Fred Haise and Jack Swigert, the Apollo 13 mission was to include a landing in the Fra Mauro Highlands on the lunar surface. Three days into the mission, an explosion severely damaged the spacecraft. Working hand-in-hand with mission control, Apollo 13 improvised a brilliant and safe return to Earth.

# EAA joins aviation groups seeking further FAA COVID relief

By EAA

EAA was one of seven organizations who requested that the FAA to grant pilots and flight instructors further extensions on meeting compliance deadlines pushed back by a SFAR published earlier this year.

The joint effort, which included a letter to the Agency signed by the collaborating organizations, asked for continuing extensions to several currency items. Of particular relevance to EAA members was

a request to continue medical extensions, noting difficulties in scheduling not just AMEs, but treating specialists during the pandemic.

The letter also reflected EAA's concern that the restriction on FAA travel is causing delays or stoppages in simulator and aircraft currency checks, which is currently impacting operators of certain experimental exhibition aircraft and could soon impact other essential services performed by FAA staff.

“While the policy coming out

of the FAA headquarters is that the FAA remains open and able to conduct business, the reality is much different,” the letter stated. “FSDO managers have expanded authority to exercise risk assessment and mitigation in the execution of duties. Understandably, the result is an extremely limited ability of inspectors to travel in the areas of the country most impacted by COVID-19.”

EAA will continue to monitor all advocacy issues related to the pandemic.



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# EAA Webinars surpass 200,000 total attendance following major growth in 2020

By EAA

EAA’s free webinar series, which has brought top aviation experts and personalities to online presentations for the past decade, has now welcomed more than 200,000 people to the sessions following substantial growth in 2020.

The webinars, which are supported by Aircraft Spruce & Specialty, have drawn approximately 30,000 people since March 1 as aviation enthusiasts sought both information and community during the COVID-19 pandemic. EAA expanded its webinar offerings to as many as four sessions per week in recent months.

“Reaching this attendance milestone well ahead of schedule is very gratifying to us, as it means we are reaching EAA members and other aviation enthusiasts with

the information they want and the sense of community that is so important to us who fly,” said Charlie Becker, EAA’s director of chapters, communities, and homebuilt community manager. “The enthusiastic feedback we have received for this content means we’ll be planning for even more in the coming months.”

EAA’s webinar series at EAA.org/Webinars covers the entire spectrum of recreational aviation, from learn-to-fly and aircraft maintenance to weather knowledge and aviation history. All live webinars are free to all, with nearly 600 archived webinars available to EAA members via the association’s video library.

Many webinars are eligible for FAA WINGS and AMT credits through the FAA Safety Program. The upcoming series in October and November currently includes the following sessions, with more

expected to be added:

**Tuesday, October 6:** (Homebuilders webinar series) \$500 HUD; John Muzzoli

**Wednesday, October 7:** The Looming Mechanic Shortage; Mike Busch\*

**Wednesday, October 14:** Strategies for Limiting, and Protecting Yourself From, Liability as an Aircraft Owner or Renter; Jack Harrington, Paul Herbers, Alan Farkas, and Jim Anderson

**Tuesday, October 20:** Emergency Bailout Procedures for Pilots and Survival Equipment; Allen Silver\*

**Tuesday, October 27:** Flying Clubs – Growing Participation in Aviation; David Leiting

**Tuesday, November 3:** (Homebuilders webinar series) Van’s RV-14; Greg Hughes

(\* – Eligible for FAA WINGS and/or AMT credits)

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