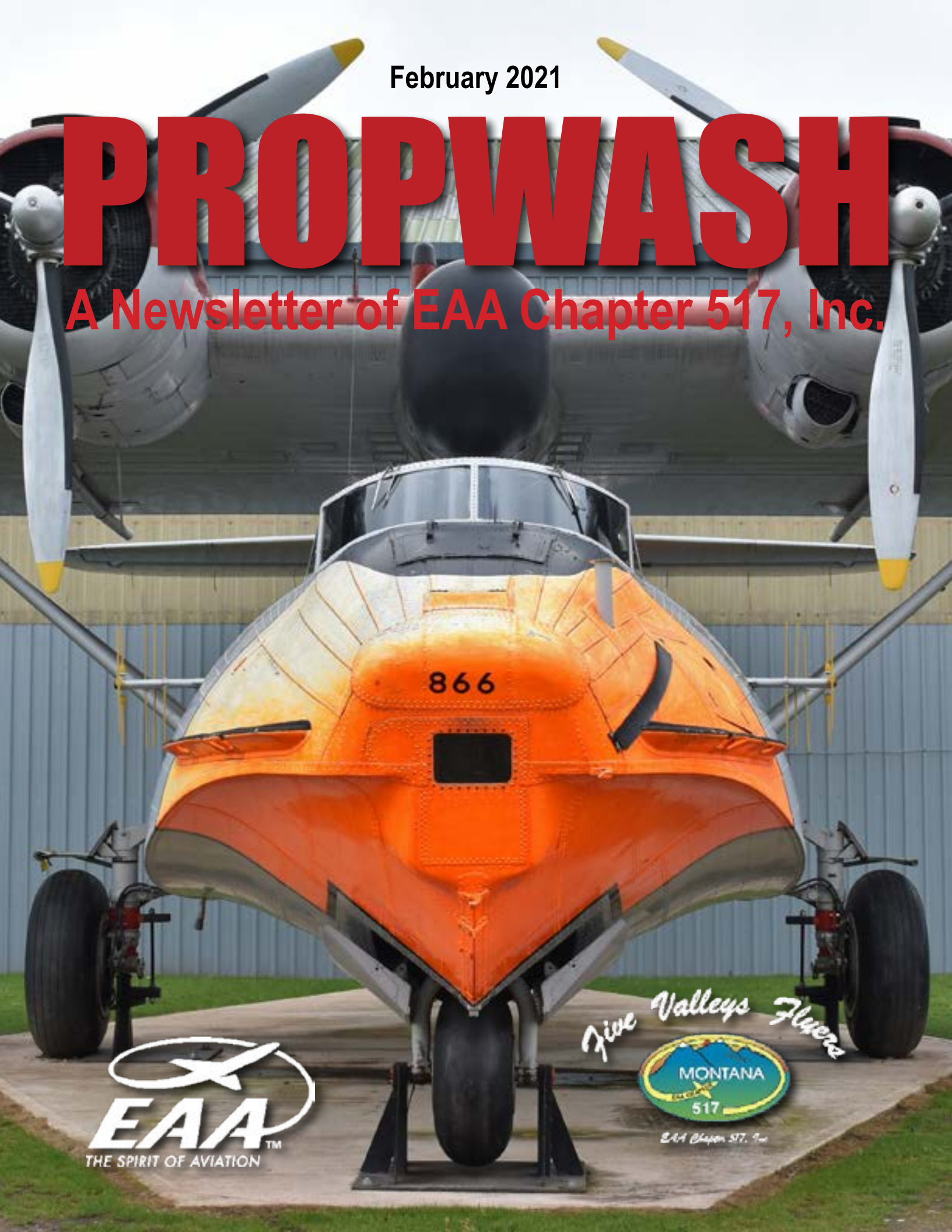


February 2021

# PROPWASH

A Newsletter of EAA Chapter 517, Inc.



866

*Five Valleys Flyers*



*EAA Chapter 517, Inc.*



# From the Chapter President



**Steve Rossiter**

Well folks; we've survived the first month of 2021, we have a new President, and we are continuing to deal with Covid-19. I suggest we are in for another interesting year, and I dearly hope we will be back to normal sooner rather than later.

On March 6, we will begin our first Saturday activities with coffee and donuts at the EAA hangar. We are really looking forward to when we can crank up breakfasts again. Baby steps, in accordance with government guidelines. On March 15, 2021, we will kick off our 2021 meeting season. An important question will be asked: Did you like or dislike the idea of no Chapter meetings in January and February?

I hope you noticed that your PropWash has shown up earlier than usual. The board has pushed up the publication date starting with the February issue, so that it will serve a timely reminder of our first Saturday event each month. Our hope is that now (and when the world returns to normal), this will result in more people remembering to get out and participate. While on the subject of the PropWash, our



Editor Clint Burson and the board encourages you to submit material for publication that might be of interest to other members. We are still looking for a paragraph or three about why you decided to learn to fly. You could also send a couple of paragraphs about your favorite aircraft and why. No doubt you have had an interesting flying trip or experience you can share with the rest of us. Remember, we are pilots and are easily entertained. If you have a special aviation related interest, tell us about it. Who knows, maybe someone else in the chapter has the same interest. The more participation in the newsletter, the better the PropWash will become!

Next time you get to the hangar you may notice some changes. We have more pictures and artwork on the walls. We now have our roll around work bench back that was

being used by our members building the Zenith. We also have additional storage cabinets to help get things better organized. And the biggest change is we have a build project under way. Cal Geyman has started construction on his new RV-9 quick build kit.

One change in and around the East LZ Hangar Condominium complex is that the front door under the tower is open during normal business hours Monday through Friday. That means you can go up to the tower without going through the hangar. You can also enter the EAA space through the inside office door. Just remember that the common areas are adjacent business office. Please be respectful when using the common areas during the week.

Until next month, keep the dirty side down,

*Steve*

# My favorite big airplane



By Steve Rossiter

I can't simply identify one favorite airplane. But I can say without reservation that the favorite big airplane I have flown is the Consolidated PBY-6A. I was actually paid to fly the airplane when I was an air-tanker pilot flying on a fire contract for the California Department of Forestry (now known as CALFIRE). The airplane I was flying, Tanker 49, was modified with upgraded Wright R-2600 engines from a North American B-25.

This was a very easy airplane to fly. It has traditional cables and pulleys for controls, and the engines are so close together that it was almost like flying a center line trust airplane. I am sorry to say, the company sold the airplane before I finished getting my type rating. The picture above was taken after the sale, when the airplane was based in Moses Lake, Washington.



# Becoming a Pietenpol family



By Eric Ristau

Two summers ago, my wife and I took our young kids to the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman to see the dinosaur exhibit. After spending several hours wandering the amongst the T-Rex skeletons and fantastic displays of prehistoric Montana, we traipsed into the Paugh History Hall, which displays a history of transportation in Montana from covered wagons to automobiles. Hanging from the ceiling is a 1932 Pietenpol Air Camper constructed by two brothers on a ranch near

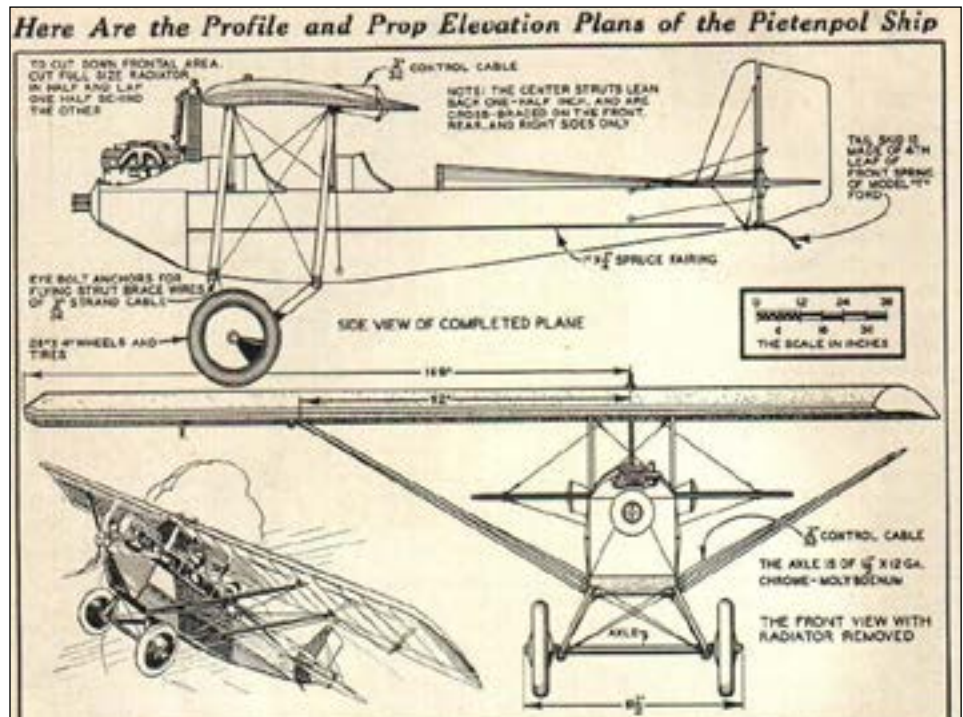


Ryegate, Montana. Their sister sewed the fabric covering on their dining room table and the boys nearly killed themselves on the test flight, thanks to a gopher hole in the pasture. In the end, the flight was a success and became the stuff of Montana aviation lore.

Bernard Pietenpol of Cherry Grove, Minnesota, designed the Air Camper in the late 1920s and first flew in 1929. Plans were published in *Flying and Glider Magazine* in 1932. He designed the airplane to be built from spruce and plywood, general store-grade hardware and powered by a Model A automobile engine – available at the time for \$50, versus purpose-built aircraft engines costing the same as an average house in the 1920s.

Upon returning home, I sent Andrew Pietenpol, Bernard’s grandson, \$100 in American greenbacks and received the 11 sheets of plans the next week. I ordered a load of Sitka Spruce and Mahogany plywood from Aircraft Spruce and got to work building wing ribs and the empennage. Soon after, however, I learned of an Air Camper project for sale at the Western Antique Aeroplane and Automobile Museum in Hood River, Oregon, including a fuselage, wing center section, empennage and a number of wing ribs. A two day trip and a U-Haul rental later, I wheeled it into the shop. The original builder, now gone West, did a lovely job – building the airplane like a piece of fine furniture.

Considered by the EAA to be one of the fathers of homebuilt aircraft, Bernard Pietenpol lived to see many hundreds of Air Campers and Sky Scouts (the single place variant) built and flown. While my build will be a slow labor of love, I’m excited every time I walk into the shop. The kids love it, too.



## AirVenture 2021 to Highlight U.S. Air Force Special Operations



### By EAA

The aircraft and personnel of the U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) will be among the highlighted programs at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2021.

AFSOC is comprised of highly trained, rapidly deployable Airmen, who conduct special operations missions worldwide. Airmen who undertake Special Operations careers specialize in unique skills such as parachuting, scuba diving, rappelling, motorcycling, survival skills, and more. Aircraft in the command include specialized mobility aircraft such as the MC-130, CV-22 and C-146, Close Air Support aircraft such as the AC-130 gunship, and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft such as the MQ-9 and U-28.

“Even those who have a solid familiarity with the U.S. Air Force

often know little about its special operations units and the important mission they fulfill, so we want to bring some visibility to that at Oshkosh in 2021,” said Rick Larsen, EAA’s vice president of communities and member programming, who coordinates AirVenture features and attractions. “The Air Force has been extremely cooperative through the years at showcasing its remarkable people and aircraft at AirVenture, and we look forward to discovering even more in 2021.”

In 1990, AFSOC formally stood up as a Major Command (MAJCOM) within the Air Force and the air component to United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), but their heritage traces back to the Army Air Forces during World War II. In the three decades since AFSOC’s formation, they have been involved in missions around the world in both independent

campaigns and in conjunction with other military branches.

“We are excited to highlight specialized airpower at the nation’s largest air show, but it’s the Airmen flying these aircraft that provide our real value to the nation. Humans are more important than hardware. The 20,000 innovative problem solvers in this command are exactly what we need to maintain our competitive advantage in the future and I am proud to showcase them at Oshkosh,” said U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. Jim Slife, commander of Air Force Special Operations Command.

Final announcements on participating aircraft and activities has not been released, but are expected to include aircraft flying during AirVenture air shows and presentations by USAF Special Operations units throughout the week.

# EAA AeroEducate Initiative helps young people explore and cultivate aviation interest

By EAA

AeroEducate, the newest youth aviation initiative from EAA, will bring an interactive, educational, and engaging experience to young people ages 5 to 18 beginning in 2021.

AeroEducate’s web-based resource provides clear, age-appropriate pathways to aviation and aerospace engagement, and even career paths. A multitude of turnkey, easy-to-use aviation-themed activities for teachers and EAA chapters can be used at sites ranging from classrooms to EAA chapter hangars.

“What EAA has created with AeroEducate is a wide-ranging program where a child can reach specific goals in aviation that are achievable, affordable, and engaging,” said Jack J. Pelton, EAA CEO and Chairman of the Board. “This is the ‘Next Step’ for direct youth aviation education that was pioneered by the EAA Young Eagles program in the 1990s. AeroEducate will encourage participation from young people, their parents, teachers, and EAA chapters in a way that builds interest in aviation from initial fun to possible career paths.”

Among the elements of AeroEducate are:

- Badging Program – designed to motivate engagement and continued discovery
- Career Pathways – demystifies the journey, regardless of area of aviation interest
- Classroom Activities – aviation-infused to help educators spark interest among youth
- Database of Youth Aviation Activities – creating



nationwide opportunities to participate

As part of AeroEducate, EAA is partnering with aviation industry leaders to develop specific career pathways that include professional pilot, air traffic controller, maintenance technician, engineering, and aviation business. United Airlines’ Aviate program led the way in late 2020 by becoming the first industry partner in AeroEducate. Aviate, established to inspire and develop the next generation of talented and diverse United pilots, will effectively create a path from a Young Eagles flight to a profession as a commercial pilot. Additional industry partners will be announced as their participation is finalized.

EAA is developing educational components with North Carolina State University, encompassing an aviation focus that can be used in both traditional and non-traditional learning environments. That flexibility is especially useful as online and distance learning has

become more prevalent over the past year. The activities focus on STEM principles, and follow Common Core Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, and technology and literacy standards. In addition, the teaching activities that are being developed for EAA AeroEducate are available at no charge and are easily adaptable to existing curricula.

“AeroEducate aims to take that youthful discovery and fascination with flight into a positive direction that builds goals and fun for young people, as well as resources for their parents, teachers, and local mentors,” said Rick Larsen, EAA’s vice president of communities and member programming. “This initiative uses the best of aviation, education, and technology in a way that reaches kids where they are and where they want to go.”

Development of AeroEducate programming will continue through the first half of 2021, with further updates and announcements also coming at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2021 in late July.

# License plate display board

By Steve Rossiter

You have all seen the aviation related license plate display board on the hangar wall. It is not full, and I would like to add new states or new unique plates to the board. You can contact me, or leave a plate on the desk in the EAA office. We have a



pretty good start, but there is always room for one more.

## Pay your dues!

It is time for members to pay their EAA 517 dues. Individual membership dues are \$20; family membership dues are \$30.

Mail to EAA Chapter 517, Inc., P.O. Box 18264, Missoula, MT 59808.

The more members who send in their dues now, the fewer members Luanne will have to send invoices to in January. Thank you.

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## BUILDER'S REPORT

**Bearhawk**  
Dick Tardiff  
Bearhawk Patrol

**Rutan**  
Ed Lovrien  
Limo EZ – 50%

**Van's RV**  
John Barba  
RV-6

Allan Glen  
RV-10 – 5%

James "Cal" Geyman  
RV-9A – 15%

**Zenith**  
Duane Felstet  
CH-750 – 75%

*Builders, please send updates to the newsletter editor at [cburson@gmail.com](mailto:cburson@gmail.com) so this list can be kept current.*



# Chapter begins venturing into flight simulators

By Ray Aten

Thanks to a donation by chapter member, Pat Little, EAA 517/Five Valleys Flyers has a basic flight simulator. Its primary purpose will be to support the Young Eagles and Eagles events and Flying Start workshops although, some friendly competitions, when in-person chapter meetings are possible, is anticipated. The basic system consists of a desktop computer, a monitor, and one of our Logitech Extreme 3D Pro Joystick controllers. The computer is running Microsoft Flight Simulator X (steam addition) and is overlaid with EAAs Virtual Flight Academy (Aviore edition). The Virtual Flight Academy (stage 1) is free to EAA members and consists of modules of basic flight maneuvers. Each maneuver for which, upon completion, you are scored. If you are interested in trying out the system, please contact Ray Aten, Young Eagles coordinator.

If you would like to see more flight simulators and a more sophisticated flight simulator at the hangar, please consider the following: we have three more Logitech Extreme 3D Pro joysticks and we have a donated yoke, throttle quadrant and rudder pedal set.



We do not have more desktop computers and monitors for either of these options. If you have a spare computer with a CPU and video card capable of running MS FSX or MS FS 2020 you would like to donate or you would like to make a charitable donation (\$\$) to the chapter, it would be most welcome.

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