



MIDWEST AÉRONAUTIQUE

BOB COON, JIM
CHYBICKI, AND CHRIS
STINSON



BEST OF 2021 PHOTOS

SOME HIGHLIGHTS
FROM A GREAT YEAR
OF FLYING & FRIENDS



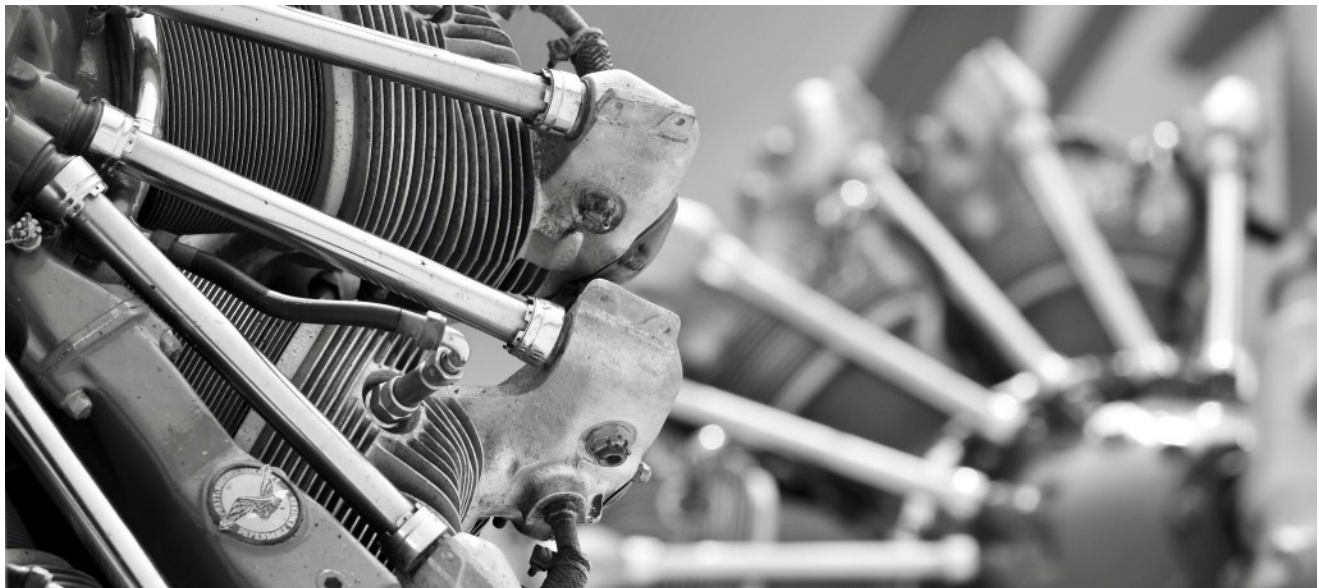
FROM THE LEFT SEAT

EAA 461 & CLOW WILL
HOST A FORD
TRIMOTOR JUNE 2 - 5



WINTER FLIGHT FEST

AT THE EAA AVIATION
MUSEUM SATURDAY,
FEBRUARY 12



From the Left Seat

Greetings Chapter 461, and welcome to the final issue of our newsletter for 2021. I hope this finds you warm and well as we dig in (out?) for winter.



Naturally, winter weather and temperatures tend to result in a significant decrease in outdoor activity, and general aviation is no exception; however, we are trying to buck that trend a bit this winter by focusing inward and improving our hangar space. We currently have two major initiatives underway: finishing up the Lounge-461

EAA Chapter 461 is a
501(c)(3) non-profit
charitable organization
based at Bolingbrook's
Clow International
Airport (1C5)



and building out SimLab-461.

Lounge-461: Many of you have seen the initial lounge build work accomplished by John Coleris, and the railing work accomplished by Dennis Miendersma. Well, one of our exceptionally motivated youth members, Mary-Elizabeth, has taken it upon herself to lead the charge as we work to finish what they started and make the lounge a truly welcoming and functional destination. We started hanging drywall and putting down laminate flooring (drywall and flooring materials donated by Amy Reeb & Craig Kurek) a few weeks ago, and we may have cabinets coming soon!

SimLab-461: A few weeks ago, John Marchese and I took delivery of five laptops and ten 21-inch flat-panel displays that were generously donated by Gorilla, LLC. John and his son, Jake, have since configured 4 of the 5 machines to run either Prepared or Microsoft Flight Simulator. The 5th machine was missing some memory, so it will be ready as soon as we obtain the needed parts. John donated a copy of Prepared, and the chapter has purchased a second copy (using Young Eagles credits) that will be used to build **MobileSim-461** - a portable sim station that will be used to enhance Young Eagles rallies and workshops.

We will need some additional components (yokes, speakers, rudder pedals, VESA monitor mounts) to build out the lab environment, and we will publish a list of needed components soon. We will be seeking donations (funds or equipment) to close out the list, so please stay tuned!

If you are interested in getting involved in Lounge-461, SimLab-461, or our Pietenpol build, or please join us at “Hangar Night” on Thursdays at 7:00 pm, or at “Chow @ Clow” at 5:00 pm on Sundays. You may also check the events section of our website (<https://www.eaa461.org/events/>) for the most up-to-date view of chapter events, or you can request more information via email: contacus@eaa461.org

Chapter Waypoints:

The chapter received a \$500 donation that will serve as the basis for the newly formed Joe Ermel Fund. The objective of the Joe Ermel Fund is to sponsor a young man at an EAA Air Academy on an annual basis.

On Dec 16, 2021, EAA HQ informed us that EAA Chapter 461 and Clow Airport have been approved to host an EAA Ford Trimotor aircraft June 2 - 5, 2022 in conjunction with our annual Cavalcade of Planes! (*Editor's note - YAY!*) Volunteers will be needed to

Aviation For All Ages and Interests

<https://www.eaa461.org>



Whether you fly, build, restore or simply enjoy airplanes and aviation, you are welcome to attend our events and join our chapter. We are a group of aviation enthusiasts, aircraft builders, and pilots who get together with like-minded people to share ideas, exchange information, encourage safety, serve the local aviation community and have a lot of fun doing so.

support the aircraft and flying operations; more details will be provided in the near future. <https://cavalcadeofplanes.com>

A message from airport manager Joe DePaulo: "Our airport has an economic impact for the state of \$34 Million, this is 250% more than the 2011 study that showed \$13.9 Million. We should be proud of this outstanding asset, not just those involved with the airport, but also all of the citizens of Bolingbrook for what this brings the Village...and the region." More details: https://www.eaa461.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/1C5_EI.pdf

The chapter purchased two iPad devices using our Young Eagles credits. These devices will be used exclusively to support EAA's new Young Eagles digital registration process.

The chapter will nominate and elect a new Board of Directors member at the regular chapter meeting on January 6, 2022. Board members may be nominated by members by a verbal or written nomination.

Thank you for helping make 2021 a truly outstanding year; I wish you a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2022!

Happy New Year, Chapter 461!!!

VFRs!

Midwest Aéronautique

Robbie Culver

Many of us are familiar with the beautiful Fairchild 24 in Hangar 2 at Clow. This one of a kind aircraft was restored by Midwest Aéronautique, and while many of us are familiar with that story, I wanted to dig into the back story a bit. If you do not know the airplane or the story, watch this video from EAA:

<https://youtu.be/3t2REIXe004>

For those that have not seen their work, Bob Coon and Jim Chybicki are craftsmen of the highest order. I am always in awe of people who have the patience and skills to work from what is, essentially, a pile of parts in order to restore an aircraft. Doing so with the level of authenticity and detail Bob and Jim adhere to is just amazing. I sat down one Saturday in their workshop and asked Bob and Jim to tell me their story.

Midwest Aéronautique, the group behind this restoration, was

MONTHLY MEETINGS

The Chapter meets on the first Thursday of the month at Clow International Airport, typically at the Illinois Aviation Museum starting at 7:00 pm. Family members, extended family and guests are always welcome.



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership dues for EAA Chapter 461 are \$25 per year and are due on the first of January each calendar year. Chapter 461 members are to be current members of the EAA, Oshkosh, WI.

Individual membership to the EAA is \$40 per year. Family memberships are available for an additional \$10 per year. Both include a twelve-month subscription to Sport Aviation magazine.

started by Bob Coon, Jim Chybicki, and Chris Stinson in 1999 at DuPage airport, where the 3 were volunteers at the Air Classic Museum in charge of restoration. They had just completed work on an RF-86 and F-4 Phantom, put them together and painted them, then added nose art. The F-4 Phantom paint job was ok from a distance, so it was named "From a distance."



When the Air Classic museum moved to the Aurora airport (KARR) they began working on a DeHavilland Beaver. Bob told Jim "we need to do this for ourselves" (some inevitable organizational politics at the Air Classics Museum may have been involved). The museum sold the Beaver, so Bob, Jim and Chris began to collect material to buy an airplane. Chris was good at online searches and doing eBay online sales, which allowed the group to raise funds for an airplane to restore. It had to be a warbird, and it needed to be unique. They decided to become a subchapter S corporation and named it Midwest Aéronautique.

At this point, they were still based at Aurora before deciding to strike out on their own and move to a different location.

Bob & Jim went to southern Indiana & Kentucky in search of a Navion. They passed on that one - it was "scattered all over." Jim found a Howard DGA-15 and by chance Bob & his wife stumbled on the airport it was stored at. The airplane had been in Mexico City for something like 40 years as war surplus. It was "incomplete" and full of bullet holes, and the tail had been sawed off. The seller wanted too much money, so they passed on it. Sometimes the world has an interesting way of leading you in certain directions.

One night Bob was sitting at the dinner table looking at Trade-a-

Board of Directors

Chairman - Dean Karafa

Angela Greer

Gia Kapp

Al Bally

**YOU CAN FIND
US ON
FACEBOOK!**

[https://www.facebook.com/
groups/EAA461](https://www.facebook.com/groups/EAA461)



HANGAR NIGHT

Every Thursday evening from 7 pm to 9 pm we host a "hangar night" where we learn, we build, we socialize, and we work on our hangar.

No experience is required, no membership dues must be paid, and no expectations are set.

Come out, meet friends you haven't met yet, see what the buzz is all about, and join in the fun!

Plane and found the Fairchild. Bob called the seller and asked about coming to see it, and was told he could fly in to the private airstrip in New Berlin, IL, just south and west of Springfield. So, Bob and Jim flew down in a rented Cessna 172 - they had to clear the Springfield airspace and a Military Operations Area (MOA) with interesting directions to follow, but they found it. It was in late February or early March and "very cold."

They wanted a warbird and the more they dug into it the more they found it was a cool looking airplane. But what they found wasn't a cool looking airplane - it was a pile of parts.

The aircraft had been shipped to Britain part of the lend lease act in June 1944 on the USS Sam Water. (It was on the Atlantic the day Bob was born.) When it got to the UK it was in the Royal Air Force air transport auxiliary and was active in the war as a light transport. It ferried pilots and air crews to different aerodromes and factories to pick up aircraft and pilots as a delivery service. At the end of the war in 1945 it was returned to the army air force and it was given to the war assets administration (the disposition service) in the UK to be sold as surplus.

After the war a dentist in the Netherlands bought the aircraft and flew it there, where it was for about 14 years until the fabric was aged out. He originally flew it by himself and then as part of a club from 1947 to 1965.



The aircraft was taken apart and part of a 6 aircraft purchase by a gentleman in New Hampshire. Bob and Jim think he was going to restore them and something happened to prevent it. 3 of the 6 are lost to history but this airplane and 2 others went to Madison, WI at JW Aviation (no relation to the current JW Aviation at Clow).

Chapter Leadership

President & Web Editor:

Chad E. Carlson

Vice President: Al Bally

Treasurer: Josh Krecek

Secretary: Alexander Falco

Sonnenberg :

Young Eagles Coordinator:

Al Bally

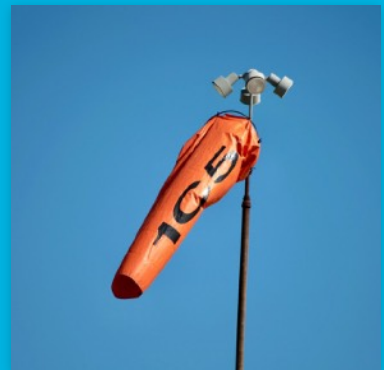
Membership Coordinator:

Angela Greer

Facilities Coordinator and

Newsletter Editor:

Robbie Culver



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Eventually, one was sold to someone in Des Moines, IA and two were sold to a guy in New Berlin, IL. He wanted one for himself and the one they restored was for spare parts. He found there was a market for it so he put it up for sale. A lot of stuff was missing.

Jim and Bob took a walk around the guys property to discuss what they saw and made an offer that day. The owner drove it up to DuPage airport and dropped it off at Illinois Aviation Academy, where it was stored for 6 months.

Illinois Aviation Academy had just opened, and the wings to the Fairchild were in a wing rack during an open house. During the event, Bob and Jim were answering questions and a guy said "I built these wings." Bob said "Really?!" The guy worked for Fairchild during the war - the factory was in Hagerstown, MD.



After they got the airplane up to Illinois Aviation Academy, they started going through it to see what they had. At the time, it was a weekends only affair, so it took a while to sort through the parts. Once they figured out what they did and did not have they pulled the airframe out to look it over and went over every weld and marked it with chalk. All of it was good. But every time they wanted to work on it they had to pull it out of a corner at Illinois Aviation Academy. Bob, Jim, and Illinois Aviation Academy all wanted it out of there.

Jim found Ed Meyer through the FAA. Ed was at Clow in Hangar 4, so they moved there in the fall of 2001. They started putting the Fairchild together in the hangar - it was an ice box in the winter. They built a plastic tent around it and put in a propane heater, so that when they fired it up, went to breakfast at Charlie's and came back it was 50 Deg F inside.

Flight Training Policy Fix: Try Again

The hopes for a 2021 congressional fix to the FAA's flight training policy that has caused confusion and consternation among pilots were scuttled last week, when a bipartisan amendment was cut from the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) sent to the president for his signature.

More information may be found at <https://www.eaa.org/eaanews->

The flight training provision, which was included in the House version of the bill and had been introduced in the Senate, would restore the flight training policy to the interpretation followed by the FAA for decades prior to this year.

The agency's change in July 2021 came from FAA legal staff following a court's non-precedent ruling in a case involving flight training in warbird aircraft. The FAA used that ruling to limit the ability of aircraft owners in the limited, experimental, and primary categories to receive flight training in their own aircraft.

The rebuilt the fuselage in that hangar, and started the wings. Bob says it took a year to do one wing as the work was still a weekend only adventure. Unfortunately, Chris passed away in June 2003 of cancer. He had been doing the finances and fundraising, all private funds and eBay sales. Once Chris was gone, the eBay and fundraising dried up and Bob dissolved the corporation but they kept the name.

It got to the point where they needed to do a test fit of the wings, so they moved into Packer Wings (the current EAA chapter hangar 3). They were there 12 years, and then when they needed to do more work they ran out of room. They were in the back of the hangar, where the RV-14 projects are now and built out the balcony that EAA 461 is now working on as a pilot lounge and flight simulator area.

About 2015 or so they moved into the current shop in Hangar 2. There was a storage company that had all kinds of stuff in the hangar area which was airplane related. They did the wing test fit in the workshop and it barely fit, but it fit! No tail feathers or engine were on the airframe at this stage. They sent the engine out to an "engine stripper" in Bensenville because the engine had sat so long and needed to be completely pulled apart and cleaned. The engine came back, Jim and Bob painted it and put it back together. (Jim is an A&P/IA)



Joe DePaulo asked if they wanted to rent the whole hangar, except the front office, and they said yes. The project was moved into the hangar bay, and they hung the engine, installed the tail and the landing gear, then put the wings on. The first engine start was late 2017 on the ramp at Clow, and she started right up.

The aircraft had clean paperwork - an obstacle in restoring any vintage aircraft to flying condition, especially one with such a

Winter Flight Fest

Winter Flight Fest will take place at the EAA Aviation Museum on Saturday, February 12, and feature both familiar and new cold-weather attractions for attendees.

From 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., kids and those young at heart can enjoy hands-on activities, interactive exhibits, flight simulators, and special events, including the Skiplane Fly-In.

Concessions are available from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. inside the museum, and the traditional free-chili lunch will be available at Pioneer Airport, across from the museum.

[Click here for details](#)

Activities include:

Airplane Model Building Contest

Skiplane Fly-In

A shuttle from the EAA Aviation Museum to Pioneer Airport is available for all guests and spectators.

Shuttle services will also be provided from Basler Flight Service to the EAA Aviation Museum for pilots flying into and landing at Wittman Regional Airport.

All events and activities inside the Museum require admission.

diverse history. But the biggest challenge was the brakes. The original aircraft design has expander tube brakes and they stopped making them in the 1950's. Bob and Jim searched for 6 years and found some parts but never could get them to work safely. This prevented them from going to OSH the first year after the aircraft flew, so they converted the brakes to Cleveland rotors and pucks.

Bob researched the entire history of the airplane, and found much of the information from the Royal Air Force museum. Bob and Jim went back and forth on how to paint it, but eventually settled on a scheme that is on the aircraft now. In 2018 and in 2019 they took the airplane to Oshkosh, and won best World War 2 transport and a Silver Wrench award as well as a judge's appreciation plaque. As Paul Harvey used to say, now you know the rest of the story!

Eat at Charlie's!

<http://ordercharliesrestaurant.com>

Charlie's is our on-site airport restaurant! It's a great place for breakfast or lunch, and offers food, friendship, and a great view of the ramp and runway!

Charlie's offers a wide array of fresh food – garbage skillet, biscuits and gravy, breakfast sandwich, cheese omelette. They use the freshest ingredients in preparing their food to provide the best quality and taste. Try their delicious food today!

Best of 2021 Photos!



AirVenture Dates

2022: July 25 - July 31

2023: July 24 - July 30

2024: July 22 - July 28

2025: July 21 - July 27

[Click here for details](#)

EAA Pilot Resources

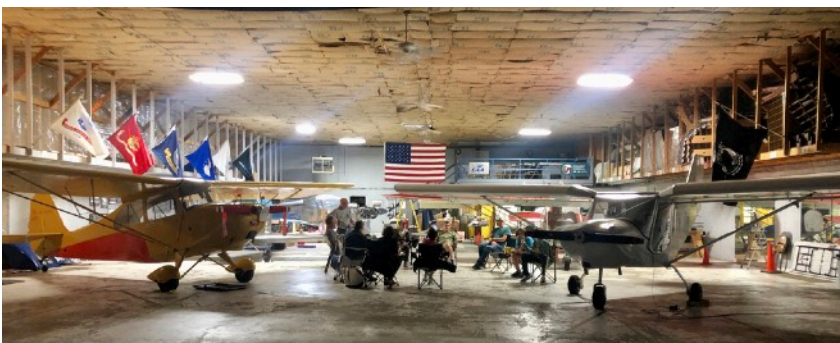
EAA's mission is to grow participation in aviation. While we certainly focus a lot on outreach programs like Young Eagles and Eagle Flights, as well as supporting affordable pathways to aviation like homebuilding and sport pilot programs, we also have a lot to offer existing pilots as well.

[Click here for details](#)

Learn to Fly

Whether you've wanted to become a pilot your entire life or have just recently found the urge, EAA can help you get started. We'll give you an overview of the opportunities available to you as a private, sport, or ultralight pilot, and then help you find the tools and the training you need to make your dream a reality.

[Click here for details](#)



Aviation Scholarships

EAA invites those who are interested in pursuing flight or a career in aviation or aviation related/STEM fields. We encourage individuals who are well-rounded, involved in their school or community, and interested in the world of aviation to apply for an EAA Scholarship.

[Click here for details](#)

CURRENT OPEN

CYCLE:

Nov. 15, 2021 – Jan. 31, 2022: Post Secondary Scholarships.

FUTURE CYCLES:

Jan. 10, 2022 – Apr. 1, 2022: Air Academy Camperships

Mar. 1, 2022 – June 1, 2022: Flight Training Scholarships* (for those starting flight training July 1 – Dec. 31)

Sept. 1, 2022 – Nov. 1, 2022: Flight Training Scholarships* (for those starting flight training Jan. 1 – June 30)

