Maeve McGuinness: Future Lear Jet Pilots of America

EAA Chapter 691 Newsletter
September 2025

On the Web @ eaachapter691.org

EAA 691 is:

President: Will Fox

Vice President: John George

Secretary: Pierre Levy

Treasurer: David Young

Web Editor: Marilyn Phillips

Newsletter Editor: April Fox

Young Eagle Coordinator: April Fox

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Meetings Schedule (unless otherwise noted)

9:30am - social time

10:00am - business meeting

10:30am - speaker/workshop/training

Check out our Chapter Website at https://www.eaachapter691.org for more information about upcoming activities.

This month's meeting on **Saturday, September 20th** will be hosted by Pierre Levy at his home as he updates us on his RV-14 build progress. We will meet at Pierre's house located at

at 10:00AM.

We plan to have a pot luck lunch after the meeting so bring a dish if you can, and please also consider that many of our members don't eat meat. Looking forward to seeing you there!

President's Report

by Will Fox

Check out our Chapter YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/@eaachapter691 for the latest videos. For a schedule of upcoming events, go to the Chapter website at https://www.eaachapter691.org/upcoming-events/

RV-14 Show And Tell

This coming Saturday September 20th, We will meet at Pierre Levy's house in Santa Fe to check out the progress on his RV-14. Pierre has been working steadily on the project and it is coming along very nicely. I think anyone interested in how airplanes are built or in building their own airplane some day will really enjoy it. We will meet at Pierre's house located at [redacted] at 10:00AM. We plan to have a pot luck lunch after the meeting so bring a dish if you can.

Our last meeting was a potpourri of flying opportunities for our members and friends who don't have access to an aircraft to fly. We had a mix of six different airplanes ranging from back country taildraggers to tricycle gear speedsters. Eight people signed up for the flights and we ended up flying 11 folks. After that we had a great presentation by John, Gary, and Steve about their adventures at Oshkosh this year. They obviously had fun and were excited to share their experiences. Some of our members are already planning to attend next year's event. We then gathered for a cookout in Roger's hangar that ended the day on a very enjoyable sunny afternoon.

Our Young Eagles are learning to fly RC model aircraft thanks to Jim Shinas and Phil Shembri from the Los Alamos RC Modelers Club. Walt Atchison who leads the Build and Fly program for our Young Eagles set up a couple of sessions to get the kids introduced to flying RC models. Their parents were there to cheer them on while Walt, Skip, and I stood around like proud uncles. The kids are doing great and are getting the hang of flying different model aircraft pretty quickly. It won't be long before they will be ready for a shot at the eKadet they built last summer.

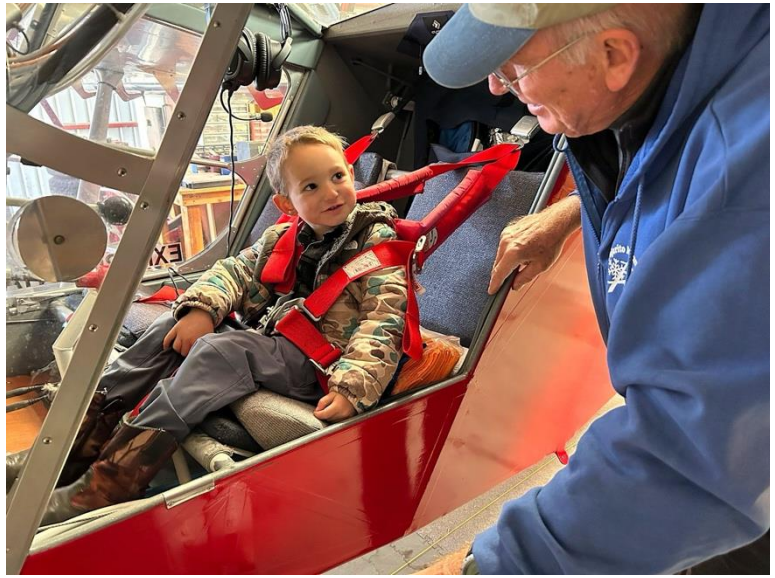
Pierre Levy is building an RV-14 in his garage and this month we get to check it out.

Young Eagles learning to fly RC models

Letter from the editor

by April Fox

Hello Readers! Our October Young Eagle Rally dated October 18th is fast approaching. I am looking for interested pilots and ground crew. Thanks for your consideration, and for volunteering your time- it's our members who make these Young Eagle rallies memorable for all involved!



Tech Corner

by Will Fox

Landings

After over 10,000 attempts, I still can't land an airplane! Well, I can land an airplane, I just can't make a good landing. You know, one where you grease it on and your passengers can't even tell they are on the ground. Or one where the runway centerline is actually under the center of the airplane and stays there during the rollout. And forget making one where the stall horn just barely chirps at the same time as the tires do. Nope can't do it. I can drop it in, I can skid it in and I can bounce it in. I can drive it on, stall it on, or slap it on. DO I really have over 10,000 landings? Sure do, because I get at least three on each approach.

Landing an aircraft can be challenging at times. (Courtesy of Kirk Wicker)

How do I know my landings are so bad? Well, I have credible witnesses to back up those statements. My landings are so bad that one day the airport manager asked me to quit practicing them during rush hour because the motorists were calling him up and reporting an aircraft had just crashed on the runway. I am not making this up. Another time the tower controller called me on the radio and asked me to never do another landing like that because I scared him. One time I was landing a Traumahawk and I hit the ground so hard that the tires left tire marks on the bottom of the wing and the flight instructor with me said "Why didn't you flare?". I did but in that case it wasn't all my fault, an engine failure and a dust devil on short final conspired against me. Have you ever seen a flat spot on a tire go thru all 6 plies? I have. Early in my flying career I considered landing on the runway centerline to be just a suggestion. I tended to use the the runway lights to define the bounds of my landing zone. On one occasion they also became the gates of a slalom course when I was caught flat footed in a strong crosswind.

But hey, this story is not really about my poor landings, its about landings that result in an accident, why they happen, and what pilots can to do to prevent them. Each year, a small percentage of General Aviation pilots make a landing that results in an accident, but these landing accidents represent a large percentage of the total accidents in a given year. The 2022 AOPA Richard G. McSpadden Report (previously known as the Nall Report) reported that of the 965 General Aviation (GA) accidents that occurred that year, 346 happened during the landing phase of flight. That is 36% of all the accidents for that year. That was the single biggest accident category and it has been for years. A landing accident can be caused by a number of factors. These include hard landings, long landings, fast landings, off-center touchdowns, crabbed touchdowns, nose-wheel-first landings, tail strikes, and gear-up landings. Another frequent cause of landing accidents are runway excursions , overruns, and attempted go-arounds. Fortunately, most of these accidents are not fatal and do not result in injuries with less than 5% involving a fatality. However the statistics are much worse for an attempted go around following a bad approach or botched landing. Here the fatality rate can jump to 15% as a result of a stall, spin, or impact with an obstacle.

So how do you avoid a landing accident? First, establish personal minimums for field length, crosswinds, go-around point, and a stable approach and stick to them. Second, fly a stabilized approach where the aircraft is under control, on the correct flight path, and configured early enough to ensure a safe landing or timely go-around if needed. If your flight path, airspeed, altitude, configuration, or power setting is rapidly changing under 1000' AGL, you are not on a stabilized approach. Third, practice taking off, landing, and rolling out on the centerline to build centerline discipline. When landing in a crosswind keep the upwind wing down throughout the landing and rollout. Practice crosswind control procedures during taxi to build in muscle memory. Add half the gust factor to your approach speed when landing. But don't over do it, normal approach speeds should be around 1.3 Vs plus the gust factor. Far too many pilots add 5 to 10 knots to the recommended approach speed and then land long and fast. If you are not going to touch down in the first half of the runway, you should plan to go around. But don't do it if there is any question of whether it will be successful or not. It is better to be on the ground and hit something going slow than to be in the air and hit something going fast.

This landing accident occurred in Los Alamos in 2006 due to inadequate visual lookout on the part of both pilots and the failure of one of the pilots to use the correct CTAF. Amazingly, no one was injured and both aircraft were repaired and are flying again.

Will Fox is a flight instructor and homebuilder. He also serves as a Technical Counselor and Flight Advisor for the EAA. In his spare time he enjoys working on and flying his two homebuilt aircraft, a Pegazair P-180 and a Questair Venture. He is also fascinated with solar power and electric vehicles, so his next airplane will be electric. Please feel free to contact him at tailspinfox@gmail.com if you have questions or comments.

Build and Fly Update

By Walt Atchison

The mist settled in the canyon as I blinked to clear the morning fog from my brain. It wasn't quite dawn and this would not be a "Dawn Patrol," although it was a beautiful morning for flying. The only detractors were the county sprinklers soaking the field as I arrived. Take offs were going to be troublesome.

We all gathered at ball field #4 on Sunday, September 7 at 0800 for the second training session for our small collection of Build and Fly young eagles: Owen Denning, Robby Ferenbaugh, and Brandon Keller. They were accompanied by our RC Flight instructors : Jim Shinas and Phil Shembri. EAA 691 members Skip Egdorf and I were there along with proud parents and family members of our young trainees. Our Young Eagles, with guidance from their mentors, began preparations by preflighting the radios and airplanes while smiling in anticipation of the morning flights.

Our mentors were able to manage the take offs despite the soggy conditions. All three of our aspiring pilots were able to have multiple sessions in which they practiced circling the field while the flight instructors accompanied them on a "buddy box" controller to rescue them if they lost control or tried to execute "advanced" maneuvers. All went well with the exception of one highly improbable mid-air collision later in the morning. Both planes surprisingly flew to a safe landing even though the right wing of one of the planes had lost about 2 inches of length off the tip. After a few minutes of discussion and no accident report, maneuvers happily continued unabated.

Young Eagles practice flying RC aircraft with mentors/instructors at the Ball fields in White Rock, NM.

From Across the Pond

This past weekend a full size Lancaster bomber sculpture has been erected into place near us in Newark. It is on a hill on the county border of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, next to the tiny village of Norton Disney... the ancestral home of Walt Disney's family.

The full-size aircraft is on a steel mount and weights 120 tons. It is a memorial to all the RAF Crews lost in WW2 but especially from Lincolnshire, known as bomber County- as there where scores of bases here.

The sculpture is a copy of a Lancaster that crashed nearby returning from a mission. It was started some years ago but covid slowed down its construction as did raising over £1 million pounds, the oxidized steel is meant to give the appearance of wartime camouflage.

BBC News - Lancaster bomber sculpture to be unveiled

https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c78n15x2jv4o

BBC News - Life-size Lancaster bomber sculpture unveiled

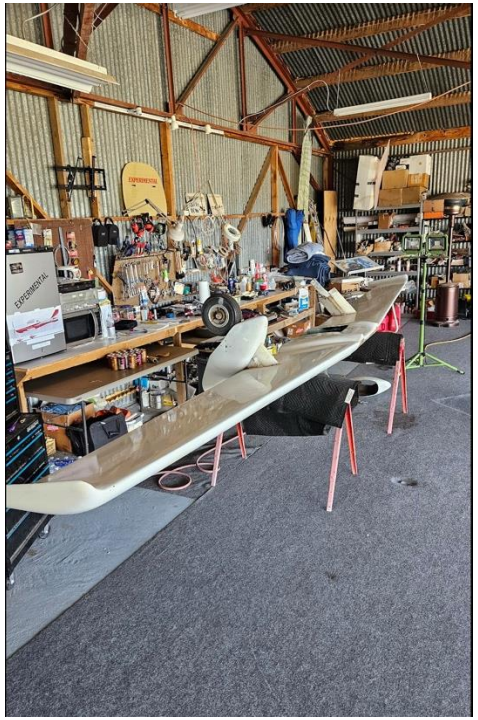
https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cre5zxv0p14o

A few days after it's completion, our only surviving Lancaster flew over it.

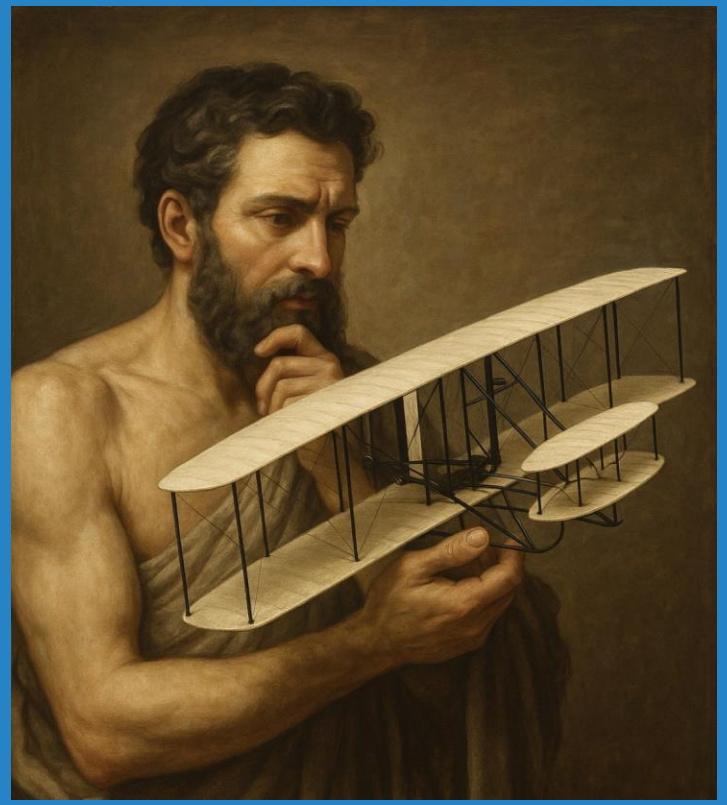
Dragonfly Progress

EAA 691

Skip really wanted to do a taxi test...With the completion of the characterization of full weight and balance and center of gravity calculations, the project is entering the building phase. The current initial step is to remove the canard and do the fiberglass repairs on its underside.On the weekend of Sept 6th, Owen Denning unbolted and removed the elevator controls and the canard attach bolts. Thanks Owen! Good work!With the canard free, the fuselage was lifted and the canard moved up to Roger Smith's hanger for the fiberglass work.Moving the canard, Skip really wanted to see how well his pickup truck might fly. OK, at least let me do a taxi test! Well, saner minds prevailed and the canard was safely placed in Roger's hanger.Initial assessment shows foam degradation on the center bottom of the structure, but the primary structural elements all seem untouched. The plan is to replace foam and re-glass the damaged part.Then a cleanup and glassing of the gear legs and wheel pants support structures should give nicely complete canard.We are making progress! Thanks to all who have helped and anyone interested is invited to join our weekend work sessions.



A bit of History by Xenophon



The BD-5J

Few aircraft have generated as much buzz—or as much disappointment—as the BD-5J. Dubbed the "world's smallest jet," it became a pop-culture icon in the 1983 James Bond film that featured it and in airshow routines that thrilled crowds for decades. But behind the glamour lies a story of bold engineering, over-ambitious promises, and an enduring legacy that continues to fascinate homebuilders and designers.

The BD-5 began as a kitplane dream in the early 1970s. Jim Bede, an engineer and entrepreneur with a flair for marketing, envisioned an affordable, high-performance sport plane that amateurs could assemble at home.

The BD-5 J was a real airshow attraction.

The original BD-5 was a pusher propeller design, offered with interchangeable wings—short for speed, long for range—and retractable gear for efficiency. Thousands of enthusiasts mailed in deposits, lured by promises of a 200-mph cruise on a snowmobile engine, at a price under $2,000. But Bede's ambitions ran faster than his suppliers. Engine suppliers fell through, delays piled up, and the kits that did make it to customers often proved difficult to finish. Amid the turmoil, Bede introduced a new variation: the BD-5J, replacing the troublesome piston engine with a compact turbojet. A French Microturbo TRS-18, producing around 225 pounds of thrust, was fitted into the tiny fuselage. The concept was intoxicating: a personal jet, no larger than a sports car, capable—at least on paper—of 300 mph.

In reality, the numbers were less dramatic. Flight tests showed that while the BD-5J could reach around 250 mph in level flight, its climb rate and endurance were modest. With only 40 gallons of fuel and a voracious engine, endurance was often less than an hour. The wing's high loading—thanks to a span under 20 feet on some versions—demanded careful handling, especially in the traffic pattern. Still, in the right hands, it was nimble and visually stunning.

Pilots like Bob Bishop and later airshow teams such as Coors Light and Bud Light exploited those qualities to the fullest turning the BD-5J into a crowd-pleasing micro-fighter.

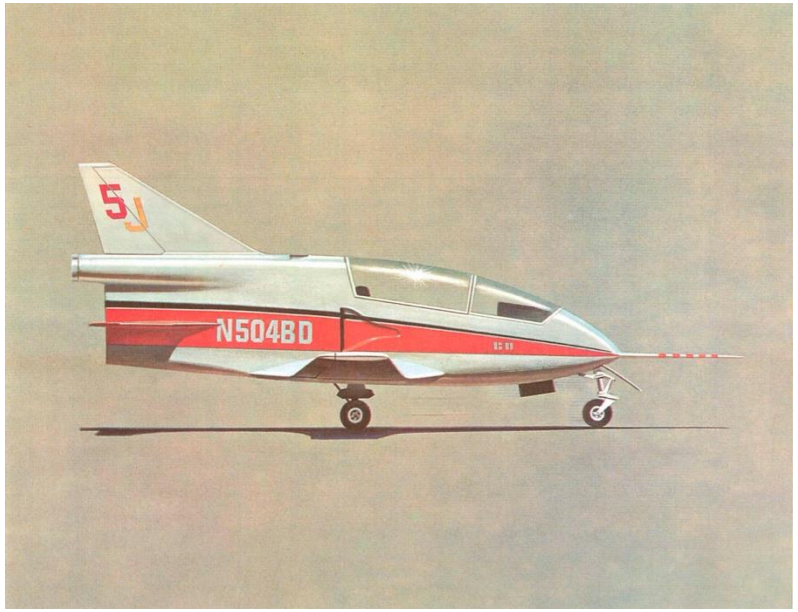
One little-known chapter in the story involves a then-young engineer named Burt Rutan. Before founding Scaled Composites and designing record-setting aircraft like Voyager and SpaceShipOne, Rutan briefly worked for Bede Aircraft. There he gained firsthand experience with Bede's unconventional design approach and the challenges of delivering on bold promises. Many aviation historians see Rutan's later emphasis on prototype testing and incremental refinement as a direct response to the chaotic BD-5 program.

Yet the BD-5's safety record proved sobering. With more than 80 reported accidents and over 20 fatalities across the BD-5 fleet, the design earned a reputation for being unforgiving. High wing loading, engine issues, and demanding handling characteristics meant that only skilled pilots could safely exploit its performance.

Ultimately, the BD-5 and BD-5J never achieved certification or mass production. Bede Aircraft collapsed under lawsuits and financial strain, leaving thousands of uncompleted kits. Yet the jet's mystique only grew. The sight of a pilot strapping into what looked like a man-sized missile, then streaking across an airshow at speeds rivaling WWII fighters, cemented its legend.

Today, only a handful of BD-5Js remain flying, largely as specialty showpieces. They are difficult to maintain, parts are scarce, and they demand pilot skill well beyond their tiny size. But the legacy of the BD-5J is undeniable. It demonstrated both the allure and the perils of visionary aircraft design: a machine that promised to democratize jet flight, fell short in execution, yet left an indelible mark on aviation history.

If you are interested in more on the BD-5J Check out the "BD5J Book" created by the BEDE Corporation. It is a nostalgic return to the promotional literature created in the 1970s.



An illustration from the "*BD5J Book*" promotional literature.

Hey Kids! Keep an eye out for upcoming work sessions to Electrify the Dragonfly!

EAA Chapter 691 Membership Application/Renewal Form

Please consider making a donation to our 501c(3) non-profit by mailing this form along with $35 to our Chapter Treasurer, Checks can be made out to EAA Chapter 691:

David Young
819 Gonzales Rd
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Name: _____
Spouse/partner's Name: _____
EAA #: _____ Expiration Date (MM/YY) _____ / _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
E-mail: _____
Home phone: _____
Work phone: _____
Cell phone: _____
Please list your currently flying A/C and any finished or in-progress projects: