



THE



SPORT FLYER

February 2003

**DATE AND TIME for February Chapter Meeting
>>> West Houston Airport, Feb. 20th, 7:30pm <<<**

Want Back-Issues? See Chapter 774's Website at: www.eaa774.org

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NOTICE: Our December meeting will be on Thursday, February 20th at West Houston Airport.

Our speaker will be Gary Hunter with great words of wisdom about the Do's and Don'ts of epoxy resins. Be there !

February 1st, 2003 - Remembering, Honoring and Celebrating the Bravery of our Columbia Astronauts

Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth,
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds -- and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of --
Wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence, Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air,
Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace,
Where never lark, or even eagle, flew;
And while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

-John Gillespie Magee



EAA SportAir Workshop In Dallas, Texas



Saturday and Sunday, March 8 & 9

On **Saturday and Sunday, March 8 & 9**, EAA will be holding an EAA SportAir Aircraft Builders Workshop in Dallas, Texas. These workshops teach people how to build their own aircraft

These two day courses will introduce participants to the joys of building your own aircraft while providing the knowledge and experience necessary to do it safely. EAA will be offering the following hands-on courses:

Sheet Metal

This 2 day course prepares you to build any sheet metal kit aircraft and teaches the procedures for sheet metal repairs. There is a discussion of all the basics including types of aluminum, rivets, tools, cutting, drilling, deburring, countersinking, and riveting. Tuition for EAA members is \$289.

Fabric Covering

This 2 day course prepares you to cover any type of aircraft, whether certified or experimental. Using the Poly- Fiber Covering System, the class will cover DC-3 ailerons. All steps are demonstrated and practiced, including preparation, gluing the fabric, shrinking, rib stitching, taping and spraying. Repair procedures will also be discussed and practiced. Tuition for EAA members is \$259.

Composite Construction

This 2 day course provides you with everything you need to know to begin building a composite aircraft. The course will provide a complete discussion of core materials, reinforcement materials, and different types of resin systems. The hands-on portion includes such skills as bonding, hot-wire cutting, and lay-ups. Tuition for EAA members is \$259.

Electrical Systems, Wiring, and Avionics

This 2 day course prepares you to wire your aircraft and allows you to practice the skills you will need to install your electrical system through the use of several hands-on wiring projects. Definitions of electrical terms are discussed along with information on selecting the proper wire size, how to route wire and installing avionics and antennae. Tuition for EAA members is \$279.

Gas Welding

This 2 day course will give you practical welding theory along with hours of actual experience using oxyacetylene welding techniques. Our goal is to show you the basics, give you a solid understanding of what welding is all about, and to help you discover that you really can build or repair your own airplane. Tuition for EAA members is \$289.

What's Involved in Kit Building

This Saturday evening seminar is a fact-filled discussion of regulations and paperwork, the workspace required, the time commitment needed, the financial investment and insurance considerations. May be taken in with other workshops. Tuition for EAA members is \$25 and includes a pizza dinner.

The courses are instructed by experts that not only know the subject matter but know how to teach! To enroll or learn more about the EAA SportAir Workshops, visit our website www.sportair.com or call 1-800-967-5746. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for supporting this important EAA educational program.
Charlie Becker EAA SportAir Workshops www.sportair.com

ATTENTION FOLKS !

Ron Hudson will cover this at the meeting, but we wanted everyone to have a heads up regarding Chapter 774 sponsoring a youngster again at the EAA Air Academy, since the deadline for reservations is March 1st !!!

Chapters have been at the heart of the Air Academy success since it started in 1984. Chapters have directed or sponsored many of the finest instructors and youth who have come to share the skills and lore of aviation at the Air Academy. Timelines and the capacity of programs have sometimes resulted in these special kids from Chapters not coming to the Academy. To assure every Chapter affiliated or sponsored Academy Candidate has the opportunity to attend the following procedure has been adopted for 2003.

EAA CHAPTERS MAY RESERVE A POSITION IN A SPECIFIC SESSION OF THE 2002 EAA AIR ACADEMY SCHEDULE BY COMPLETING THIS FORM AND RETURNING IT WITH A \$100 DEPOSIT. PLEASE SUBMIT A SEPARATE FORM AND DEPOSIT FOR EACH RESERVATION. You will receive a validated copy of this form when it is received at Oshkosh. That validated form must be submitted with the participant's application. The \$100 deposit is then applied to their registration fee.

This reservation is in effect until 60 days before the opening day of the camp when the complete application, required written recommendations and written letter of application must have been received at the Air Academy -Oshkosh. If no application is received for the reservation you may request a refund by letter or offer it as a donation to the Air Academy.

ALL CHAPTER/SQUADRON/AVIATION ORGANIZATION RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 1ST, 2003.



EAA SOUTHWEST REGIONAL FLY-IN UPDATE

Plans are coming together on the fly-in in New Braunfels this May 16 & 17. Many vendors and forums are signing up. We will offer chapter tables again at the banquet and will also offer chapter tents for a cost of rental ---details will follow.

We still need a chairperson for the printed program--- need desktop publisher and some time to devote to the effort---please volunteer.

We are trying to locate all the former presidents of the event and have not found:

Don Watson-1969

David Beckett-1979

Bill Thomas-1986

Can you help? Please contact Stan Shannon at 830-997-8802 with any information you have.

Stan Shannon, President , SW Regional EAA Fly-In www.swrfi.org 830-997-8802

Punching Out At 15,000 Feet

Courtesy Los Angeles Times, December 16, 2002

By Kevin Sack, Times Staff Writer

Odd as it may seem, the first thought that crossed Lt. Col. John W. Capito's mind as he felt the initial lash of freezing rain at 15,000 feet was of the 8-year-old boy at the airfield. "Have you ever had to eject?" the youngster had asked as Capito prepared to jet off in his AV-8B Harrier. "No, kid," the 39-year-old Marine told him. "That never really happens." Capito knew better. Harrier pilots must always be prepared for an unscheduled ride up the rails. Considering the plane's safety record, some say they feel "spring-loaded to eject." It is rarely a simple call, or one afforded much time for calculation. Reach down and pull the black-and-yellow rubberized handle at the right moment and you float to earth with the anticipation of free drinks at the officer's club. Pull it a second late and your



family faces a closed-casket funeral. Punch out before it is clear that the plane is doomed and you can expect a lifetime of second-guessing. On March 31, 1985, Capito ejected into a battering storm over Long Island Sound. His harrowing descent to the 38-degree water below lasted nearly 20 minutes. While buffeted by gusting wind and pea-sized hail, he had plenty of time to contemplate the causes and consider the consequences. His odyssey began at the Naval Air Station at South Weymouth, Mass., where the boy had posed his question. Capito was a Kentuckian, the son of a Marine, and an experienced aviator. Before joining a Harrier squadron in 1973,

he had notched 130 missions in Vietnam in the F-4 Phantom. Now he was second in command of the Harrier training squadron at the Marine air base in Cherry Point, N.C. He had been tapped to become the squadron's commander in three months. From the first time he saw it, Capito loved the pure power of the plane. "You see a Harrier hover and then a few seconds later accelerate at 400 knots and it's just impressive," he recalled. "It was loud and smoky and fast, all the things you wanted in an airplane." Like most Harrier pilots, Capito had survived several close calls. Early in his career, he forgot to adjust the plane's thrust nozzles when accelerating out of a hover and sank to 20 feet above ground before recovering. In 1976, he flew his way out of an engine vibration and landed safely. Two years later, he descended vertically with inoperable landing gear. On that dreary March day in 1985, Capito was flying an AV-8B, the new and improved version of the Harrier. Dozens of pilots had been forced to eject from the earlier model, the AV-8A, but Capito would become the first of 70 to bail out of the AV-8B. During preflight checks, Capito noticed that a small door on one of the intakes was sticking rather than flapping open as designed. He knocked it loose shortly before takeoff, satisfying himself it would not pose a problem. The takeoff and climb were uneventful. But as Capito cruised up to about 26,000 feet, he felt a thump and then the telltale trembling that almost always announces an engine failure. "It was," he said, "like being on a vibrating bed in a cheap motel." A compressor blade had cracked, probably from simple fatigue, an alarmingly common occurrence with the Harrier. It had happened to Capito three times before, and he had always managed to bring his plane home. But this time the vibration was much worse. The blade fragments had punctured a fuel cell and sliced through an electrical cable. "Flameout!" Capito radioed to his wingman as he attempted to restart the engine. It would be his last transmission. His power had vanished. Capito knew what he was going to have to do, and was not particularly thrilled about it. He could see no more than 50 feet, and he knew it would be cold and wet outside the cockpit. He wasn't sure where he was. Near Hartford, Conn., maybe, he thought. Capito wanted to stay with the plane for a while, down to 5,000 feet if possible, so he could get under the weather. He fantasized that his Harrier might fix itself. But at about 15,000 feet, smoke started seeping into the cockpit. His decision was made for him. "If I wait too long," he thought, "I'll burn up the parachute." He had checked his harness, his helmet, his oxygen mask, his visor. He had tightened the seat restraints. He pulled the nose up to trim his airspeed to about 230 mph. It was time. He sat back, head flush against the headrest, feet on the rudder pedals, the position recommended to protect the spine. He yanked the handle. He kept his eyes wide open. This he did not want to miss. With a booming detonation, the canopy blew away and he felt the rockets fire beneath his seat. As the seat propelled him out of the

aircraft, the concussive deceleration of his forward airspeed blew his helmet and oxygen mask right off his head. "It was like somebody just took a huge inflated baseball bat and hit me as hard as they could," he said. Still strapped in his seat, Capito tumbled backward in two somersaults. After a freefall of perhaps five seconds, he felt the reassuring tug of his parachute risers, saw the chute deploying and felt the seat separating from his body. He was OK. He checked his watch, and then started obsessing about the intake door. Had that caused the flameout? He worried that the Marines would snatch away his command if his careless mistake had destroyed a plane. But the sting of icy hail brought him back to the present. "Hold on," he told himself. "You're not out of this yet." He covered his bare head with his hands to fend off the hail. Lightning pierced the distance. Updrafts and downdrafts fought for his parachute. He thought he should have been falling about 1,000 feet a minute, but he could tell he wasn't. He was mostly moving sideways. Capito focused on his training, mentally reviewing the procedures for releasing his inflatable raft just before splashdown. "I can do this!" he yelled into the wind. He wondered how far he was from shore. If he cut the right parachute lines, he could steer toward land, but he couldn't remember which lines. Finally, he broke out of the clouds to discover a view that was both breathtaking and eerie. He could see for miles around, and he was alone. No choppers. No Coast Guard cutters. Nothing. As he approached the water, he pulled the handle that released and inflated the raft and watched it plunk into the sound. He followed right behind, unsnapping the parachute straps from his shoulders as his feet touched the water. He plunged into the frigid sea and then pulled the raft toward him with its lanyard. Weighted down by survival gear, Capito threw himself into the raft, got tossed out by a swell, and heaved himself in once more. The air temperature was 40 degrees, and the drenched pilot could not stop shivering. He was no more than two or three miles from shore, not far from Montauk Point at the eastern tip of Long Island. But when he fired up flares, they barely seemed visible. And when he dropped a dye marker, it sank like a rock. "I began to think I was going to be there for a while," he said. Fortunately for Capito, a Long Island pilot named John Duell and his son, Todd, 17, heard that a plane had crashed into the sound and took off in their single-engine Cessna. Todd spotted smoke from Capito's flares and they summoned help. Fifteen minutes later, a Coast Guard cutter arrived and pulled Capito aboard. Hypothermia had set in. Another hour and he might have been in trouble. The doctors at Eastern Long Island Hospital in Greenport warmed Capito with blankets and fitted him with a neck brace as a precaution. The Duells arrived with dry clothes and a premixed martini in a glass covered with plastic wrap. Because it was a Sunday afternoon and there were no motels nearby, the Duells invited the bedraggled pilot to stay with them. After making sure Capito was comfortable, the Duells decided the day's adventure should not get in the way of their traditional Sunday night outing to Skipper's, a local seafood restaurant. "John," Duell informed his houseguest, "we're going out to have our Sunday night lobster. You can stay here and make calls and rest." Capito ripped off his neck brace. "Steamed or broiled?" he asked. The next morning, the Marines arrived to take Capito to his base. A week later, he was back in a Harrier cockpit. After salvaging parts of the engine, Marine investigators concluded that the intake door had played no role in cracking the compressor blades. Capito got his command. Now a developer in this Kansas City, Mo., suburb, Capito keeps one of his plane's broken compressor blades mounted on a plaque like an aviator's Oscar. Though he acknowledges the Harrier's problems, he remains committed to the plane and to the community of pilots and mechanics who have made it their lives. He will be 60 in three years. And on that birthday, John Capito wants to go skydiving, this time on his own terms. In the dim light of memory, his first ride down seems thrilling, even life-affirming. Once he broke through the clouds, the serenity was overwhelming. "I would like to visit the quiet again," he said.



ANNOUNCING THE JOHN DEERE PARTNER PROGRAM

EAA Members-Only Program Now Available



JOHN DEERE

EAA members in the United States can receive substantial discounts worth up to thousands of dollars by taking advantage of the new John Deere Partner Program. This program, the first of its kind for longtime EAA sponsor John Deere, is available exclusively to EAA members. Discounts are provided toward the purchase of a variety of John Deere equipment, including lawn and garden tractors, riding mowers, walk-behind mowers, Gator utility vehicles, commercial mowing equipment, and compact utility tractors that are purchased through the program.

"We're very excited about this program because it provides a real benefit to our members," said EAA President Tom Poberezny. "Only EAA members can participate, meaning we can pass on a significant benefit to our members at the local level."

Here's how the program works:

To take advantage of the program, an eligible EAA member will need to access a special John Deere Partner Program website through the EAA [Members Only website](#) to obtain a personal identification number (PIN). Once the PIN is assigned, print out an authorization document, which includes the PIN. Then take the printout to an authorized dealer and present your current EAA Membership card to get the discounted price. (Discounts may vary depending upon the product and the season.)

EAA members in the U.S. are allowed additional discounts even on items in special pricing or financing programs.

There is no waiting period for new members, but all participants in the program must present an EAA membership card to the John Deere Dealer at the time of purchase. That means you or a friend can take advantage of this great EAA member benefit by [joining EAA now!](#)

Canada and other foreign countries may not participate in the program at this time.

John Deere is a Platinum sponsor of EAA AirVenture, supplying 120 Gator utility vehicles to the annual event, as well as compact utility tractors that pull people-moving trams and tow small aircraft. John Deere, in its 14th year as an EAA sponsor, also provides grounds maintenance equipment used throughout the year.

"This program is the first of its kind for John Deere," said John Deere Factory Marketing Manager Greg Weekes. "It acknowledges our successful Partner with EAA and our commitment to the future."

Airlines Offer Air Fare Discounts To EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2003 Visitors

Four airlines have announced special air fare discounts for EAA members and others who plan to attend EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2003, scheduled for July 29-August 4 at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh. Participating airlines include American, Delta, Midwest Express, and Northwest. United Airlines will not offer AirVenture discounts in 2003.

EAA AirVenture discounts are available from the following airlines (be sure to refer to the proper file number when requesting the discounts):

- American (800-433-1790). 5% off published fares; 30 days in advance is 10% off during travel 7/19-8/11. Arrival cities Green Bay, Milwaukee and Chicago. File A2273AK.
- Delta (800-241-6760). 5% off published fares; 60 days in advance is 10% off during travel 7/16-8/14. Arrival cities Appleton, Milwaukee, Chicago (ORD and MDW) and South Bend, Ind. File 194712A.
- Midwest Express (800-452-2022). 8% off published fares; 60 days in advance is 12% off during travel 7/19-8/11. Arrival cities Appleton and Milwaukee. File CMZ1263.
- Northwest (800-328-1111). 5% off published fares; 30 days in advance is 10% off during travel 7/16-8/14. Arrival cities Appleton, Green Bay and Milwaukee. File NYR57.

The discounted fares are available courtesy of the participating airlines and are subject to individual airline restrictions. Other discount airfares may also be available. Contact the individual airline or your travel agent for the best savings.

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Order Online at shop.eaa.org