



# THE *SPORT FLYER*



November 2003

**!!! NOTICE !!!**  
**November Meeting will be November 20th**  
**At West Houston Airport**

**Want Back-Issues?** See Chapter 774's Website at: [www.eaa774.org](http://www.eaa774.org)

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## Pat's Patter

Our meeting for Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup> will be at West Houston Airport. Honeywell will be presenting a program on their GPS at 7:00pm with door prizes, and our meeting will start at 8:00pm with Gary Hunter and Bruce Bohannon as the speakers. Gary and Bruce are always very entertaining and have such experiences to share with us. I don't think you want to miss this one.

Seasons Greetings from Sammy and I. Another year has flown by and we have had wonderful things to remember and very sad times with the passing of our friends and members. We all look forward to great flying and sharing friendship and experiences with one another.

Our Young Eagles event was called off on November 8<sup>th</sup> due to weather and hopefully by the time you read this we will have flown the almost 100 youngsters who showed up again on November 15<sup>th</sup>. They were very patient during the time we waited to make the decision to call it off. In case we are not able to do the make up day on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Woody has agreed to let us try again on Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. I know this is asking you to set your Saturday calendars ahead to assist in finishing this program, but if possible please plan to come out and fly our youngsters or volunteers. There are 100 kids still wanting to get these flights and most have never flown. Please let me know if you will be there. (281)492-8450.

Thanks and see you at the meeting at West Houston Airport. Pat.



## From the Editor's Desk...

This year's trek to Reklaw (the Flying M Ranch) was a mixed bag of good weather and bad. Having been rained out last year, there appeared to be a large pent-up demand for the event shown by the large number of people who flew in on Friday. (Heck, some even flew in as early as Wednesday and Thursday!)

The record number of people arriving on Friday became apparent when Dave announced that we were going to be short on burgers, and that we would also have the choice of BBQ that evening since he couldn't get any more burgers that late! The weather was great and we saw a lot of great planes. We spent the vast majority of Friday at our flightline / campsite area watching all the great birds take off and land, saving Saturday for the traditional walk around. However, after breakfast Saturday morning a quick call to Flight Service determined that we had about one hour to break camp and get our tails in the air and headed back to Houston. On the way back, I was able to use my handy dandy Palm Pilot to get in-flight weather radar and we zipped through a narrow alley of thunderstorms coming back to Houston. Literally an hour later would have been too late as the rest of the day and the following day were totally socked in with bad weather. I later talked to a few folks who had not made it out and wound up camping at Reklaw in the cold and rain for the next couple of days. The tents and sleeping bags are nice and dry and packed away waiting for SWRFI next May.



**Beautiful Beech 18 makes a low pass**

Til next time, Gary

## ***Notable Signs:***

**Sign in the FBO's men's room:** "Pilots with a short pitot tube and low manifold pressure are advised to taxi up close..."

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# ONE MILLION YOUNG EAGLES FLOWN!

## **Illinois Teen Andrew Grant Named the Millionth EAA Young Eagle**

November 13, 2003 - Pilot Rick Ellis, EAA 469164, Freeport, Illinois, was quoted in a recent local feature story about the EAA Young Eagles program: "Who knows? The millionth Young Eagle could be someone who flew out of this airport."

That became a prophetic statement this week when 15-year-old Andrew Grant from nearby German Valley became the 1 millionth Young Eagle entered into EAA's official register, the World's Largest Logbook, to achieve the program's lofty goal announced in 1992. Rick, president of EAA Chapter 475 and Young Eagle coordinator for both chapters 475 and 22, flew Andrew on October 25 at Freeport Albertus Airport (FEP). Andrew, son of Becky and Tom Grant, is a sophomore at nearby Forreston High School.

Both Rick and Andrew will be EAA's special guests at the Centennial of Flight celebration next month in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Following the EAA Wright Flyer's re-enactment of the first flights at precisely 10:35 a.m. on December 17, Andrew will accompany EAA Young Eagles Chairman Gen. Chuck Yeager on a ceremonial flight to commemorate the million Young Eagles flown and to honor the more than 35,000 pilots and 50,000 ground volunteers who made it happen.

When EAA Young Eagles Director Steve Buss called Rick with the big news, he was surprised and thrilled...but not totally shocked. "I knew from reading the EAA website that we were getting pretty close, but when I went to the airport that day and saw a beautiful, large hawk perched on top of a sign that reads 'Learn to Fly Here,' I just had a real good feeling."

They went up in the Piper Cherokee Warrior he co-owns around noon that sunny, clear day. Rick, a former engineer with Honeywell who's now self-employed, has flown over 860 kids since the end of 1995, the year he received his private pilot certificate. He's averaged more than 100 Young Eagles a year since, and this year was close to 150 kids.

Andrew was supposed to make the flight several weeks earlier but postponed it due to a scheduling conflict. "We go to the same church as Rick and he was offering airplane rides to the kids there," Andrew explained. "I told my Mom I wanted to go, but she thought I was too old for the program, so she signed up my little brother Cody (9)." When Cody ultimately declined, they found out Andrew was in fact eligible and he jumped at the chance.

After the flight, Andrew recalls hearing Rick say something about the millionth Young Eagle, but never thought much about it. Rick, as he always does with his kids, also made special mention of Gen. Yeager's signature on the Young Eagles certificate.

When his grandparents filled him in on just who Chuck Yeager is, Andrew began to appreciate how significant it all was. "It's amazing! It's really a big deal and I am getting kind of nervous about it," he said.

"I am just floating," Becky said. "We're all extremely excited and proud this is happening. It's a once-in-a-lifetime thing, one in a million." Andrew, his parents, and brother will arrive in Kitty Hawk on December 15. He will attend a special media conference on December 16, and then prepare for the big day and flight with Gen. Yeager on December 17.

Rick said his first meaningful experience with aviation happened during an EAA convention in Rockford he attended with his father in the late 1960s. He received a flight from none other than Carl Unger in his Breezy. Rick compared the experience to a Young Eagles ride, as he was not too much older than Andrew at the time. That very airplane resides in the EAA AirVenture Museum today.

Rick pondered about the centennial of flight and the upcoming celebration. "I've thought about this a little bit, about what things have happened in history that have been most significant," he said. "Aviation literally rises above all others, because it opened up transportation and brought the world closer together. I tell all the kids I fly that they get a totally different perspective on creation, that they can see the world in which we live at a totally different vantage point. I'm sure the Wright brothers had much greater vision than what we give them credit for, but even they couldn't realize how much impact their achievement would have.

"To celebrate the 100th anniversary and to do it where the Wrights had the first successful flights is going to be awesome."

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## AVID CLOSES DOORS, LOOKS TO RELOCATE OPERATION

November 6, 2003 - Avid Aircraft of Montana has shut down operations at its factory in Ennis, Montana, according to a recorded message on its company line. Callers hear the following message: "You have reached Avid Aircraft of Montana. We are looking to relocate the company at a more populated area of the country, possibly the Midwest. Therefore, the factory is shut down. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and we will announce when we resume production. Thank you."

EAA's attempts to contact owners Jim and Kim Tomash have been unsuccessful. The couple purchased the company, including manufacturing rights and tooling, from majority owner and president Charlie DeRago in the spring of 1999 and moved the entire operation from Idaho to Ennis. Jim Tomash had been a minority owner of the company since 1989. Aircraft designer Dean Wilson founded the company in 1983 with the introduction of the Avid Flyer. In May 1987, a Flyer was the first experimental homebuilt to fly to the North Pole. The latest product line includes the Magnum, Mark IV, Bandit, Champion, and Catalina.

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### **Wright Brothers' Flying Machine (Repeat from Nov 11th) Tuesday, December 16 at 7 p.m. on PBS (NOVA)**

Relive the engineering challenges that two obscure bicycle makers overcame to become first in flight.

December 17, 2003, marks the centennial of the world's first powered flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. To celebrate this milestone, NOVA presents the definitive documentary on the invention of the airplane. While many shows have retold the Wright brothers' personal story, no program has properly explored the astonishing inventiveness that they applied to the problem of powered flight. NOVA reveals that the popular image of the Wrights as amateur bicycle mechanics who tinkered their way into the sky is a total myth. The program features exhilarating footage of flights by exclusively commissioned replicas that use the same original materials and the only existing Wright engine for the frail craft that first propelled humans toward the clouds. The triumph of powered flight comes alive once more in NOVA's epic documentary.

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## Sport Pilot Rule Remains at DOT

October 29, 2003 -- The proposed sport pilot/light-sport aircraft (SP/LSA) rulemaking package still remains at the Department of Transportation (DOT). EAA understands that the rule has been reviewed by all offices within the DOT and is currently in the Secretary of Transportation's office awaiting final approval.

Once approved, the rulemaking package will be sent to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for final review by that government agency. By government rulemaking procedure, each agency has 90 days within which to complete a review of a rulemaking package. DOT's 90 days is set to expire at the end of October.

EAA has been working with congressional and light-sport aircraft industry representatives to facilitate a quick review by OMB.