

December 01, 2025

WNY AeroMail #107

IMPORTANT

Swiss Army Knife Airplane

There have been quite a few aircraft that filled in roles for which they were not originally designed. The Boeing C/KC 135 and Lockheed C-130 series immediately come to mind. Our subject aircraft may be brought up late in a conversation though. It has some 30 + designations ranging from the civilian CV-340 to the CV-C-131, T-29 and R4Y-1. Most folks just call it "The Convair".



Mohawk Convair

It began as an effort to improve on the Douglas DC-3/ C-47 aircraft. American Airlines led the way in specifications that ultimately led to the CV-240. Larger engines, tricycle landing gear and pressurization were welcome features. This aircraft was the basis to fill some needed roles for the military. We'll use a few adaptations to illustrate just how great the design concept was. While American Airlines was instrumental in the development, it didn't take long for others to recognize this as a winner. So the List of who didn't operate it may be shorter than those who did.



American Airlines

The CV-x40 family were primarily short to medium range "feeder" aircraft for longer range aircraft such as DC-6 & 7, Constellations and later jets. As newer turbine powered competitors such as the Vickers Viscount and Fairchild F-27 emerged, airlines were forced to make a decision. Buy new aircraft or upgrade their Convairs to turbine power? The most popular conversion featured Allison turbo-props and gave the airframe a new lease on life longevity. It was referred to as the CV-580.



Conqair CV-580

My thought is that key to the success of the design was PRESSURIZATION. This enabled comfortable flight over the weather rather than through it. This is the important factor to buy a new design rather than pick from hundreds of C-47's and C-54's that were available. Every airline aircraft since has had this important feature.



American Airlines

The T-29 was the navigator trainer version of the design. Other aircraft were utilized for missile tracking and a gunship role. The C-131 Samaritan did a great job in the Medevac role. The interior was configured with provisions for immobile patients such as litters and wheelchair access. The aircraft often had priority handling at many military bases. A landing often found fire trucks and ambulances on the taxiway.



T-29 "Flying Classroom"

A fire suppression HH-43 "Pedro" helicopter often was also on the scene. The concern was getting immobile patients out of harm's way as soon as possible.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4OColeAUmo>

Several aircraft filled the "Air Force One" role at times. When Lyndon Baines Johnson was the President, he used one to commute to "the Ranch". Lucy, Lynda, and George Hamilton IV were among the notables of that era that made the trip. We knew someone really important was arriving as all available hands were recruited for polishing duty.



LBJ's Ranch Commuter - sadly, no longer polished now!

By far the most unusual is a Buffalo product. The NC-131H or "TIFS" which was the "Total In-Flight Simulator". The aircraft was modified to the unique cockpit configuration circa 1969 by the Calspan Corporation and was also upgraded to twin 4,368 hp. Allison turboprop engines. The capabilities were utilized in the development of the Space Shuttle, B-1, B-2, Stealth Fighter, C-17 and other modern aircraft. Many local people were involved with the re-design, modification and operation of this aircraft. It now resides in the National Museum of the United States Air Force.



Calspan's NC-131H

It all started with a great design!

Ron



EVENT CALENDAR

December 2025

3rd. - **EAA Chapter 44** continues the **Baby Ace Restoration** sessions on every Wednesday at 6PM. You are welcome to observe and pitch in!

7th. - **A Pearl Harbor Remembrance** at the **Niagara Aerospace Museum** starting at 11:30 AM – see below for details for prepaid attendees.

7th. - **EAA Chapter 46 Holiday Party & Football Tailgate** (Bills vs. Bengals on the Big Screen) from 12 noon to the end of game. Bring a pot luck dish to pass, family and flying friends are welcome!

9th. - **AIAA Zoom meeting** 8:00PM featuring William Sutor, pioneering Bell Rocket Belt test pilot, see attachment below for details.

9th. - **Airframe & Powerplant Course #10** - Classes are held every Tuesday @ 6:30 PM in the Terminal building at the Buffalo-Lancaster Airport (BQR), 4343 Walden Ave in the Town of Lancaster, NY

11th. - **Aero Club of Buffalo** meets at Risottos Italian Eatery and Sweetery, 930 Maple Road, Amherst NY 14221 for dinner and presentation. See attachment below for details, bar opens at 6 PM.

18th. - **EAA Chapter 674** meets on the third Thursday of every month at 7 PM. Join us in the clubhouse of Gaines Valley Airport, 2501 Gaines Waterport Road, Albion, NY. See below for details. Jean Depatie, jdepatie@rochester.rr.com

16th. - **Airframe & Powerplant Course #11** - Classes are held every Tuesday @ 6:30 PM in the Terminal building at the Buffalo-Lancaster Airport (BQR), 4343 Walden Ave in the Town of Lancaster, NY

The December 2025 Issue of the **Akron Flyer** by **Allen Kidder** is now available and includes many interesting people and airplanes that landed this month at Akron Jesson Field along with an interesting article of historic Buffalo aviation photographs published by the Buffalo News. Mike Westphal's photos this month are of the amazing Beluga Airbus cargo aircraft visiting Buffalo.

The December 2025 issue of **Vectors for Safety** by **Gene Benson** is now available with Old Pilot Tips #37, metacognition and continues presenting several of his Accident Analyses with graphic photos:

<https://www.vectorsforsafety.com/blog/vectors-for-safety-december-2025>

You may not be aware that Gene has 95 videos on his website for your viewing!
See: <https://www.youtube.com/@GeneBensonAviation/featured>

EAA Chapter 44 news: <https://chapters.eaa.org/ea44/newsletters>.

EAA Chapter 46 news: <https://chapters.eaa.org/ea46/newsletters>.

Here are some of EAA's Webinars scheduled for December:
<https://eaa.org/eaa/news-and-publications/eaa-webinars>

Did you catch **Aviation Training Center's** Black Friday lifetime access deal?
<https://learn.aviationtrainingcenter.org/bundles/special-private-instrument-pilot-lifetime-bundle>

ATTACHMENTS / LINKS

Airframe & Powerplant Course

Eleven week semester, class #10 is on December 9th, 2025. Classes are held every Tuesday evening in the Terminal building at the Buffalo-Lancaster Airport (BQR), 4343 Walden Ave in the Town of Lancaster, NY. Start time is 6:30 PM and the class is three hours, ending at 9:30 PM. The topic for this Fall Semester is **Airframe**.

While intended to assist in obtaining the A&P Certificate, these courses are helpful to anyone operating or maintaining light aircraft. You are invited to stop in for a night and see if it meets your expectations before registering.

New Students: Please contact Ron Ciura at 716-560-7205 (text / call) or magman366@gmail.com



Dinner Meeting and Lecture, **Tuesday** December 9th, 7:00 PM

William Sutor, Rocket Belt Pilot



Please join us this month for what promises to be a very special evening with guest William Sutor, pioneering Bell rocket belt test pilot. As a member of the Bell Aerosystems rocket belt flying team from 1964–1970, Sutor traveled the world demonstrating the Rocket Belt. He has made over 1,000 flights in 14 different types of rocket-powered flying machines. His distinctions include:

- Holding all of the records in altitude, distance, and speed for the Rocket Belt.
- Flying all three versions of the belt.
- Performing at the halftime show of the first Super Bowl in 1967 and, as seen in the photo above, the opening ceremonies of the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.
- Flying the rocket belt for Sean Connery in the James Bond movie *Thunderball*, and a number of TV series including *Lost in Space*, *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *The A Team*, and *The Fall Guy*.

William Sutor was hired by Bell Aerosystems in 1964 at the age of 19 when their contract with the Army stipulated they had to prove it could be operated by a young man of “draft age” with no previous flying experience. Bell engineer and rocket belt inventor Wendell Moore was a family friend and neighbor and after he said to Sutor, “Hey kid, wanna job?” the rest is history. He made his first tethered flight on March 26, 1964.

Tuesday, December 9th, at Rizzotto Italian Eatery and Sweetery, 930 Maple Road, Williamsville, NY 14221

Cash bar at 6:00 pm, Dinner at 7:00 pm, presentation to follow

Cost: \$35 per person, \$20 for full-time students

Choose the following meal selections: Pork Chop ___ Fish Florentine ___ Ravioli with Butternut Squash ___

RSVP by Friday, December 5th with meal selection, name(s) and whether member, guest or student to Pam Crassidis at nf.aiaa@gmail.com

Pay online at www.paypal.me/aiaanfs or by check payable to “Niagara Frontier AIAA” and send to: Don Nixon, 11854 Wiscoy Road, Portageville, NY 14536



**L.D. Bell / Niagara
Frontier Chapter
Air & Space Forces Association**

Presents its annual tribute to:

A Pearl Harbor Remembrance

**Sunday 7 December 2025 11:30
Buffet Style Dinner 12:00**

at the Niagara Aerospace Museum
9990 Porter Road, Niagara Falls IAP, Niagara Falls, NY 14304

Featuring

Greg Semrau, General Manager of Hypersonic Vehicle Systems at Moog, will present Deterrence 101: the evolution of U.S. defense strategy for hypersonic and strategic systems, including Moog's role in the current modernization effort.

Price includes Ticket to the Aerospace Museum—\$30

ROTC Cadets, CAP Cadets and Sea Cadets — \$20

Tours of the museum are available before and after the event!

.....
[AFA – Pearl Harbor Remembrance Reservation Form](#)

Please print

Name (Last, First)	Address	Phone	Cadet
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Sunday 7 December 2025 @ the Niagara Aerospace Museum
9990 Porter Road, Niagara Falls IAP, Niagara Falls, NY 14304

IMPORTANT MESSAGE!

Due to higher cost, future chapter mailings will be sent via email. Please provide a valid email address below. Thank you!

EMAIL:

Tickets: \$30 per person

ROTC, CAP Cadets & Sea Cadets—\$ 20ea

Deadline for reservations is Nov. 30th

Checks payable to: "AFA LD Bell Chapter 204"

Mail to: Robert T. Ward

AFA 204 President

3 Campbell Mdns

Getzville, NY 14068

Phone: 716-225-1579

Help us reduce costs. Send an e-mail to pecoraror@aol.com (chapter Membership chair) and/or rlltward@gmail.com (Chapter President), and request we add your e-mail to our membership list. Better yet, logon to <http://www.afa.org/Home/> and add your e-mail to your profile. You will start to receive newsletters and event fliers in your e-mail and save our chapter cash. Thank You!



Save the Date

*EAA Chapter 46
Holiday Party & Tailgate
(Bills vs. Bengals on the Big Screen)*

*Sunday, December 7
12 noon - end of game
Big Hangar at Lancaster Airport*

Bring a pot luck dish to pass

*Family and flying
friends are welcome!*



The Aero Club of Buffalo



Upcoming Events

President's Letter, December 2025

Dear All,

As I come to the end of my tenure as the ninetieth president of the Aero Club of Buffalo, I would like to thank you all for your tremendous support. During the last couple of years, I have met some amazing people and made many friends. It has been truly a privilege to lead such a prestigious organization with its rich aviation and aerospace history, but now it is time for me to hand the yoke, or joystick as

traditionalists would say, to someone new. A new president will be appointed soon and you will be notified in due course but I would like to remind you of the tremendous benefits that you have received whilst I have been in tenure. Where else would you have heard, face-to-face, from people that have orbited the Earth, flown around it single handed, survived being shot down over Europe, and hopped short distances as James Bond on a rocket belt? We have a wonderful organization with wonderful speakers. We also provide scholarships for our young people to further their aviation ambitions, camaraderie and good company. We cannot continue in this way without your support and your subscriptions (due in January) and donations to the scholarship fund. Details can be found on the website (aeroclubofbuffalo.org) of the scholarship and membership application. I must emphasize that we can't do it without your help.

We are working on rectifying known problems paying for dinners online but it is absolutely essential that the restaurant has accurate reservation numbers two days before the event. Profit margins are too small for the restaurant to have stand-by dinners on hand for walk-ins. On many previous occasions, Board members have sacrificed their first meal choice or received very late cold meals so as to accommodate walk-ins. It is acceptable for payments to be made at the door provided reservations, including meal selections, have been received at least FOUR days before the dinner by phone (716 901 6126), or email to aeroclubofbuffalo@gmail.com, or mailing of the flyer-dinner-reservation-form plus check (made out to Aero Club of Buffalo) to Aero Club of Buffalo, box 676, Williamsville, NY 14231.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your president and with new leadership and your support I am sure the Club will continue to flourish for many years to come.

Next Event

Thursday December 11, 2025: our holiday event with a basket raffle to add to the fun. Our speaker is yet to be determined but could be someone special! Note: this date is the exception being the 2nd. Thursday of the month.

Our monthly meetings are held at **Rizotto Italian Eatery & Sweetery**, 930 Maple Road, Williamsville, NY 14221 usually on the 3rd. Thursday of the month. All members and guests are welcome and you will be sent an e-Mail to remind you of these events and on our website <https://aeroclubofbuffalo.org> for details including registration form, membership application and making donations. Please make note of the following: Our phone number is (716) 901-6126 and our mailing address is PO Box 676, Williamsville, NY 14231. The club's e-Mail address is aeroclubofbuffalo@gmail.com

If you need any more information, you may e-Mail me at marymattocks9@gmail.com

Regards,
Willy Mattocks



EAA Chapter 674 Upcoming Events

Our EAA meetings are usually at the GVA (Gains Valley Airport) club house. At times, it is at a member's home or hanger to show their project's progress. We also try to do technical demos like welding, riveting and such for our younger members.

President:	John Tower	585 283-1762
Treasurer:	Jean (John) Depatie	585 589-0358

<https://www.facebook.com/p/Gaines-Valley-Aviation-100069383616047/>



16 DAY GROUND SCHOOL

6.00-8.30 pm EVERY TUESDAY & THURSDAY
January 13, 2026 to March 5, 2026

OnCore Aviation is proud to announce the launch of our Private Pilot Ground School!

PRICE: \$300

*No refunds will be issued after 1/5/2026

This program is designed to give aspiring aviators the knowledge and confidence they need to succeed in flight training and earn their Private Pilot Certificate.

Students will cover FAA-required subjects such as aerodynamics, navigation, weather, flight planning, and regulations, all in a structured, and engaging classroom environment led by experienced instructors.

Whether you're starting your aviation journey or looking to strengthen your foundation, this ground school is the perfect first step toward the skies.

By completing 16 days of our ground school, you will also receive the required endorsement to take your FAA written exam for your FAA checkride.

For questions please contact Amy Beechler: Amy@OnCoreAviation.com

**OnCore Aviation LLC | Genesee County Airport
4697 E Saile Drive | Batavia, NY 14020**



<https://niagaraaerospacemuseum.org/visit-the-museum/>

Open Saturday and Sunday 11-4PM and by appointment.

The Niagara Aerospace Museum, located to the left of the terminal at the Niagara Falls Airport, recently celebrated its 25th year documenting the incredible aviation and space history of Western New York, ranging from the rocket engine that lifted all twelve Apollo astronauts off the moon to the Bell X-1 that Chuck Yeager flew to break the sound barrier

WNY AeroMail issue #108

Please note that e-Mail **submissions** of any type for the next issue of WNY AeroMail must have "#108 " in the subject line. You do not need the quotation marks but you do need to have a space after the number 108. Send submissions by December 28th. to **Both** christopher.koch@gmail.com & magman366@gmail.com

Also: Clicking "reply" to this monthly copy of WNY AeroMail sends your response to a non-monitored e-Mail address. Please use our e-Mail addresses above.

Secondly, "for sale" ads will run for three issues maximum unless the ads are revised and updated.

Thanks, Chris

The next Pilot Forum will be held at Mercy Flight, 12/10 at 7:00 pm. The topic is stabilized approaches and go arounds. Contact Richard Middaugh for details: rmiddaughcfii@yahoo.com



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Connor Domoy - 585-201-3718

New LSA ruling investment opportunity

We are seeking seed money to launch a crowd funding program, or direct investment support to manufacture a game changing LSA (hybrid) 4 seat complex aircraft, Kit to certified. Designed for efficiency, performance, comfort, occupant safety (BRS), and low manufacturing cost. Scalable design for Drone applications and/or pressurized and larger non LSA future consideration. Current model has 9' wing span. Details are available after an NDA has been signed.

585-738-8264 Darrell Panike
darrellpanike@gmail.com

Modernization of Special Airworthiness Certification (MOSAIC)

Key Changes in the MOSAIC Rule:

- **Aircraft Capabilities:**
- **Increased Speed:** MOSAIC allows for higher maximum speeds for light-sport aircraft, potentially up to 250 knots.
- **More Complex Systems:** The rule permits more advanced systems, including retractable landing gear, constant-speed propellers, and various propulsion systems like electric and hybrid options.
- **Increased Size:** MOSAIC allows for aircraft with up to four seats, though sport pilots will still be limited to carrying one passenger, [according to the FAA](#).
- **Stall Speed:** The rule is based on a clean stall speed, with a likely cap between 54 and 63 knots.
- **Weight:** By permitting higher stall speeds, the proposal would bring aircraft weighing as much as 3,000 pounds within the LSA regulatory framework, says the FAA.
-
- **Pilot Privileges:**
- **Potential for Simplified Medicals:** The MOSAIC rule may maintain sport pilot privileges, potentially allowing pilots to operate expanded LSA capabilities without a medical certificate, though this remains under review.
- **Endorsements:** Pilots may need specific endorsements for certain aircraft features or operations, like night flying or operating aircraft with more complex systems.

See: https://www.faa.gov/newsroom/MOSAIC_Final_Rule_Issuance.pdf

<https://www.eaa.org/eaanews-and-publications/eaanews-and-aviation-news/2025-10-30-as-mosaic-rule-kicks-in>

<https://planeandpilotmag.com/mosaic-briefing/>

Helpful Basic Med Links

<https://www.aopa.org/advocacy/pilots/medical/basicmed>

https://www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/airmen_certification/basic_med/

Here is the form for your Doctor to complete:

https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Form/FAA_Form_8700-2_.pdf

December 2024 changes made through the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024:

- Pilots can carry up to six passengers, increasing the total number of occupants in the aircraft to seven
- Takeoff weight increased from 6,000 lbs. to 12,500 lbs.
- Pilot examiners can conduct flight checks in aircraft covered by BasicMed
- The duration of the comprehensive medical examination is determined using calendar months

Transport category rotorcraft certified to airworthiness standards under part 29 are **not** covered by BasicMed

ITEMS FOR LEASE, SALE OR WANTED

FOR SALE/RENT/RENT TO OWN

HANGAR AND SHARE AT CLARENCE AERODROME (D51)



A share in Clarence Aerodrome entitles the owner to one twenty-fifth ownership in the airport. In addition, the owner is entitled to buy or build a hangar which he owns separately from the ownership of the share.

This offer is for a combined share and hangar. The hangar is approximately 1,900 square feet, comprised of a 40' X 40' building and a 17' X 17' addition. It has water and electric service and a concrete floor. The door is electrically operated. The hangar is fully insulated and includes a 100,000 BTU oil fired furnace. It also has second floor storage.

Call: Bob Dispenza
(716) 291-8685

Have you always wanted to own an Airport?

Hamburg Airport and adjacent land will be listed For Sale soon, interested parties contact Rob Gannon at gannon@hamburgairport.us for details. This would be a great opportunity for a group of airplane owners!

FOR SALE

N11721

1972 Bellanca Citabria 7KCAB - \$65,000

TT: 7774.97 SMOH: 2002.37

Complete maintenance logbooks

Last annual 03/04/2025

Compressions: 1) 76 2) 76 3) 78 4) 78

All ADs complied with

Located in KGVQ, Batavia, NY

Engine: Lycoming IO-320-E2A 150HP

Inverted fuel-oil system

Wooden spars and fabric in great shape.

A well loved airplane always hangared and taken care of by its only 3 owners.

Modifications:

-Schweizer tailhook system

-IFR

-uAvionix skyBeacon ADSB-Out

Reason for sale: lack of use

Ready for sale and ferry anywhere within the CONUS.

Tailwheel endorsement and insurance checkout training available.

For further information including photos,
please contact **Eloy** at 585 719 5988 or eyaguespaude@gmail.com



VREF Valuation Service

As you may know, VREF airplane valuations are no longer available to AOPA members. Little Bird Airways, LLC has recently purchased a VREF subscription. If you are in the market to buy or sell an aircraft and need guidance on its value, we can prepare a VREF report for you for a small fee. Please call Claudia at 716-796-1823.

Aries in Flight Ground School Services - My name is Elisabeth Tate. I am an Advanced Ground Instructor. I offer affordable lessons online via Zoom or in-person at Akron-Jesson FBO. Please visit my website for more information and contact information. <https://elisabethtate.wixsite.com/ariesinflight>

Cherokees, 172s and other aircraft for sale **wanted**. Send details to Ron at Magman366@gmail.com who will relay to buyers.

Wanted: Lycoming O-235C, contact Ron Ciura: magman366@gmail.com

We Highly Recommend:

Visit Niagara Aerospace Museum's website: <https://niagaraaerospacemuseum.org/>

Do you periodically read "**Vectors for Safety**"? Join Gene Benson's mailing list: <https://www.genebenson.com/#join-my-mailing-list> Also check out his websites at <https://www.vectorsforsafety.com/> and <https://www.genebenson.com/>

If you don't receive the monthly **Akron Flyer** newsletter, contact Allen Kidder AllenKidder@Gmail.com and request to be placed on the subscription list or simply signup on the website: <https://www.akronairportny.com/newsletter-signup>

Akron Airport's website: <https://www.akronairportny.com/> and <https://www.airnav.com/airport/9G3>

Check out the National Warplane Museum in Geneseo, NY - <https://nationalwarplanemuseum.com/>

Wings Flights of Hope: <https://www.wingsflight.org>

Further info on abandoned Airfields: www.airfields-freeman.com

Jeff Brook's "My Fokker DVII Project" - <http://www.theaerodrome.com/forum/showthread.php?t=24887>

Mike Busch's Savvy Aviation: <https://www.savvyaviation.com/about-us/>

Notes from Ron Ciura (the Reporter):



We are looking for local aviation history and articles! Send them to Ron Ciura at Magman366@Gmail.com.

We all know that WNY has many unique Aircraft, Pilots & Stories. If you know of anything unique, please send it to Magman366@gmail.com

Some AeroMail points you should know:

- If you have a message you wish to have added to AeroMail then send it to me - the earlier the better.
- Advertisements will be posted for three issues unless you request an extension.
- If you wish to respond to any content, contact the content provider, not Ron Ciura!
- If you no longer wish to receive the "Aviation-Only Mail" please let me know why & I will subsequently remove you from the List.

Thanks,
Ron

"Flying is a hobby I participate in to prevent becoming wealthy!"

"A mile of highway gets you nowhere - A mile of runway gets you everywhere"



Production Editor: Christopher Koch christopher.koch@gmail.com