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the Centennial of Flight.



# COUNTDOWN

A NEWSLETTER UPDATE FROM EAA



November 4, 2003 - Vol. 1, No. 3

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## 42 Days to Kitty Hawk!

-- EAA Young Eagles As of Today: 996,235 --

### Young Eagles Nears Incredible 'Million' Milestone

At this writing, we are within less than 4,000 registrations of the coveted 1 million mark for the EAA Young Eagles program. While those registrations continue to pour into the Young Eagles office, EAA's Young Eagles staff continues to keep up. We estimate that Young Eagle No. 1,000,000 will be registered sometime during the second week of November, at which time EAA will make a major announcement. The millionth Young Eagle—and his/her pilot, will be invited to take part in the First Flight Centennial celebration in December, including a special commemorative flight for the child with Young Eagle Chairman Chuck Yeager. For more information on the Young Eagles program, visit [www.youngeagles.org](http://www.youngeagles.org).

### John Travolta To Emcee December 17 'First Flight' Program

Actor and 5,000-hour pilot John Travolta will serve as master of ceremonies for the December 17 First Flight Centennial Celebration program in December at Wright Brothers National Memorial, Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina. A licensed jet pilot who serves as Australian-based Qantas' Airways' Ambassador-at-Large, Travolta will also fly his Boeing 707 as part of the day's ceremonial fly-over. "I was thrilled to kick-off the national celebration last December," Travolta said. "It is an even bigger honor to be asked to participate in the activities of the day 100 years later on the very ground where it all began."

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### Lee Greenwood, Michelle Branch Among 'First Flight Centennial Celebration' Performers

Multi-platinum artist [Lee Greenwood](#), best known for his "God Bless the USA" anthem, and [Michelle Branch](#), one of America's outstanding young pop music stars, will perform during the six-day First Flight Centennial Celebration in December. Grammy award winner Branch will perform on opening day, December 12, while Greenwood headlines the December 16 festivities. Other entertainers slated to appear include The Beach Boys (December 13); The Temptations (December 14); and Aaron Tippin (December 15).

### C-SPAN Plans Live Centennial of Flight Coverage

Those unable to attend the December 17 flight re-enactment by EAA's 1903 Wright Flyer can tune into the C-SPAN cable television network for live coverage of the First Flight Centennial Celebration festivities on December 17. Morning coverage will be offered up to and including the flight, scheduled to take place at 10:35 a.m. ET, weather permitting. Also planning event coverage are *The Early Show* (CBS); *The Today Show* (NBC), and CNN. More than 400 media credential requests have been received, including many from overseas representing such nations as Germany, the United Kingdom, Taiwan, Japan, Canada, and the Voice of America.



## General Admission Tickets Still Available For December 13-16

While December 17 is officially sold out, organizers of the First Flight Centennial celebration report that tickets for the other four days (December 13-16) remain available. Opening day, December 12, is a non-ticketed day. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for seniors 62 and over and disabled. Children 12 and under are free but must have a ticket to be admitted. For more information or to obtain tickets, visit [www.wrightbrothers.reserveworld.com](http://www.wrightbrothers.reserveworld.com) or call 800/973-7327.

## Microsoft Continues Flight Simulator Tour

The Microsoft Flight Simulator team continues its extended tour of the United States providing people throughout the country with the opportunity to virtually fly the 1903 Wright *Flyer*. Microsoft, with support from the EAA Museum's Restoration Department, developed the hands- (and hips-) on replica cradle that, together with MS software and a large-screen monitor enables participants to fly the *Flyer*. The Simulator Station will be at the San Diego Aerospace Museum from November 6-10, before wrapping up the mini-tour at the following facilities:

- Nov. 13-16 - Los Angeles - California Science Center
- Nov. 20-23 - San Jose - The Tech Museum
- Dec. 4-7 - Toronto - Ontario Science Centre

[Learn more](#) about Flight Simulator 2004 – A Century of Flight.

## Ford Motor Company Helps Uncover Secrets of the Wright Brothers

Secretive aviation pioneers Orville and Wilbur Wright left few clues about how they achieved their historic first powered, controlled flight nearly 100 years ago. But Ford Motor Company has been able to solve some of the mystery and preserve the information for generations of innovators to come.

At its Dynamometer Laboratory in Dearborn, Michigan--the same facility Ford uses to develop powertrains of the future--the company conducted a controlled testing of the engine that will power EAA's 1903 Wright *Flyer*, the only authentic, full-scale reproduction of the first successful powered aircraft. The engine will propel the re-enactment of the Wrights' first flight on December 17--100 years from the historic moment.

[\(read more\)](#)

## Eclipse Aviation's Greatest Aviation Innovations

### Featured Innovations: Piper J-3 Cub and Learjet

If one airplane gave the average American wings, it's the Piper J-3 Cub. It first flew in 1938 and became an instant success because Bill Piper recognized the importance of marketing. He didn't achieve his dream of an "airplane in every garage," but the Cub introduced untold thousands to the joy of flight. When production ended in 1947, Piper had built 14,125 Cubs, making it one of the most popular airplanes in history--and "Cub" a synonym for "small plane."

What Piper's J-3 Cub did for individuals, in 1963 Bill Lear's jet did the same for businesses. Based on the Swiss P-16 fighter, the six-seat Learjet became the first production jet designed and built specifically for business transportation and corporations embraced its speed and efficiency as an essential tool of business. And just as "Cub" is a synonym for a small plane, "Learjet" is the synonym for "business jet."

[Learn about eight more great innovations.](#)

[View the official announcement](#) of the Greatest Innovation.

## Kitty Hawk Moments:

### Mosquitoes...and Disappointment

Having hired a man to run their bicycle shop, the Wrights were able to leave earlier for Kitty Hawk in 1901. They arrived at their former campsite on July 11, full of confidence based on their previous year's testing--and with a glider of the same design, but much larger, with a wingspan of 22 feet, and a weight of 98 pounds, nearly twice that of its predecessor. Their mood was tested, however, when they were greeted by a foul nor'easter with 93 mph winds, and forced to pitch their tent in the pouring rain. Four days later, they began building a hangar big enough to house their

new glider, which Orville thought was “a grand institution, with awnings at both ends...”

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### **Light at the End of the Tunnel**

The Wright brothers were a disappointed pair when they arrived back home in Dayton unexpectedly early on August 22, 1901. According to their sister Katharine, they did not talk about flying for days. Their self-confidence was draining, and they felt that two years of time, money and effort had been wasted. Yet of one thing they remained certain – their setbacks on the Outer Banks that summer were not because of their efforts, but because earlier data supplied by pioneers like Otto Lilienthal and John Smeaton (which they had trusted) was somehow faulty. What they had to do, they realized, was replace uncertainty with hard facts – their facts – in which they could have absolute confidence.

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