



TOM POBEREZNY

Chairman/President, Experimental Aircraft Association

Born: October 3, 1946

B.A., Northwestern University

Family: wife, Sharon; daughter, Lesley

Home: Brookfield, Wis.

Tom Poberezny was first elected president of EAA in 1989. Since that time, membership in the organization has increased to 160,000 members worldwide. He assumed additional duties as EAA's Chairman of the Board in February 2009.

An accomplished aviator in his own right, Poberezny was a member of the U.S. National Unlimited Aerobatic Team that captured the World Championship in 1972. The following year, he won the U.S. National Unlimited Aerobatic Championship. He subsequently flew for 25 years as one wing of the legendary Eagles Aerobatic Team (originally the Red Devils), the most successful civilian precision flying team in history.

During his career with EAA, Poberezny has overseen a number of the organization's milestone events. In the late 1970s he spearheaded EAA's first major capital campaign, which supported construction of the current EAA Aviation Center headquarters and museum complex at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh, Wis.

In 1992, he led the creation of EAA's Young Eagles, which has become the most successful aviation youth program in history. Realizing the importance of mentoring to the future of aviation, EAA aimed to give one million kids between the ages of 8 and 17 an airplane flight by the centennial of powered flight on Dec. 17, 2003. The one millionth Young Eagle was flown in October 2003, celebrating the efforts of 85,000 EAA volunteers to reach the goal. The Young Eagles Program has now flown 1.5 million young people.

In 2002-2003, Poberezny played a pivotal leadership role in the national centennial celebration of flight. He was a member of the Centennial of Flight Commission, a six-person board empowered by Congress to coordinate and publicize the nation's commemoration of the Wright brothers' historic first flight. At the same time, he led EAA's Countdown to Kitty Hawk program, which commissioned the construction of the first completely authentic reproduction of the 1903 Wright Flyer – the airplane that gave birth to powered flight. The airplane successfully flew at Kitty Hawk, N.C., in late 2003 and was present on those hallowed grounds on December 17, 2003 -- 100 years to the minute from the Wrights' first flight.

Most recently, he has spearheaded EAA's leadership role in the sport pilot/light-sport aircraft categories, as well as serving as an ardent spokesman for the importance of general aviation as essential to the national transportation system and a unique expression of personal freedom.

One of Poberezny's most demanding roles has been chairman of the annual EAA AirVenture Fly-In Convention for more than 30 years. During that time, EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, as it is now known, has grown to be the world's largest annual general aviation event, attracting an attendance of more than 500,000 from 70 nations and 10,000 airplanes for one spectacular week every summer.