

Coming Soon: Biggest LSA Industry Get-Together

by Dan Johnson



The LAMA Dinner 2011 drew a standing-room-only crowd to hear AOPA's Craig Fuller. photo by Rande Laskewitz

While AirVenture, Sun 'n Fun, and Germany's Aero may have more LSA professionals in attendance the LAMA Dinner at the Sebring U.S. Sport Aviation Expo is big. How big? For the last four years,



Craig Fuller addresses the largest gathering of LSA professionals in 2011. photo by Meg Godlewski

LAMA has "sold out" — standing-room-only last year — its annual dinner. The event takes place in the main, large tent at Sebring. This year it will be the AeroShell tent as that company is generously providing the tent and tables through a sponsorship. Each year LAMA draws 300 or more persons, all industry participants. The dinner is by invitation only.

This represents the largest gathering of LSA professionals at any show and it is proving to be a major



AOPA's Craig Fuller (L) with EAA's Rod Hightower at AOPA Summit 2011. photo credit: Midwest Flyer magazine

draw. Consider the confirmed list of highly placed officials coming to Sebring 2012: EAA President Rod Hightower will address the LAMA Dinner; GAMA President and CEO Pete Bunce will again lead a joint GAMA/LAMA meeting with LSA businessmen; and AOPA President Craig Fuller will reportedly make an appearance early in the show. Here are three of general aviation's biggest leaders all showing at Sebring 2012. That's never happened before.

In addition, FAA is planning meetings with LSA manufacturers and importers as they have done at previous Sebring events. Along with the chance to speak directly to

the association leaders, access to FAA officials is appreciated by the LSA business community.

One bit of irony given the events of the last few days, an invited speaker to the LAMA Dinner was Randy Babbitt. Due to budget strains, FAA was unable to confirm his visit and now that request appears moot. While not condoning driving under any influences, Administrator Babbitt had been quite supportive of the LSA development and several in the industry lament his sudden departure (which, by the way, adds to the many changes of leadership in aviation as twice reported on www.ByDanJohnson.com).



GAMA President and CEO, Pete Bunce. photo courtesy GAMA