

Dinner Means Business...

LSA Business by Dan Johnson, LAMA President



Since most of us can remember the aviation calendar revolved around Oshkosh (now known as AirVenture), which ended in the first days of August. Fall brought AOPA's Expo (now Summit) and NBAA's giant jet show. At the close of those shows, we began a rather long winter until Sun 'n Fun rolled around in mid-April. Certainly, we had all manner of regional events and pancake breakfasts but the major airshows were over, it seemed. That is, until Sebring happened.

Eight years ago, the U.S. Sport Aviation Expo popped up on the show circuit, first in late fall (at the end of hurricane season) then migrating to January. For snow-bound northerners the Florida event during the wintry months up north is a welcome respite and Florida is itself a dynamo of aviation activity with pilots interested in learning more about this newest aviation segment. More than 10,000 attendees and as many as 15,000 will flock to the Sunshine State to catch the action in the most dynamic slice of the aviation pie.

In the 2012 running of Sebring, some of the biggest names of American aviation organizations are making an appearance. New president Rod Hightower will represent EAA as he addresses the Light Aircraft Manufacturers Association annual dinner. AOPA president Craig Fuller will hold a hangar-style town meeting and GAMA President and CEO Pete Bunce will cohost an industry leaders meeting in cooperation with LAMA. FAA will also bring a contingent of advisory personnel to meet with industry representatives.

Many forums are scheduled, an auction and a wine tasting are planned along with numerous other activities to fill the four days of the show. But the main attraction is the presence of nearly every Light-Sport Aircraft available on the U.S. market. This is the nation's largest collection of these lightest and least costly airplanes featuring the newest technologies.

LOOKING GOOD AND GOOD LOOKING

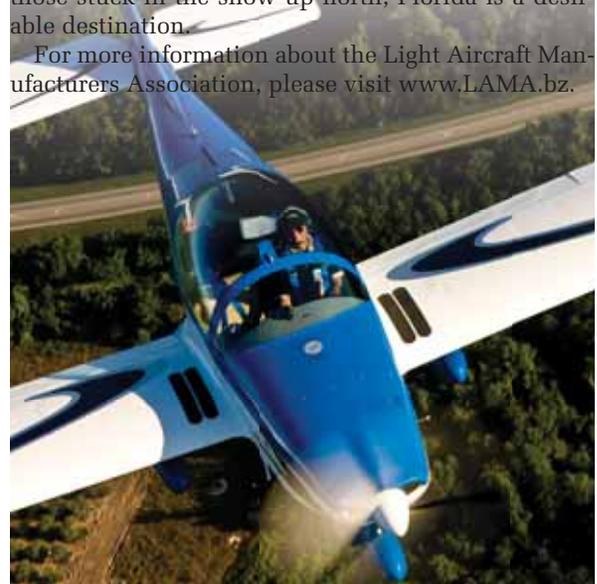
Recently LAMA staff visited the show site to make some final decisions about the LAMA Dinner and oth-

er activities. LAMA visitors found new director Jana Filip very ably taking the reins from founding director Bob Woods. Jana has been associated with the show since the beginning, so she already knew the flavor of the LSA-focused event. Filling the former military officer's shoes wasn't easy. Bob Wood left the show in fine shape but set an aggressive pace for his staff and small army of volunteers. He'll stay to help the transition and will remain a volunteer, but Sebring is now run by the airport with Jana at its helm.

The show kicks off Thursday, January 19. At the end of the opening day LAMA will hold its fifth-annual dinner for LSA professionals engaging EAA president Rob Hightower to come speak to the opening evening assembly in the AeroShell tent. Some 300 LSA businesspeople will be in attendance, the largest such gathering in the world.

Sponsorships are up. Exhibitors should fill every available spot. Forums are plentiful. Meetings help link up various groups. Activities are plentiful. The mood at Sebring is bright, so bring on the show. For those stuck in the snow up north, Florida is a desirable destination.

For more information about the Light Aircraft Manufacturers Association, please visit www.LAMA.bz.



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