


FEATURED VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers Save Two Rallies

Chicago/Wheeling, Ill., Nov. 20, 2006 – Two Wednesdays in October were special days for students from several Chicago high schools. On Wednesday, Oct. 4, 16 students from Ray Graham Occupational School and 26 students from Southside Occupational High School participated in a field trip to [Gary Chicago International Airport](#) in Gary, Ind., for the Dreams and Wings Young Eagles Rally. Exactly one week later on Oct. 11, 27 students from Jacqueline Vaughn Occupation High School went on a field trip to [Palwaukee Municipal Airport](#) in Wheeling, Ill., for the same event.

Founded in Michigan by Capt. Jack Lewis, Dreams and Wings, Inc. helps special needs children experience the world from a new and higher perspective. The partnership with EAA's Young Eagle program gives the special needs children an opportunity to see new horizons and challenge themselves to realize that they can prevail over any obstacle.

This year was the fourth rally at Palwaukee; it was the first time at Gary Chicago International Airport. Many of the students, all of whom are mildly cognitively disabled and/or physically disabled, had never flown before. At both events, students arrived around 10 a.m., ready to spend several hours becoming Young Eagles. The FAA, [Great Lakes Regions People with Disabilities Committee](#), spearheaded the event under the guidance of Jan Liebovitz.

Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate with the events. At both Gary and Palwaukee, low visibility punctuated with rain meant Young Eagle rides were not possible. Ken Rapier had the Tuskegee Airmen Cherokee 140 brought into the staging hangar at Gary. He explained principles of flight and the Tuskegee markings to small groups of students. Every student also was able to sit in the plane and have his/her picture taken – revealing big smiles on everyone. At Palwaukee, Richard Steinbrecher provided a mini-ground school, explaining how and why an airplane flies, using a Piper Warrior to assist in his presentation.

Pilots from both airports participated, despite the inclement



All of the students from Ray Graham Occupational School and Southside Occupational High School that participated in the Dreams and Wings Rally at Gary International Airport.



Ken Rapier explains the principles of flight and the Tuskegee Airmen Cherokee 140 markings to students.



weather. With flying not an option, they drove to the airport to talk to the students about flying and to help out with the activities.

FAA volunteers manned Flight Simulators, where the students were able to practice their flying skills. In keeping with the fall season, the FAA volunteers had a craft table to make a Halloween spider out of a Tootsie Roll Pop and pipe cleaners. Another craft table utilized rubber bands, a stick of gum, a roll of candy and Life Savers to build an airplane. Other volunteers helped students enjoy a rocket display and blow-up balloons to launch, while learning about thrust. Putting together a parachute with a clothespin man and talking with Bev Dunjill, a [Tuskegee Airman](#), were all part of the ground activities planned for the students.

The students were selected on the basis of essays they wrote; most of them expressed the wish to having never been on a plane before. Some excerpts from their essays included: "I wanted to experience how it feels when you are up in the sky flying like a bird" and "I want to see how high the sky is and confront my fear of flying."

At both events, students, pilots and volunteers were all treated to lunch including pizza and pop at Gary, an Eli's Cheesecake box lunch at Palwaukee. Before boarding the buses to go back to school at around 1:30 p.m., each student also received a goody bag from the FAA (with a water bottle and pencil) and a Young Eagle's goody bag (with a Sporty's cockpit poster, pencil, pen, lanyard, airplane trading cards, YE badge, YE wristband and balsa wood glider – thanks to donations collected during [AirVenture 2006](#)).

An extra treat for the students whose field trip was at Gary came when the head controller came to visit and gave permission for their two school buses, with lights flashing, to follow an airport truck all the way down Runway 30!

While their names were not entered in the [EAA's World's Largest Logbook](#), the kids' smiles, excitement and even hugs were the best compliment the pilots and ground volunteers could receive. The annual events have become a highlight of the fall for all those involved. Even if the weather doesn't cooperate, volunteers can still share their love for flying.

Submitted by Carol MacCabe



The head controller at Gary International Airport allowed the students in two school buses, with lights flashing, to follow an airport truck down Runway 30.



Students from Jacqueline Vaughn Occupation High School traveled to Palwaukee Municipal Airport in Wheeling, Ill., for the Dreams and Wings rally.



Volunteers help students learn about thrust while launching blow-up balloons.



FAA volunteers man Flight Simulators, where the students are able to practice their flying skills.



For More Information

[Gary Chicago International Airport](#)
[Palwaukee Municipal Airport](#)
[Great Lakes Regions People with Disabilities
Committee](#)
[Tuskegee Airman](#)
[AirVenture](#)
[EAA's World's Largest Logbook](#)

LATEST FEATURED VOLUNTEERS

- [2007 - 12/05 - Young Eagles Pilot Tony Yacono Reaches Milestone](#)
- [2007 - 10/18 - EAA Chapter 463 Rally Report](#)
- [2007 - 10/01 - EAA Chapter 690 Visit](#)
- [2007 - 08/10 - Reading and Flying Do Mix](#)
- [2007 - 08/29 - Reading and Flying Do Mix!](#)

[>>> Featured Volunteers Archive](#)

[Site Help](#) .. [Privacy Policy](#) .. [Site Map](#)

All content, logos, pictures, and videos are the property of EAA .. © Copyright 2010 Experimental Aircraft Association, Inc.

.. Special thanks to the Emil Buehler Trust for funding the initial development of this website ..



is the presenting sponsor of EAA's Young Eagles program.