

EAAer = Friend

... around the world!

If you've read "What's New Around the Aviation World" in this issue (pages 20-29), you know I did a bit of traveling in April. First I went to Florida to spend a couple of days at the Sun 'n Fun Fly-In; then I flew to Germany to represent EAA at AERO.

I've been home for about two weeks, now, and it's been a busy time as I recovered from jet lag, reclaimed my house and lawn, and put this June issue together.

I learned a lot about new airplanes on this adventure, but I also learned a lot about people. One thing this trip brought home to me...again...is what wonderful people EAAers are. Because of my job, I literally have friends all over the world. I'd like to tell you about some of them.

I'll start with Anna Osborn, of Ker-ville, Texas, a longtime volunteer in the Vintage area at EAA AirVenture. I don't remember how we met, but Anna and her husband, John, have been my friends for years. When I learned I was going to AERO this year, I decided to add some vacation days to the trip and travel around Germany. It's not much fun to travel alone, so I started asking various friends if they'd like to come along. The only person who had the time *and* money was Anna...and John said she'd be crazy not to go. In true EAA fashion, Anna also volunteered to work at the EAA booth at AERO, and now she has new EAA friends around the world.

Lt. Col. Erick Crews, who is stationed with the U.S. Army in Stutt-

gart, Germany, and his wife, Cathy, and stepson, Kevin, are new EAA friends. Erick contacted me months ago, offering to write some articles from Europe. A veteran ocean-crosser, he recommended Delta Air Line's direct flight from Atlanta to Stuttgart as a good way to travel. He and Cathy met Anna and me at the Stuttgart Airport when we arrived, groggy after more than eight hours of flying. They took us to their home, let us rest a bit, and then we traveled together to Friedrichshafen, where they volunteered at EAA's booth, too. And now they have more EAA friends around the world.


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Two years ago when I attended AERO I met Peter Raab, an EAAer from Frankfurt, Germany. He offered to help with translation at EAA's booth then, so we invited him to help again this year. What an angel! He not only worked nearly nonstop at the booth but also arranged for the donation of an airline cart full of desserts from his employer, Sky Chefs, the caterer

for Lufthansa, for a reception EAA co-hosted. Peter's been an EAA member for 22 years, and he also is a regular volunteer at the International Visitors Tent each year at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh. Now, Peter has more new friends from around the world, and Anna and I are looking forward to seeing him again at AirVenture 2007.

Willi Tacke is EAA's advertising representative in Europe and also a principal of the publishing house Flying Pages. EAA shared booth space with Flying Pages, which means we had the privilege to work with his great staff, including his wife, Julia, and associates Werner Pfandler and Rosi Berkemeier-Raskop...and the rest of his team whose names I can't remember. What great folks they were to work with! And, guess what, I think we all have more new friends.

Of course, I can't stop talking about AERO without mentioning all the European EAA members who stopped by to say hello and visit about "Oshkosh." We're hoping to see many of them at "Oshkoshes" to come. Included among those new friends are EAAers Albert and Virginia Jones of Gainesville, Virginia, who decided to take a vacation to AERO "because we love airplanes and southern Germany!"

What a treasure trove of wonderful people our association is! This trip reminded me that we only need to reach out and another EAAer will be there to help...no matter whether we're building an airplane or flying halfway around the world. 

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