

Tom Poberezny, President, EAA



## What's in a "kosh?"

### A worldwide shorthand for aviation passion

EAA has been an important part of my life for as long as I can remember. In the early days, members would gather in the basement of our home to discuss aircraft homebuilding and aviation stories. These meetings would disperse into our garage where my dad always had an airplane project underway.

In those days, the annual fly-in was in Milwaukee before it moved to Rockford, Illinois, in the 1960s. Our family summers were consumed with EAA activities, especially preparation for the annual convention. Little did any of us realize that the convention would expand in scope and stature and become an international event with major impact on all aspects of general aviation. Ultimately, the convention moved to Oshkosh in 1970 and has remained there ever since. Each year as the convention approaches, the excitement I feel is still strong. The anticipation starts to build as spring arrives and early campers and volunteers make their way into Camp Scholler. EAA Oshkosh 2007 doesn't start on July 23; it starts months in advance.

In fact, Oshkosh has been a year-round experience since the 1980s, when EAA's headquarters and museum were combined with the convention site to become the EAA Aviation Center. The Center is a repository for knowledge and information that is disseminated on a daily basis to people no matter where they live.

Recently, I attended AERO 2007 in Friedrichshafen, Germany. This is an outstanding general aviation show

with seven large pavilions packed full of general aviation aircraft and hardware. As I toured the facilities, I saw a tremendous variety of light-sport aircraft, reinforcing the growing impact of this movement, nurtured by EAA, on an international scale.

*The depth of aviation passion, innovation, and participation is represented by those seven letters...  
"O-S-H-K-O-S-H."*

On the first day of my tour at AERO 2007, I came across a sign above a booth that said, "Tannkosh." It immediately caught my attention and piqued my interest. I walked over to the booth and introduced myself. The people in the booth were excited to tell me how the show in Tannheim, Germany, has become known as Tannkosh. It's an annual summer event that is held on a small grass strip (1,000 meters in length) that draws more than 1,000 airplanes throughout the weekend. When I viewed pictures of the event, it reminded me of the early days of Oshkosh. A member of the German media dubbed the event Tannkosh, and it has stuck. They are proud to be known as an event that espouses the culture, passion, and participation that has become synonymous with "Oshkosh."

As I listened to them describe their event, I felt great pride for what has been accomplished by EAA members through your annual convention, which—despite its official name of EAA AirVenture Oshkosh—is known by many simply as "Oshkosh." It got me thinking about AirVenture's importance. For those of us who live with it every day, there is a tendency to take its value and impact for granted. The depth of aviation, innovation, and participation is represented by those seven letters... "O-S-H-K-O-S-H." It makes me ponder what's in a "kosh."

After leaving Friedrichshafen, I took the time to visit Tannheim and meet the family that established the airport 30 years ago. I learned more about the phenomenon that caused it to earn the title of "kosh." Oshkosh has become a worldwide event that is being compared to the Farnborough Air Show in England or the Paris Air Show and other significant international events. The comparison is not to say that Oshkosh is like those events, but rather that it is in the same category of worldwide stature. It is nice to see that this impact reaches down into the grassroots of aviation and to all corners of the globe.

Oshkosh is the standard bearer for individual aviation participation, no matter the level of aviation knowledge, ratings, or aircraft ownership. Oshkosh is more than an event. It represents the culture of passion and innovation that has become the heart and soul of aviation, and 2007 will continue that tradition of excellence.

See you there! 