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## A Speck of Sand... ... with a lot of potential!

Several years ago I attended a seminar at which one of the speakers described every human being's presence in the universe as smaller than a single speck of sand on all of the beaches that have ever existed or ever will exist on Earth.

Talk about a humbling description! But it does put life into perspective. Each one of us is just a diminutive dot in the vast expanse and long history of the universe.

What's more amazing, though, is what one little dot can accomplish. Think about the dot known as Bill Gates. Through his intelligence and resulting massive fortune he's definitely changed the world. Or how about the dot known as Adolf Hitler? What if that dot had never existed?

How about the dot known as Paul Poberezny? Yes, he's made a difference in the world, too. And so have every one of us, though we may not know now...or ever ...what that difference was or will be.

In his Position Report this month (see page 4), EAA President Tom Poberezny announced a new initiative for EAA—that is, to direct some of the association's energy toward increasing the number of pilots and other participants in aviation. He aptly points out that today's declining pilot population won't sustain the current aviation industry and definitely won't support a growing aviation industry—something that is vital for the entire world.

So it seems to me that this initiative is a perfect opportunity for all us

dots to make a difference. If each one of us took on the responsibility of nurturing one person—or maybe 10 over the course of the next few years—to a greater knowledge of aviation, think of the impact that could have. Recently, I attended my high school class reunion (no, I won't tell you which one), and I was reminded again about how intimidating aviation stuff can be for folks who don't hang out at airports or with aviation enthusiasts. Aviation, flying, and aeronautical stuff all seem very complex to nonaviators.

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So what can we do? Well, I think the opportunities are endless. How many nonaviation clubs, organizations, or associations do you belong to? What if you volunteered to present a program about aviation or took folks on a tour of your local airport and explained how it impacts the community? I don't know of many groups that aren't constantly eager for someone to put on a program.

EAA's new electronic learn-to-fly newsletter, *Reach for the Sky*, is a great way to introduce someone to the joy

of flight. Invite those who show an interest in learning to fly to sign up. It's easy; just direct them to the Reach for the Sky icon on EAA's homepage, [www.EAA.org](http://www.EAA.org).

What if you set a goal of taking three people who've never been in a small aircraft for rides in the next year and, during the course of those flights, explained to them the process of learning to fly? Try to target people who might have the ability/disposition to become involved in aviation and/or want to learn to fly.

Here's another idea: What if we were all friendlier to the strangers who show up at local fly-ins or chapter meetings? Recently we received a letter from a 37-year-old member who was, well, disgusted at the reception people his age received at a recent fly-in. He observed that many older EAA members wouldn't give these younger folks the time of day. He said he's frequently the only person who will walk over and talk to a new face at a chapter meeting. How do we expect our chapters, our association, or the aviation community to grow if we behave in that manner?

EAA Sport Aviation Editor David Hipschman suggested in his Editor's Log a few months ago that every aviation enthusiast should look for his or her eventual successor—that is, bring another person into the fold. That would be a good start to accomplishing the goal Tom has outlined...that and being a little more open and friendlier. 