



EAA-2016-35
For more information, contact:
Dick Knapinski, EAA Communications
(920) 426-6523
dknapi@eaa.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EAA, SPORXY'S OPEN DOORS TO AVIATION FOR MORE THAN 40,000 YOUNG PEOPLE

Free online courses available to EAA Young Eagles following their flights

EAA AVIATION CENTER, OSHKOSH, Wisconsin — (November 2, 2016) — The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and Sporty's Pilot Shop of Batavia, Ohio, are doing their part to ensure the next generation of aviation thrives, as more than 40,000 young people have now enrolled in the Sporty's Learn to Fly online courses as a follow-up to their flights in the EAA Young Eagles program, which introduces youth to aviation through free flights with EAA members.

The Sporty's course, which was first offered to all Young Eagles in 2009, allows young people to take the FAA sport, recreational, or private pilot ground school courses at no charge. The courses are the next step for the approximately 70,000 Young Eagles flown each year by volunteer EAA-member pilots. Since the Young Eagles program launched in July 1992, more than 2 million young people have been flown by 50,000 pilots.

"Sporty's long term support for the Young Eagles program is truly outstanding," said Brian O'Lena, EAA Manager of Young Eagles. "Sporty's understands the Young Eagles mission and provides a way for kids and teens to explore aviation using the most up to date training technologies available today. This means that more than 40,000 young people have had the opportunity to pursue their dreams of flight."

The concept for the free online courses was developed with input from EAA pilots who had been flying Young Eagles. Those pilots reported that many of the young people wanted to discover more about aviation but lacked access to reliable and professional resources. Sporty's filled that role by offering its popular online course at no charge. The goal is to build the next generation of aviators and boost student pilot starts with a group already engaged through the Young Eagles program.

"There's no better way to ensure a robust aviation community than by attracting new young people to the pilot ranks," says Sporty's President Michael Wolf. "Sporty's Learn to Fly online course in tandem with EAA's Young Eagles program provides a tangible and measurable way to achieve that goal."

Young Eagles receive information on how to register and begin the Sporty's courses immediately after their flights. The instructions and login information allow young people to get involved quickly.

What's next? "Reaching more kids with these aviation opportunities, because all of us understand the urgency to get more people involved in flying," O'Lena said. "The Young Eagles Program is celebrating its 25th anniversary year in 2017 and thanks to the support of Sporty's, the most successful youth aviation program in history will continue well into the future."

More information is available at www.EAA.org/YoungEagles.

About EAA

EAA embodies the spirit of aviation through the world's most engaged community of aviation enthusiasts. EAA's 200,000 members and 900 local chapters enjoy the fun and camaraderie of sharing their passion for flying, building and restoring recreational aircraft. For more information on EAA and its programs, call 800-JOIN-EAA (800-564-6322) or go to www.eaa.org. For continual news updates, connect with www.twitter.com/EAA.