

# EAA Media Advisory

*For Immediate Release: Photo and Video Available*



## Evening event thanks Harrison Ford for leading EAA Young Eagles Program and welcomes new co-chairs: US Airways Ft. 1549 pilots Sullenberger and Skiles

### *California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger offers praise and congratulations*

SANTA MONICA, Calif. — (Sept. 30, 2009) — Following yesterday afternoon's press conference at which **Harrison Ford** announced that US Airways Ft. 1549 pilots **Sully Sullenberger** and **Jeff Skiles** would succeed him as leaders of the EAA Young Eagles Program, EAA hosted a special dinner event at Santa Monica Airport thanking Harrison Ford for his five years of service and welcoming the new co-chairs.

California Governor **Arnold Schwarzenegger** commended Ford for giving back to the community and underscored the value of the EAA Young Eagles Program. Aviation legends, celebrities from the aviation world, and members from more than 20 nearby EAA local chapters also attended the dinner and program.

Photos, captions, and video of yesterday's news conference and evening dinner program are available through Associated Press. The Young Eagles chairmen announcement is available at ...

<https://eaa.box.net/shared/static/irxutqca1m.pdf>.

### **Press Conference Photos**

<http://apimages.ap.org/Search.aspx?st=det&sort=date&id=EAA%20Young%20Eagles%20News%20Conference&showact=events&prds=10002&intv=3d&sh=10002&kwstyle=and&adte=1254329765&pagez=60&cfasstyle=AND&>

### **Dinner Photos**

<http://apimages.ap.org/Search.aspx?st=det&sort=date&id=EAA%20Young%20Eagles%20Honors%20Dinner&showact=events&prds=10002&intv=3d&sh=10002&kwstyle=and&adte=1254329765&pagez=60&cfasstyle=AND&>

### **Video Clips**

<http://sheawalsh.com/EAA.htm>

[Broadcast-quality video is also available over AP's wire. Please call Claribel Torres, 212.621.7623 (NY) or Mary Allison, 213.346.3158 (LA) to acquire the video.]

Additional materials, including detailed information on the EAA Young Eagles Program and on its chairmen past and present (including new co-chairs Sully Sullenberger and Jeff Skiles), is available from EAA's media download site ...

<https://eaa.box.net/shared/91h6gfz5me>

The EAA Young Eagles Program, now in its 17th year, has provided inspirational and educational first-flight experiences to nearly 1.5 million youth, thanks to the volunteer efforts of 42,000 EAA member pilots and countless supporters around the globe. In addition to Harrison Ford, previous EAA Young Eagles Program chairs were: Oscar-winning actor and avid pilot Cliff Robertson (1992-1993); and aviation legend Chuck Yeager (1994-2003).

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*EAA President Tom Poberezny speaks while incoming and outgoing EAA Young Eagles chairmen — (l-r) Sullenberger, Skiles, and Ford — listen in. [\[Link to photo\]](#)*



*California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger praised Ford for his service and commended Sullenberger and Skiles for stepping up to lead the EAA Young Eagles Program. [\[Link to photo\]](#)*

*EAA embodies the spirit of aviation through the world's most engaged community of aviation enthusiasts. EAA's 160,000 members and 1,000 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 activities, call 800-JOIN-EAA (800-564-6322) or go to [www.eaa.org](http://www.eaa.org).*

## Harrison Ford names US Airways Flt. 1549 pilots Sullenberger and Skiles as successors to lead EAA Young Eagles Program

*Program gives inspirational and educational flights to 80,000+ youth annually*

SANTA MONICA, Cal. — September 29, 2009 — Captain **Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger** and First Officer **Jeffrey Skiles**, known for their expert handling of their airliner’s emergency landing in the Hudson River in January, today took the helm as co-chairmen of the EAA Young Eagles Program. In a news conference, EAA member, pilot, and famed actor **Harrison Ford** officially passed the baton after having served for five years as the chairman of this program that uses aviation to inspire and educate youth.

EAA Chairman/President Tom Poberezny, who launched the EAA Young Eagles Program in 1992, moderated the news conference. Later this evening, Poberezny will host a special dinner recognizing Ford for his service and welcoming the program’s new co-chairs. “I’m eager to thank Harrison tonight for his engagement, dedicated leadership, and active participation,” Poberezny said.

“Harrison and I were delighted when Sully and Jeff agreed to co chair the program. They were ideal candidates not only because of the skill they demonstrated on that fateful day in January but also, and perhaps more significantly, because of the leadership they’ve shown since that time,” Poberezny added. “They’ve been excellent ambassadors on behalf of aviation.”

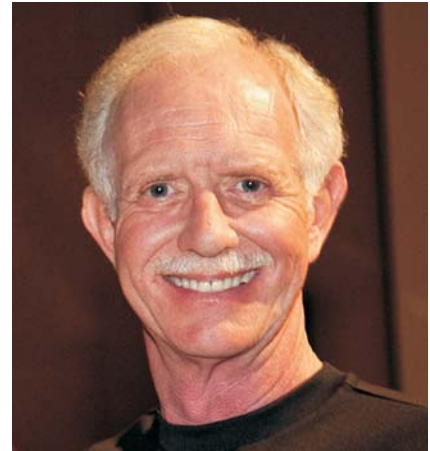
Ford agreed. “For five years as the program chair, I’ve stressed the program’s message of *earned reward*, showing young people that, by disciplining and applying themselves, they can earn marvelous rewards, such as the freedom and thrill of flight,” Ford said. “Now, Sully and Jeff will add an emphasis on the value of training, preparation, and teamwork. No one could bring more credibility in sharing these concepts with our youth,” Ford added.

Sullenberger and Skiles accepted the offer to lead the program in discussions with Poberezny and Ford that took place during this year’s EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, which is widely considered the world’s premier aviation event.

“After having the opportunity to learn more about the EAA Young Eagles Program while I was in Oshkosh, Jeff and I were inspired to get involved. Co-chairing the program is an opportunity that I welcome,” said Sullenberger. “Jeff and I are honored to take the stick from Harrison Ford, who has gracefully guided the program for the past five years.”

For Skiles, a rekindled enthusiasm for flight fueled his acceptance of the co-chair role. “I’m grateful to EAA and the AirVenture Oshkosh convention for allowing me to fall in love with aviation for a second time in my life. I’m eager to share this passion with young people and encourage their participation in aviation,” Skiles said.

The EAA Young Eagles Program, now in its 17<sup>th</sup> year, has provided inspirational and educational first-flight experiences to nearly 1.5 million youth, thanks to the volunteer efforts of 42,000 EAA member pilots and countless supporters around the globe. In addition to Ford, previous EAA Young Eagles Program chairs were: Oscar-winning actor and avid pilot Cliff Robertson (1992-1993); and aviation legend Chuck Yeager (1994-2003).



*“Sully” Sullenberger*



*Jeff Skiles*



*Harrison Ford*

## Ford names Sullenberger and Skiles as successors

(con't, page 2 of 2)

Highlights of Harrison Ford's chairmanship of the EAA Young Eagles Program include the following:

- ▶ Nearly 500,000 young people received inspirational first-flight Young Eagles experiences while he chaired the program.
- ▶ He personally raised considerable funds for the program by donating auction items such as movie-set experiences.
- ▶ He elevated the stature of the Gathering of Eagles event, which takes place during EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, to make it a more effective fundraising vehicle for the program.
- ▶ He enhanced the program's public profile and exposure.
- ▶ He emphasized the "ambassadorship" message, underscoring the EAA Young Eagles Program's significant potential to enhance the image of general aviation among policymakers and the broad public.
- ▶ He personally provided flights to nearly 300 Young Eagles.

Sporty's Pilot Shop, in partnership with EAA, provides free online flight training to participating youth who are inspired by the Young Eagles flight experience to continue pursuing an interest in aviation. ConocoPhillips is the presenting sponsor of the EAA Young Eagles Program. Learn more at <http://www.young eagles.org>.

EAA embodies the spirit of aviation through the world's most engaged community of aviation enthusiasts. EAA's 160,000 members and 1,000 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 activities, call 800-JOIN-EAA (800-564-6322) or go to <http://www.eaa.org>.

### **Resources for Editors:**

Clicking on the link below will take you to an online folder containing downloadable text, images, and video about the EAA Young Eagles Program.

<https://eaa.box.net/shared/91h6gfz5me>



Contact:  
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# EAA Info Sheet

## About the EAA Young Eagles Program



### **Basic Facts:**

- ▶ EAA launched the program in 1992 to give young people ages 8-17 an opportunity to fly in a general aviation airplane.
- ▶ Flights are offered free of charge and made possible through the generosity of EAA member volunteers.
- ▶ A major objective of the program upon its founding in 1992 was to inspire a million young people with introductory general aviation flights before the centennial of powered flight, a major nationwide celebration on Dec. 17, 2003, marking the Wright brothers' historic first at Kitty Hawk, NC. The EAA community rallied and met this objective on Nov. 13, 2003.
- ▶ More than 1.4 million Young Eagles have enjoyed a flight through the program. Young Eagles have been registered in more than 90 different countries and have been flown by more than 42,000 volunteer pilots.
- ▶ Actor, pilot, and aviation enthusiast Harrison Ford has served as the EAA Young Eagles Program's chairman since early 2004. The program's founding chairman in 1992 was actor Cliff Robertson, also an avid pilot. Two years later, aviation legend Chuck Yeager succeeded Robertson and served in the post through the end of 2003.

### **Benefits of the EAA Young Eagles Program:**

The EAA Young Eagles Program fulfills five important purposes:

- ▶ It inspires youth and promotes their achievement. Young Eagles flight experiences with EAA volunteer pilots reinforce the message of earned reward. The youngster sees firsthand that pilots — by applying themselves and being self-disciplined and focused on a goal — earn the reward of flight. The experience is also educational, reinforcing principles of math, physics, and mechanical engineering.
- ▶ It builds a future for aviation. Although not all youth inspired by an EAA Young Eagles experience will further pursue an interest in aviation, many of them will. The EAA Young Eagles program plants seeds that will reap the pilots, aeronautical engineers, and other aviation leaders of tomorrow.
- ▶ It provides a highly rewarding way to participate in aviation. Promoting participation in aviation is a major part of EAA's mission. EAA Young Eagles rallies and fly-ins help to keep our members active in pursuing their passion. These events give pilots another good reason to fly, present many other volunteering opportunities, and bring chapter members together, strengthening the community of aviation enthusiasts.
- ▶ It sustains regional and local airports. Many small airports struggle to remain solvent. EAA Young Eagles rallies and fly-ins provide local airports a much-needed boost in publicity and business. The vitality of these airports, in turn, promotes commerce and the economic activity in the surrounding local communities.
- ▶ It serves as an ambassador for general aviation. In many ways, particularly in the post-9/11 era, general aviation has been misunderstood and, consequently, "under attack." Policymakers and other public figures have assailed general aviation as a nuisance or a security threat. The EAA Young Eagles Program can help to dispel those misconceptions and show people in communities all across the nation the commercial, economic, educational, inspirational, and recreational value of general aviation.



*Actor, pilot, and aviation enthusiast Harrison Ford personally provided Young Eagles flights to nearly 300 young people while he served as EAA Young Eagles Program chairman from spring 2004 through fall 2009. During this time, nearly 500,000 young people received inspirational and educational aviation experiences, thanks to the efforts of thousands of volunteer EAA member pilots and supporters around the globe.*

# EAA Info Sheet

## About “Sully” Sullenberger and Jeff Skiles



### New EAA Young Eagles Program Co-Chairs

US Airways Captain Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger and First Officer Jeffrey Skiles, known for their expert handling of their airliner’s emergency landing in the Hudson River last winter, took the helm as co-chairmen of the EAA Young Eagles Program. In a Sept. 29 news conference, EAA member, pilot, and famed actor Harrison Ford officially passed the baton after having served for five years as the chairman of this program that uses aviation to inspire and educate youth.

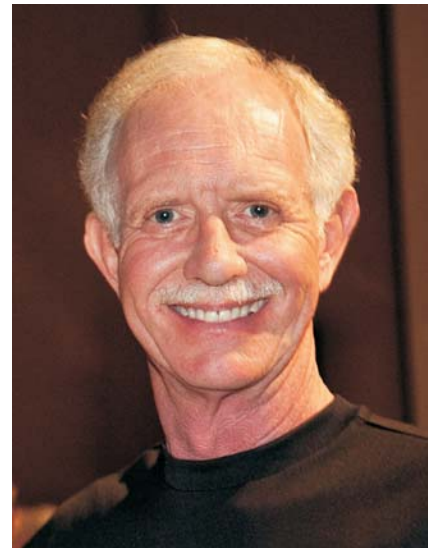
“Harrison and I were delighted when Sully and Jeff agreed to co chair the program. They were ideal candidates not only because of the skill they demonstrated on that fateful day in January but also, and perhaps more significantly, because of the leadership they’ve shown since that time,” said EAA Chairman/President Tom Poberezny. “They’ve been excellent ambassadors on behalf of aviation.”

### Captain Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger

- ▶ United States Air Force Academy graduate. Recipient of Outstanding Cadet in Airmanship Award. Undergraduate degree in psychology; masters degrees in industrial psychology (Purdue University) and public administration (University of Northern Colorado).
- ▶ U.S. Air Force fighter pilot from 1975 – 1980. In USAF, earned distinctions as flight leader, training officer, accident investigator, and captain.
- ▶ Airline pilot with Pacific Southwest Airlines and US Airways.
- ▶ Safety officer and accident investigator for the Air Line Pilots Association, International.
- ▶ Developer and trainer of US Airways crew resource management course.
- ▶ Founder in 2007 of Safety Reliability Methods consulting company.
- ▶ Subject of a Congressional resolution recognizing him for bravery in conduct of US Airways Flight 1549 ditch landing in Hudson River without serious injury to any aboard.
- ▶ Co-author of autobiographical book, *Highest Duty*, due for release in October 2009.

### First Officer Jeffrey Skiles

- ▶ Son of pilot parents, began flying at age 16. Gained experience flying with his father over the Alcan Highway to Alaska.
- ▶ Bachelor of science degree in geology and geophysics from University of Wisconsin – Madison.
- ▶ Professional pilot for more than 25 years, flying for cargo and commuter airlines before joining US Airways in 1980.
- ▶ Vice president of Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations.
- ▶ Subject of a Congressional resolution recognizing him for bravery in conduct of US Airways Flight 1549 ditch landing in Hudson River without serious injury to any aboard.



“Sully” Sullenberger



Jeff Skiles

# EAA Info Sheet

## About Harrison Ford's Service



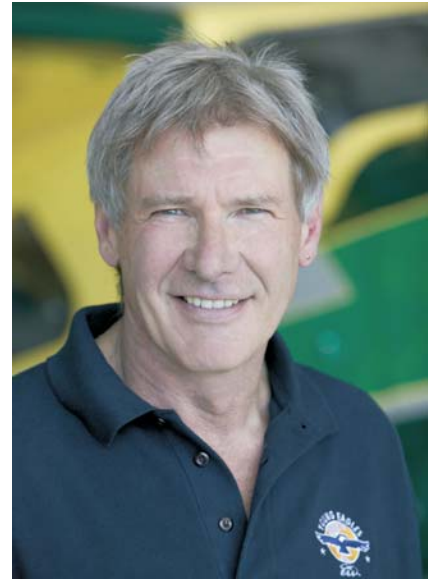
### *Thank You, Harrison Ford*

Actor, pilot, and aviation enthusiast Harrison Ford accepted the role of EAA Young Eagles chairman in the spring of 2004 and remained in the post until the fall of 2009.

Highlights of Harrison Ford's chairmanship of the program are the result of his leadership, dedication, passion, and active participation:

- ▶ Nearly 500,000 young people received inspirational first-flight Young Eagles experiences while he chaired the program.
- ▶ He personally raised considerable funds for the program by donating one-of-a-kind auction items such as movie-set experiences.
- ▶ He elevated the stature of the Gathering of Eagles, which takes place during EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, boosting its effectiveness as a fundraising vehicle for the program.
- ▶ He enhanced the program's public profile and exposure.
- ▶ He emphasized the "ambassadorship" message, underscoring the EAA Young Eagles Program's significant potential to enhance the image of general aviation among policymakers and the broad public.
- ▶ He personally provided flights to nearly 300 Young Eagles.

The EAA Young Eagles Program, now in its 17<sup>th</sup> year, has provided inspirational and educational first-flight experiences to nearly 1.5 million youth, thanks to the volunteer efforts of 42,000 EAA member pilots and countless supporters around the globe. Ford's predecessor program chairs were: Oscar-winning actor and avid pilot Cliff Robertson (1992-1993); and aviation legend Chuck Yeager (1994-2003).





# EAA Info Sheet

## About EAA and Its Chairman/President



### **EAA**

The Experimental Aircraft Association is a worldwide membership organization of more than 160,000 members in 100 nations. It began in 1953 as a small group of aircraft builders and restorers, but has grown through the years and is now dedicated to serving anyone with a passion for personal flight.

Collectively, members of this community actively share their passion for flying, building, and restoring personal aircraft. They exchange knowledge and information, gather together to celebrate flight, share resources to promote their common interest, coalesce to protect the privilege to fly, and work to make flight more accessible and affordable.

In addition to belonging to a worldwide and online community ([www.Oshkosh365.org](http://www.Oshkosh365.org)), EAA members gather in nearly 1,000 local chapters around the world that promote and encourage aviation in their local regions. Various interest groups offer activities for those interested in homebuilts, vintage aircraft, warbirds, aerobatic flight, ultralights, flight instruction, and more.

The EAA community also attends to aviation's legacy. Members conduct historic aircraft tours, honor the history of personal flight in their world-class museum, inspire youth with flights in general aviation aircraft, and educate young and old alike about aeronautical and aerospace science.

And, each summer, the EAA community hosts EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, "The World's Greatest Aviation Celebration." This weeklong member convention, fly-in, trade show, educational seminar, entertainment extravaganza, and regulatory summit is widely considered the world's premier aviation event.

EAA is based at the EAA Aviation Center in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Additional information is available at EAA's website at [www.eaa.org](http://www.eaa.org).

### ***Tom Poberezny, EAA Chairman and President***

Tom Poberezny became president of EAA in 1989 and also became the association's chairman of the board in February 2009.

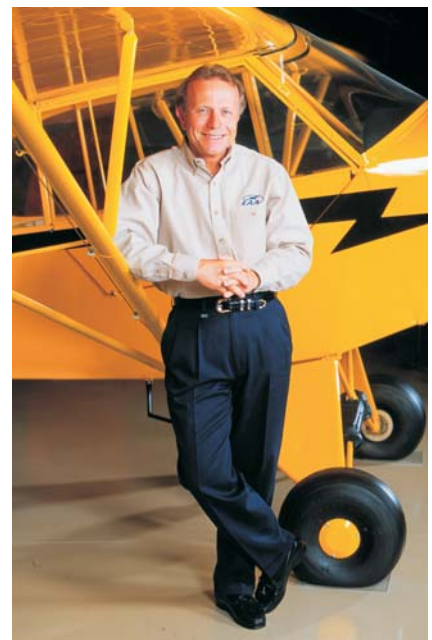
An accomplished aviator, Poberezny was a member of the U.S. National Unlimited Aerobatic Team that captured the World Championship in 1972. The following year, he won the U.S. National Unlimited Aerobatic Championship. He subsequently flew for 25 years as one wing of the legendary Eagles Aerobatic Team (originally the Red Devils).

In the late 1970s Poberezny spearheaded EAA's first major capital campaign, which supported construction of the current EAA Aviation Center headquarters and museum complex at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

In 1992, he led the creation of the EAA Young Eagles Program, widely considered the most successful aviation-related youth program in history. Through this program, EAA members have provided inspirational and educational flight experiences to approximately 1.5 million young people.

Most recently, Poberezny spearheaded EAA's leadership of the new sport pilot/light-sport aircraft categories in the U.S. These new categories for pilot and aircraft certification are breaking down time and expense barriers so that many more people may pursue their interest in flying.

Poberezny also has served as chairman of EAA's annual fly-in convention for more than 25 years. During that time, EAA AirVenture Oshkosh has become the world's largest general aviation event, an annual pilgrimage for aviation's most passionate participants.



# EAA Info Sheet

## About EAA AirVenture Oshkosh

EAA's fly-in convention, now known as EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, has been in existence nearly as long as the association itself. The first gathering was in September 1953 as a small part of the Milwaukee (Wis.) Air Pageant. That original EAA fly-in was attended by a handful of airplanes, mostly homebuilt and modified aircraft. Fewer than 150 people registered as visitors.

In 1959, the event moved to Rockford, Ill., where it stayed for 10 years before coming to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in 1970. In the nearly 40 years since, EAA AirVenture Oshkosh (as of 1998, the new name for the Fly-In Convention) continues to grow. The weeklong event begins in the last week of July. This year, expanded and upgraded convention grounds and facilities accommodated a weeklong attendance of 578,000 aviation enthusiasts and 10,000 aircraft.

EAA AirVenture Oshkosh is an international gathering place for aviation enthusiasts, and for aviation businesses, as more than 700 exhibitors showcase their products and services at Oshkosh each year. An AirVenture participant can study the latest aircraft and innovations; discover new ideas and techniques from the nearly 1,000 forums and workshops; see aviation's top personalities; or just talk airplanes with people from around the world.

Here are some of the features and attractions that made 2009 a banner year for the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh convention:

### Spectacular Aircraft

- ▶ The world's largest airliner, the Airbus A380;
- ▶ Virgin Galactic's WhiteKnightTwo mothership "Eve";
- ▶ Terrafugia, the "flying car";
- ▶ Spectacular Warbirds flights and the world's best aerobatic performers;
- ▶ 10,000 aircraft and 2,500 show planes.

### Celebration of Aviation and Its History

- ▶ The cockpit crew of US Airways flight 1549;
- ▶ Fly4Life, a celebration of aviation's role in humanitarian activities;
- ▶ WomenVenture, honoring women's role in aviation;
- ▶ Observation of several historic aviation anniversaries;
- ▶ Hundreds of vintage aircraft;
- ▶ Grand opening of Founder's Wing of EAA Museum.

### Entertainment

- ▶ A concert by the Doobie Brothers;
- ▶ The comedy of Jeff Dunham;
- ▶ Ford Fly-In Theater;
- ▶ Theater in the Woods.

### Knowledge, Information, and Education

- ▶ 800 exhibits;
- ▶ Nearly 1,000 forums and hands-on workshops.



*"The World's Greatest Aviation Celebration!"*



*The Airbus A380, the world's largest passenger airliner.*



*Virgin Galactic's space-tourism Mothership "Eve" (WhiteKnightTwo).*



*Heroic cockpit crew of US Airways Flight 1549.*