



# President's Page

by GERRY MOLIDOR IAC 14825

E-mail: GMolidor@aol.com

Tel: 815/344-3239



## Venture into the Unknown

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In the third week of October, the IAC and the rest of the EAA divisions will hold their board meetings in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The meetings are coming less than a month after our U.S. Nationals, and these activities are keeping things hopping at our Oshkosh office. We have a positive forward momentum going within our organization, and I intend to continue building on our refreshed direction.

I would like to recognize Contest Director Katie Kyer for her great work in organizing this year's U.S. Nationals. She has been working steadily on the project for several months, and her natural leadership ability is shining through. Katie is also IAC (Lone Star) Chapter 25's president and flies for UPS when she is not flying her Pitts S-2B. I hope many of you were able to make it to the Grayson County Airport to be a part of our fall classic. More on this year's U.S. Nationals will be featured in the December issue.

I have had the pleasure of working with a few of our members in the past months and have thoroughly enjoyed seeing their enthusiasm in learning new things about flying. There are many corners of aviation to explore (seaplane, skis, ultralight, vintage, and the list goes on), but none of them challenge the inner soul more than aerobatic flying. To master aerobatic flying, you not only have to understand and learn new skills, you also have to overcome an inner fear of the unknown. Any activity carries the potential of anxiety in learning, but aerobatic flying is one of the most dynamic

and exhilarating of them all, and the reward of accomplishing it is also the greatest.

Safety has always been a paramount concern of all our members and I am very pleased with the attitude culture that is present within our association. Our members are very concerned for the safety of other members, and because of this our sport has remained exceptionally safe. We can't let up in our quest to address all the risks we can and that is where belonging to a Chapter pays a big dividend. As members become involved with a Chapter, true friendships form and the promotion of safe practices comes naturally. Nothing is more fun than watching somebody learn aerobatics correctly from the start, and the IAC has been promoting this for more than 30 years. If you are reading this and don't belong to a Chapter, you may want to reconsider.

For quite some time now, I have had the pleasure of sharing the art of aerobatics with a great many pilots. It is a lot of fun to relive the excitement of discovery through a fellow aviator, and it amazes me that this sport remains the best-kept secret in aviation. Perhaps the reason for this is that we're bucking perceptions—perceptions that it is too dangerous of an activity, perceptions that our association is all about competition, and perceptions that it is out of reach financially. You name it; people think it. In reality, whenever a pilot chooses to venture into the unknown and learn about this incredible art, most come away with a

positive and invigorated feeling about what they have done.

So, how come we don't have two and three times the membership that we currently do? That, my friends, is the million dollar question. While we're waiting to crack that nut, I will keep on promoting the exact spark that keeps our active members so enthused about what they are doing. I will continue to lead our organization to promote safe aerobatic education. I will continue to emphasize the education of the art and allow the pilot to decide if he or she wants to compete. The training and discovery of the art is the same either way. I will continue to protect our access for waivers. I will continue to counter the negative perceptions of what we do, and I will continue trying to optimize the way the office fosters what you do best. Aerobatic flying opens up a vast sea of possibilities in flying enjoyment, and sooner or later the pilot masses will figure that out.

In the meantime, let's continue to do what we do best, and that's safely expose new members to the art. Continue to foster that healthy, safe attitude. Continue to foster the social fun of experiencing this art safely together. Continue to recognize new leaders that can help lead the journey—at Chapters and nationally. Be involved in helping pilots achieve their goals, and be sensitive in understanding that goals will vary. Remember, to teach someone something is to touch their lives forever. Fly safely and have fun together! ✈