



Our Mission: To interpret aviation, particularly that related to New York State, with exhibits and programs that educate, entertain and excite the public

Volume 35, Issue 2

Summer 2026

FOCUS ON YOUTH

ESAM continues to grow its youth programs. Here are some examples of what the museum offers our youth:

- **YOUNG AVIATORS SUMMER PROGRAM:** This year, we are offering two Young Aviator Summer Programs. For 10-12 year olds, we offer the *Becoming a Young Aviator* program. The program will take place Tuesday-Friday, August 11- August 14 from 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. For teenagers aged 13-17 years old, we are offering the *Aviation for Teens* program Tuesday-Friday the week of August 18-August 21 from 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. The fee for each program is \$300 which includes an Explorer Flight by Five Star Flight's team of professionals. Here is the Program outline: Students will spend the week at the Empire State Aerosciences Museum learning about aviation and what real pilots do on the ground and in the air. In this hands-on class, students will learn about the history of aviation and aircraft design, the forces of flight – how airplanes fly (thrust, lift, drag and flight control), the different parts of a plane, specific aircraft in the museum collection, and a variety of other aviation topics. Students will also have an opportunity to interact with guest speakers and have a guided tour of the museum's incredible exhibits and airpark, which features more than 20 historic military aircraft. Students will be able to get into the cockpits of some of these legendary fighter and attack aircraft. Students will also have the opportunity to enjoy a half-hour flight in an airplane. Due to the construction going on all around ESAM this summer, the Explorer Flight will be held at Richmor Aviation (right down the road from us). For further information, please visit sunysccc.edu Workforce Development Kid and Teen Academy. There are still some seats available.
- **YOUNG AVIATORS DAY PROGRAM:** These programs are held periodically, approximately every other month. Each session is devoted to a particular aviation topic. Separate sessions are held for grades K-2 and 3-6. See Page 6 of this newsletter for additional information.
- **SECONDARY SCHOOL, HOME SCHOOL AND COLLEGE TOURS:** School and home school tours can be scheduled throughout the school year through the ESAM Office (518-377-2191). The museum hosted nine school tours, three home school tours and two college tours in the past year.
- **SUMMER CAMP TOURS:** Four summer camps are currently scheduled to visit ESAM this summer. We expect more will sign up.
- **BIRTHDAY PARTIES:** Have some fun and learn about aviation at an ESAM birthday party. Five birthday parties have been held at ESAM in the past year. They have been very well received.
- **CIVIL AIR PATROL:** ESAM provides space and support for the Civil Air Patrol.
- **SCHOOL VACATION PROGRAMS:** ESAM offers programs during school vacations
- **SPECIAL EVENTS AND OTHER PROGRAMS:** ESAM's Jack-O'-Lanterns and Jets, and Christmas is in the Air bring many enthusiastic youngsters to the museum. Young people are readily welcomed to a host of other programs such as the monthly Fly-in-Breakfasts and Glenville Day.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is my pleasure to welcome **Dave Roe** to our short list of paid staff members.

Dave has begun his new full-time position, serving as ESAM's Operations Manager. In this role, he will be responsible for managing and executing the day-to-day business operations and policies of the museum. He will be working closely with the Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, paid staff, and volunteers to carry out ESAM's mission and execute the business plan.

More specifically, the Operations Manager responsibilities will include:

- Work closely with the Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and Treasurer to monitor and manage the museum's finances. Maintain appropriate fiscal procedures and controls.
- Supervise museum staff, identify job duties and priorities, perform annual performance evaluations, ensure compliance with Federal and NYS mandated training, report human resource concerns to the Executive Committee.
- Seek out and approve vendors/contractors for carrying out museum operations.
- Assist the Executive Committee in developing short and long-term business plans.
- Enact policies and procedures to ensure the safety of visitors, volunteers and museum staff. Assure compliance with building codes.
- Establish an on-site office and be available to staff and volunteers. In this regard, the Operations Manager is expected to be at the museum daily during normal business hours, and oftentimes on the weekend as needed.
- Assure compliance with the requirements of museum partners, such as the U.S. Department of Defense, and State and local governments.
- Organize and participate in regular meetings of the various museum committees and working groups, aimed at assuring coordination of efforts and fostering the identification of priorities and collaborative opportunities.
- Facilitate and be an active participant in ESAM's special events, fundraising initiatives, and educational programs.
- Assist grant writers in completing applications for grants, as needed.
- Inform the Executive Committee of short and long-term needs.
- Liaise with the technical and marketing groups to ensure a consistent message, both online and in person.
- Provide an effective facilities maintenance plan.

The Operations Manager position is critical to the success of the Museum. We look forward to supporting Dave as he embarks on this exciting period of growth for ESAM.

Sincerely,
Rich Bievenue, President



Rich Bievenue

PARADE SEASON IS UNDERWAY

ESAM's very impressive F-14 cockpit made its 2026 parade debut by participating in the Scotia Memorial Day Parade on May 20th. It followed up with the Burnt Hills Flag Day Parade on June 16th. Led by an ESAM sign carried by **Dave Roe** and **Fonz Diblasio**, towed by **Rich Bievenue**, manned by **John Kolwaite** and followed up by **Ricardo Madho** and **Peng Chen** with a sign advertising ESAM's Summer Fest, the cockpit drew oohs and aahs from parade spectators up and down Route 50. Thanks to Peng Chen for taking photos.

Next on the agenda was the Clifton Park Fourth of July Parade.



ESAM WELCOMES MIGUEL TEIXEIRA TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ESAM is pleased to welcome **Miguel Teixeira** as a Trustee. His appointment runs through December 31, 2027.

In recent years, Miguel has been actively involved in planning for and participating in ESAM's major community programs. He grew up and for the last 30+ years has lived across the street from the museum. He started coming to the museum because of **Dan Wilson** and one of the reasons he stays is to continue to remember him.

Miguel owns a number of Dunkin Donut franchises, through which he supports many community activities, including ESAM.

Welcome aboard, Miguel.

RESTORATION TEAM CONTINUES POSITIONING WORK IN THE AIR PARK

Moving the planes in the Air Park to accommodate repaving presented both challenges and opportunities for the Restoration Team. Positioning planes weighing from 9,000 lbs to 85,000 lbs, with different height wings, different length noses and different tire conditions was, to say the least, challenging. The limited length of the tow bar, the need to use nitrogen bottles on tires that wouldn't hold air, and the need to use three vehicles to move the C-130s had the team overcoming various obstacles. Once the planes were in place, they were mounted on steel plates to keep them from sinking into the pavement. Many of them are now raised on landing gear stands and some are stabilized with supports attached to the fuselage or wings. Kudos to the Restoration Teams for their efforts.



ESAM's F-84 is securely anchored in place in the repaved Air Park

OPERATION SONG RETURNING TO ESAM IN SEPTEMBER

Operation Song empowers veterans, active-duty military members, and their families to tell their stories through the process of songwriting. The story tellers need no musical or writing skills, only a willingness to share their stories and, with the help of professional songwriters, transform them into song. Their stories will be presented at ESAM in song on Saturday, September 19th.

ESAM SUMMERFEST CANCELLED FOR 2026 HOPEFULLY IT WILL TAKE PLACE IN 2027

After meeting with new **Director of Operations Dave Roe**, the members of the Executive Committee have come to the conclusion that it is best that we cancel the SummerFest and Drone Show event for this year. A key factor in this decision is the extensive Schenectady Airport construction work that is being done around the museum. This was not an easy decision, but we were all in agreement that it is in the best interest of the Museum at this time.

CARS AND CAFFEINE: MAY 17 AND SEPTEMBER 27

ESAM hosted a very successful **Cars and Caffeine Show** on May 17th. If you missed it, or if you're ready for more, the museum is hosting another show from 9 am to noon on September 27th.

**GLENVILLE DAY, AUGUST 23RD**

With generous support from the **Town of Glenville**, ESAM has declared August 23rd as Glenville Day.

All Glenville residents will receive free admission to the museum on this day. Day, genre

ESAM CONTINUES YOUNG AVIATORS SINGLE-DAY SERIES

Winter and Spring school breaks saw the continuation of ESAM's Young Aviators Program, coordinated by **Patti Southworth**. The presentations in this series are directed toward two age groups: Grades K-2 and Grades 3-6. The Winter series offered The Wright Brothers for the younger group and F-15 Class and Model Building for the older group. The Spring series offered Getting to Know the C-130 to the younger group and B-17 Class and Model Building for the older group.

Another series took place on June 30th: Space/NASA for the younger group and SR-71 for the older group.

And yet another series was held on July 16th with both age groups learning about helicopters.

ESAM is pleased to extend its reach to Young Aviators.



DIGGING CONTINUES

Airport improvements (replacement of taxiways and parking area) are in full swing around ESAM. The improvements will be ongoing through the summer and into the fall. Nevertheless, the museum remains open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 am to 4 pm. Don't let the construction deter you from coming.



Views of the grounds in front of the museum (top)
and the area in back of the museum (bottom)

ALEX AWARD NOMINATIONS DUE BY SEPTEMBER 11TH

Each year, one or more ESAM volunteers are presented with the Alex Award for their sustained and outstanding volunteerism. Named in memory of a truly great ESAM volunteer, **Roland "Alex" Alexander**, the award recognizes the volunteer's service, cooperation, teamwork and a dedicated pursuit of excellence.

The ESAM Board of Trustees is actively seeking applications for this year's nominees for the Alex Award. The Board of Trustees welcomes applications, which may be sent to the ESAM office (250 Rudy Chase Drive, Glenville, NY 12302 or esam.office@gmail.com). Applications must be received no later than September 11, 2026.

The application should clearly describe why the individual deserves the award, and must be from ESAM members who have worked with the individual. Therefore, the application is based on personal experience, rather than second-hand information. The application can be hand-written, typed or submitted through email, and must provide the following information:

- The name of the nominee and a statement that he or she is an ESAM member in good standing
- The dates of the volunteer's service (must have been an active volunteer for a minimum of five years)
- A description of the personal qualities of the individual that demonstrate the characteristics of his or her pursuit of excellence
- A list of the activities in which the individual has been a participant
- A list of the individual's accomplishments supporting the development, operation and enhancement of ESAM and its mission
- The names of at least two ESAM members in good standing who have worked with the individual in an ESAM volunteer setting and who are making the nomination. The application must be signed and dated by the two members making the nomination.

The final choice of the recipient is a difficult one as there always are a number of outstanding representatives of Alex's qualities. We look forward to the challenge and the reward of recognizing another outstanding volunteer at the Annual Meeting in October.

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY
USA**



AeroNotes

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Empire State Aerosciences Museum

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OH-6A HOLDS RECORD FOR LONGEST FLIGHT BY A HELICOPTER

ESAM is pleased to have an OH-6A Cayuse helicopter in its collection. The OH-6A not only distinguished itself in Vietnam, but also, since 1966, an OH-6A has held the record for the longest nonstop, unrefueled flight by any helicopter.

In April 1966 retired **Air Force Lieutenant Colonel** and **Hughes Test Pilot Bob Ferry** took off from Culver City, California. Fifteen hours and eighteen minutes later he landed at Ormond Beach, Florida, having covered 2,213.1 miles in the air. Helped by a tailwind, Ferry averaged nearly 150 mph and over the course of the flight climbed to more than 24,000 feet altitude. Ferry went on a special diet for weeks before the flight, losing 20 pounds so he could carry more fuel. When he landed, it is said that he didn't have enough fuel to fill a coffee can.

During the flight, he ran the chase plane carrying an official representative of the National Aeronautics Association out of fuel, forcing it to land in Tallahassee to refuel.



ESAM's OH-6A Cayuse

A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW OPERATIONS MANAGER

Greetings ESAM Members,

It's your new Operations Manager (and Volunteer Coordinator) **Dave Roe**. Our staff, our Board members, and many of our volunteers have some great ideas for the museum. However, we need your help to get them done.

One such opportunity to serve is at our upcoming **Founders Garden Project** that will take place over two Saturdays in early fall: September 26th and October 3rd from 9-2 (or however long your schedule allows you to help out). We will supply lunch and the materials. However, if you have a point shovel, hoe, metal garden rake, or wheel barrow, please bring them with you. We will be moving the Founders memorials from the gate by the Restoration area to underneath the Concorde. We also want to relocate the Memorial Brick garden there and subsequently reinitiate that program. We have a beautiful area under the Concorde, so we want to take full advantage of it. Please contact me at 518-377-2191 if you have a specific interest or project that you want to initiate or if you want to know where you can volunteer.

WORLD WAR II WASP HISTORY PRESENTATION

ESAM's Fly-In Breakfast on July 18 featured guest speaker **Peg DiBenedetto**.

Author Margaret DiBenedetto is the daughter of WASP Ruth Franckling Reynolds (Class 43-W-2). Franckling was a flight instructor in Kingston, New York State before joining the WASPs. She was a US Army Air Forces Pilot for 18 months, ferrying primarily trainers and pursuit planes from factories to airbases across the US. She was one of more than 1,000 WWII Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs).

Peg grew up listening to her mother's stories about flying for the WASP. She has worked closely with the **National WASP Museum** in Sweetwater, Texas and has written a historical novel to tell some of her mother's flying experiences. During her presentation, she discussed the WASP and her mother's aviation adventures. There was an accompanying slide show and questions & answer period. Her book, **Silver Dollar Girls**, is a combination of World War II history and a fictional family narrative, set in a rural valley of the Catskill Mountains during the 2020 COVID lockdown. The stories of Ruth Franckling are woven throughout, and are true. Peg did a book signing after her presentation.

GSA AREA PROPERTY MANAGER VISITS ESAM

Shawn Martin, the General Services Administration Area Property Officer, visited ESAM on June 3rd to complete a compliance check on the C-130 and the forklift that ESAM received through the Federal Donation Program. While at ESAM, he also discussed the Federal Donation Program in general with **ESAM President Rich Bievenue** and other ESAM representatives. As an eligible member, ESAM has benefited from surplus items in the past. We were pleased to have shown off the museum to Mr. Martin.

LETTERS, POSTS AND EMAILS LIKE THESE WE LIKE TO RECEIVE

Good Afternoon,

As the school year winds down and we all catch our breaths, I must take a moment to say THANK YOU for your incredible donation in support of this year’s Grimshaw Parade of Baskets!... We are so grateful for your generosity! 🍷🍷🍷

Sincerely,
Becky Pethybridge & Dawn Pulverenti
Grimshaw Parade of Baskets Coordinators

Dear Chad,

This is our official thank you for your donation of two complimentary Family Memberships to the Empire State Aerosciences Musuem.

These tickets were very popular and helped us raise nearly \$800 at the raffle table.

Sincerely,
Susan Burton
Reading is Fun Raffle Coordinator



Our class had a lot of fun at the Aerosciences Museum last week. We are very grateful for the tour and for your service! We hope you enjoy the rest of your summer!

North Colonie ESY program

Thank You
Mr. Kevin
Mr. Brian
ESAM

We learned so much.
Thank you for remembering how children learn!!

Nathan’s Birthday Party

OUR SUPPORTERS		
	Business Benefactor	
	BBL Construction	
	Friend of ESAM	
	Stephen & Sherri Ruggles	
	VIP Contributing	
	David Buono	
	Family	
Peter Berrian	April Bourdeau	Michelle Budge
Kenneth Chaney	Tim Cruver	D'Ambrosio Family
Jonathan Davis	Mary Dedon	Matthew Deet
Ciro DiDonna	Andrew Dijstelberaen	Richard Grant
Sam Green	Ryan Henderson	Hasna Kaddo
Becky Kencsan	Ben Lazarus	Elizabeth Posson
Ashley Rouse	Patricia Saskowicz	Suzanne Spagnolo
Hanna Wells	James Yetto	

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	Individual	
Michael Mills	Mahlon Richards	
	Senior Citizen/Student	
John Gansfuss	Ron & Sharon Locke	Rev. Moonhawk
Elizabeth Sullivan		
	Library	
Glenville Public Library	Mechanicville Public Library	Schenectady Public Library

MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

ESAM thanks the following people for their generosity to the museum:

Phil Ariony
Peter Ontkush

Carol Borthwick
Carol VanValkenburgh

Nicole McNamara

ESAM TO OBTAIN DC-3

ESAM has won a bid for a DC-3 aircraft currently located at **CV-TEC Plattsburgh**. **Board Member John Panoski** submitted the bid and it has been approved. The school requires that the aircraft be moved off of their property before this Winter, at the latest.



The Empire State Aerosciences Museum is supported in part by:

Business Benefactors

All Seasons Equipment
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James Liguori
John Panoski
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Ruggles
Maureen Sauter
Howard Schlossberg & Michelle Ostrelch
The Family of Jansz Vander Veer*

*ESAM Charter Member

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

- **Nancy Sagendorf** donated two parachutes from the collection of **Victor Rickard**. Victor Rickard flew the first plane to land at the Schenectady County Airport, June 1, 1927, and operated a flying school and a taxi service at the airport.
- **Anthony Vigneri** donated thirteen diecast aircraft models with transport totes.
- **John Gibson** donated 26 American Historical Society journals.

RALPH ROSENTHAL, IN MEMORIAM

Past President of the Empire State Aerosciences Museum Ralph Rosenthal passed away on April 11, 2026, shortly after his 89th birthday. Born in Amsterdam, Holland, Ralph spent his youth hiding from the Nazis while his parents were part of the Underground Resistance.

Ralph and his family emigrated to the United States in 1951 and lived in Bronxville, NY. Ralph attended high school there and became an Air Force National Guard member. This allowed him to also receive his citizenship. After high school, Ralph attended Bard College and then lived in Jackson Heights, NY.

Ralph was a dedicated volunteer and Trustee at ESAM. He spearheaded the museum's World War I exhibit. He served as President of the Board of Trustees from 2011-2014. The museum's achievements during his tenure as President included installation of a new, electronic sign in front of the museum; acquisition of three aircraft (Mig-15, Supermarine Scimitar, and the F3D Skyknight) from the **Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum**; a visit from the Collings Foundation B-17, B-24 and P-51; holding a WW II/USO-themed Hangar Dance; hosting the National Intercollegiate Flying Association Regional SAFECON in association with **Schenectady County Community College**; and celebrating ESAM's 30th Anniversary

ESAM is pleased that Ralph's family designated the museum to receive donations in his memory. Recent contributions include \$550 from **Stephen** and **Sherri Ruggles** and **Helle Moore**.



Ralph Rosenthal

PLEASE CONSIDER REMEMBERING ESAM IN YOUR WILL

Over the years, ESAM has benefitted from numerous people who have remembered the museum in their wills. Through estate planning, the museum has received monetary distributions that have allowed us to expand programming and maintain an 80-year-old building.

In recent years, we are grateful to **Jack Ericson, Whitney Denio** and **Judge Guido Loyola** for providing for the museum in their wills. Please consider remembering ESAM in your will.

COCKPIT INSTRUMENTS HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED TO THE RESTORATION TEAM

Through the cooperative efforts of the Curatorial and Restoration Teams, a number of cockpit instruments that had long been in storage were made readily available for aircraft restoration.

Thanks to **Bob Vore** for spearheading this effort.

GRANT RECEIVED FOR HALLOWEEN EVENT

We are pleased to report that ESAM was awarded a \$1000 grant from the **Schenectady County Legislature** for our **2026 Jack-o'-Lanterns & Jets** event.

This will be our third annual event where we invite families to tour a Halloween-decorated museum.

"FLIGHTS FOR VETERANS" EARNS \$5,500 FOR ESAM

ESAM has received a check in the amount of \$5,500 from the **Glenville Rotary**. The money is ESAM's portion of the proceeds from the second annual "Flights for Veterans" event that was held at the museum in November 2025.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered and/or attended this event.

ESAM Membership Application

Please check one: NEW MEMBERSHIP _____ RENEWAL _____

ANNUAL DUES:

INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY

_____ Senior Citizen \$35
 _____ Student \$35
 _____ Individual \$45
 _____ Family \$75

VIP

_____ Contributing \$80
 _____ Supporting \$135
 _____ Sustaining \$285
 _____ Galaxy Club \$500
 _____ Friend of ESAM \$1,000

BUSINESS

_____ Supporter \$285
 _____ Patron \$500
 _____ Benefactor \$1,000
 _____ Library \$75
 _____ Small Business \$100

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home (____) _____

Work (____) _____

E-mail address _____

Please make your check payable to ESAM

Mail to ESAM, 250 Rudy Chase Drive,
 Glenville, NY 12302

If your company offers a matching gift program, please contact them with the amount of your gift.

Matching Gift Company _____

Empire State Aerosciences Museum
250 Rudy Chase Drive Glenville, NY
12302



Happenings at ESAM

MUSEUM HOURS

Summer Hours: (Father's Day through Labor Day)

Open Tuesday through Sunday 10 AM to 4 PM. Closed Monday

Winter Hours: (Labor Day until Father's Day)

Open Friday through Sunday 10 AM to 4 PM. Closed Monday through Thursday

Closed on New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day
For all other federal holidays or school breaks, contact the museum in advance to confirm.

General Museum Admission – \$15 per adult (effective June 1, 2026); \$11 per senior and military; \$9 age 5-16;
4 and under free when accompanied by an adult

Simulated Reality Vehicle (SRV) – Ride: \$5

Jansz Vander Veer Research Center/Library Hours – Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday

9 AM to 12 noon, by appointment only. Appointments can be made through the ESAM Office at 518-377-2191

July 18, Saturday - Pancake Breakfast: 8:30-10:30 AM. All you can eat: \$12 for ages 15 and older, \$8 for children 6-14, free for children under 6. Menu varies with pancakes, French toast, sausage, eggs, applesauce, juice and coffee/tea. The public is invited to attend.

Pilots: Tower Frequency 121.30; Ground 121.90. Land at Schenectady County Airport and taxi to the north parking area. Browse the Museum beginning at 10 AM. Museum Admission: \$13 per adult; \$11 per senior and military; \$9 age 5-16; 4 and under free when accompanied by an adult.

July 18, Saturday - Speaker: 10 AM. Peg DiBenedetto. Peg's mother was a WASP in World War II

July 20, Monday - Board of Trustees Meeting: 7 PM ESAM Community Room

August 11-14, Tuesday-Friday - Summer STEM Program Ages 8-12: Sign up through Schenectady County Community College.

August 18-21, Tuesday-Friday - Summer STEM Program Ages 13-18: Sign up through Schenectady County Community College.

August 23, Sunday - Glenville Day: Residents of the Town of Glenville receive free admission to the museum.

September 19, Saturday - Pancake Breakfast: 8:30-10:30 AM. All you can eat: \$12 for ages 15 and older, \$8 for children 6-14, free for children under 6. Menu varies with pancakes, French toast, sausage, eggs, applesauce, juice and coffee/tea. The public is invited to attend.

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September 19, Saturday - Operation Song

September 21, Monday - Board of Trustees Meeting: 7 PM ESAM Community Room

September 26, Saturday - Founders Garden Project: 9 AM-4 PM: Volunteers needed. See Page 10 for more details.

October 3, Saturday - Founders Garden Project: 9 AM-4 PM: Volunteers needed. See Page 10 for more details.