

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**EAA # 282**



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### **EAA's B-17 Bomber Tour Coming to St. Pete / Clearwater Airport**

Get up-close and personal with the airplane known as the Flying Fortress, considered one of the greatest military airplanes ever built. On Friday, January 30 Thru Sunday, February 1, 2015, visit the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport (PIE) to see history come alive with the sights and sounds of yesteryear. Participants will have the opportunity to see this historic WWII bomber, take a tour and a "mission" flight. The event will be hosted by Clearwater's Experimental Aircraft Association's (EAA) Chapter 282. Event parking will be at SheltAir located at 15875 Fairchild Drive in Clearwater.

The three-day visit to PIE is part of the EAA's restored B-17 bomber Aluminum Overcast national tour.

Book early and save on flights. Departures are planned for 10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m. both days. Purchase tickets online at [www.b17.org](http://www.b17.org) or by calling 1-800-359-6217.

Advanced pricing:

- \$409 for EAA members
- \$449 for non-members (includes a free one-year membership)

On-site pricing:

- \$435 for EAA members
- \$475 for non-members (includes a free one-year membership)

Ground tours begin at 2 p.m. and continue until 5 p.m. all 3 days. Cost per person is \$10 and free for active military and veterans. Memorabilia will be available for purchase along with many free photo opportunities.



#### **About EAA's Aluminum Overcast**

The Aluminum Overcast was built in 1945, but was delivered to the Army Air Corps too late to see active service in World War II. The B-17 was donated to the EAA Aviation Foundation in 1981 with the provision of the aircraft being maintained in airworthy condition. After being displayed at the EAA AirVenture Museum in Oshkosh, Wisconsin for a decade, the airplane made its national tour debut in the spring of 1994.

#### **About the Experimental Aircraft Association**

EAA embodies the spirit of aviation through the world's most engaged community of aviation enthusiasts. EAA's 185,000 members and 1,000 local chapters enjoy the fun and camaraderie of sharing their passion for flying, building and restoring recreational aircraft. Call 800.JOIN.EAA (800-564-6322) or go to [www.eaa.org](http://www.eaa.org) for more information on EAA and its programs.

**For the complete Tour Schedule visit: [www.b17.org/tour/](http://www.b17.org/tour/)**



# Experience **HISTORY**



## **One of the Great Airplanes from 'The Greatest Generation'**

**EAA's B-17 Flying Fortress comes to  
St. Petersburg / Clearwater international Airport (PIE)  
for flights, tours.**

For America's young men 70 years ago, their thoughts weren't on college and careers. They were focused on survival and a battle bigger than any of them individually during World War II.

For some that meant in a foxhole in Europe, Africa or some Pacific island, or perhaps aboard a battleship with eyes focused for enemy submarines. For thousands of young men, most barely out of high school themselves, it meant long days airborne in a freezing aluminum tube, hoping that it wasn't their day to be unlucky.

A rare B-17 bomber, owned and operated by the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, is making a stop locally as part of its nationwide tour that salutes those veterans and helps the rest of us discover that history. The aircraft will be based at SheltAir FBO located at St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday (Jan 30 thru Feb 1). Flights from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, guided public tours from 2:00 PM till 5:00 PM. All are invited to see and fly in this historic aircraft.

More than 12,000 of these bombers were built during the early 1940s. More than 4,000 were lost during the war, mostly in high-danger bombing missions over Europe. That made the odds not in favor of those 18- to 25-year-olds who manned the airplane. Still, the airplane itself evokes strong memories for those who came back from the conflict.

**“I love the airplane,” said Capt. Bob Abresch of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who piloted B-17s for the 398th Bomb Group during World War II. “It had a great record, was nice to fly and very well built.”**

**This particular B-17 currently on national tour is named *Aluminum Overcast*, in honor of a term coined by a wartime reporter who witnessed the flying armada of bombers overhead and remarked on the *Aluminum Overcast* that would soon be flying over Germany.**

**This particular airplane had an interesting life before arriving in 1981 at EAA, an international organization of more than 180,000 members dedicated to recreational flying. The bomber was built in 1944 and delivered to the U.S. Army at the end of World War II. It was eventually sold as surplus for just \$750, and spent nearly 40 years doing assorted jobs ranging from a firebomber in the western United States to a mapping aircraft over the Middle East.**

**In the late 1970s, the aircraft was purchased by an Oklahoma group to be restored as a World War II bomber. Time and finances were against the private group, though, so it donated the aircraft to EAA in 1981 with the provision it be restored to flying status. It took EAA more than a decade to fully restore the airplane, which then began its national tours in 1994. The aircraft is now more than 90 percent accurate to its wartime construction, with allowances for updated technology in such areas as navigation and brakes.**

**“It is a truly amazing airplane to fly,” said Sean Elliott, an EAA vice president who regularly flies the aircraft on tour and gives flight tests to other B-17 pilots. “It’s more than an airplane, however. It’s a piece of living history that allows us to honor our veterans and talk about their sacrifices. It’s a true privilege to be able to do that throughout the country.”**

**More information about the airplane’s history and how Tampa Bay Area residents can tour and fly in this historic bomber is available at [www.B17.org](http://www.B17.org). The airplane’s stop in this area is supported by the volunteer efforts of local EAA members and chapters who host the airplane during its national tours.**



**Experience**

# HISTORY

Join us for an unforgettable experience aboard one of the few remaining airworthy B-17s in the world. Visit [B17.org](http://B17.org) or call 800-359-6217 for more information and to reserve your flight.

**EAA Members: \$409**

**Non-Members: \$449**  
(Includes a FREE 1-year EAA Membership)

**St. Petersburg / Clearwater International Airport**  
**Friday, Saturday, and Sunday (Jan 30 - Feb 1)**

The above prices are for advance bookings only. E-Z Pay payment plans are available. Flights purchased on site are \$435 for EAA members and \$475 for Non-members. Once the B-17 is on location, the discounted prices are no longer available for that stop.

*"Keep 'em Flying"* - Revenues from the B-17 tour help cover maintenance and operations costs for Aluminum Overcast.

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