

# Gov. Walker: Walker, Jim Lovell: Wisconsin remembers Apollo era, looks to future of space exploration

Posted on Friday, Jul 21, 2017

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

## Contact:

Tom Evenson, [\(608\) 266-2839](tel:6082662839)

**MADISON** - Governor Scott Walker joined Jim Lovell, former NASA astronaut, veteran of four space missions, and the first man to journey twice to the Moon, today in releasing the following column highlighting Wisconsin's contributions in space and looking forward to the future of space exploration in America.

## Wisconsin Remembers Apollo Era, Looks to Future of Space Exploration

Every year about this time in Wisconsin, the Wittman Regional Airport becomes the busiest airport in the world.... busier than Chicago's O'Hare, than New York's La Guardia, than Los Angeles, London, Singapore, and all the rest. Oshkosh, Wisconsin is the home of EAA AirVenture, an annual gathering of more than 500,000 flight enthusiasts.

From its beginnings in 1953, the Experimental Airplane Association's premier event has become the biggest fly-in in the world, featuring everything from kit planes to Warbirds, acrobatics to antiques, unique one-of-a-kind experimental aircrafts to hundreds upon hundreds of private planes piloted by enthusiasts from all over the world. It is a one-of-a-kind event that runs from July 24-30 this year.

But EAA AirVenture doesn't just focus on the skies - it also looks to the stars. As in years past, the event includes several panels, presentations, movies, and sessions relating to space, and provides the opportunity to meet representatives from NASA

and the space industry.

This year is special because 2017 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the launch of the Apollo program that placed Americans on the Moon two and a half years later. It is, therefore, fitting that EAA AirVenture host a “Salute to Apollo” on Friday, July 28 featuring Apollo astronauts Buzz Aldrin, Frank Borman, Joe Engle, Dick Gordon, Fred Haise, Jim Lovell, Al Worden, and iconic flight director Gene Kranz, who will discuss their experiences and talk about America’s future in space.

It is also fitting that this reunion will take place in Wisconsin. Milwaukee’s AC Electronic Circuits and later Delco (forerunners of today’s Delphi Electronics & Safety) were responsible for the Apollo guidance system and built the lunar roving vehicle that first traveled on the Moon.

Today, the United States is getting ready to leave Earth’s orbit once again, preparing to launch into deep space by the end of this decade. Wisconsin is playing a vital role. Almost two dozen companies – including several in Milwaukee and one right in Oshkosh – are helping build NASA’s next great spacecraft, the massive Space Launch System (SLS) rocket and the Orion crew capsule. Together, they will take humans farther into space than ever before.

Wisconsin’s manufacturing and engineering expertise will go with them. Companies such as Amorim Cork Composites, 3M, Maynard Steel Casting Company, Pierce Manufacturing, Snap-On, and Oshkosh’s own Multicircuits PCB are contributing manufacturing, engineering, analysis, technology, and exquisite quality control to the exacting task of creating the components and knowledge necessary to launch Americans once more into deep space.

These Wisconsin businesses join hundreds of other companies throughout the nation in forming the backbone of America’s aerospace and aeronautical manufacturing and technology industry.

As important as manufacturing the rocket and crew capsule are, astronauts are of course integral to human space exploration, and Wisconsin is the proud home to half-a-dozen former astronauts. Curt Michel (La Crosse), 3-time space shuttle astronaut Leroy Chiao (Milwaukee), Deke Slayton of the Apollo-Soyuz test project (Sparta), 3-time shuttle and Soyuz team member Jeffrey Williams (Superior), 4-time shuttle astronaut Mark Lee (Viroqua), and 4-time shuttle astronaut Daniel Brandenstein (Watertown) all hailed from Wisconsin.

Today, we especially highlight Deke Slayton's contributions to the Apollo project. Deke was an American World War II pilot, aeronautical engineer, and test pilot who was selected as one of the original NASA Mercury Seven astronauts and became NASA's first Chief of the Astronaut Office. Wisconsinites are proud of our historic contributions to space exploration, and we honor the work of Deke Slayton.

President Trump and Vice President Pence have also signaled their strong support of human space exploration by signing recent legislation to fund and advance NASA programs and reestablish the National Space Council. As a fully-invested "space state," Wisconsin joins them in looking to the stars, ushering in a new era for American leadership and discovery in space.

*Scott Kevin Walker is the 45th and current Governor of Wisconsin*

*A veteran of four space missions, Jim Lovell became the first man to journey twice to the Moon.*

### **About EAA AirVenture Oshkosh**

Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) AirVenture Oshkosh is the "World's Greatest Aviation Celebration" and EAA's yearly membership convention. It annually attracts 500,000 visitors from more than 70 nations and more than 10,000 aircraft to the weeklong event. Additional EAA AirVenture information, including advance ticket and camping purchase, is available online at [www.eaa.org/airventure](http://www.eaa.org/airventure).