

EAA Chapter 81 Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2026

Meeting was called to order at the Ryan Field meeting room at 1105 by President Ray Puckett.

Secretary's Report: Motion passed to waive the reading of the Minutes of the December 13 meeting, which are available on our website eaa81.org and by a link from the last newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: Kevin Byers provided a brief summary: our end-of-year balance is \$59,584.39. Details may be obtained from our website.

Visitors: None

Election for Board of Directors: Aside from the four Officers, who are automatically board members, those present voted to retain George Snyder and Jim Keown. Past-President Erik Fjerstad was elected to the board. Lynn Wesley will be asked whether he wants to remain on the BOD.

This morning's scheduled Pancake Breakfast and Young Eagles Event were cancelled due to low temperatures and high winds.

Projects:

- Eric Witherspoon has disassembled, deburred, and reassembled the wings of his Bruce King BK 1.3 single-seater project, this time with rivets.
- Alan LaFever is working on the canopy of his RV-10 project.
- Chris Welborn is building his Kitfox in his garage.

Other Stuff: Alan LaFever informed us that Alan Hobson stepped in to rescue Ray Scholarship recipient Oliver Russell, who was unable to pass his Private Pilot check ride due to inadequate education, both in flight skills and on the ground. It seems that Oliver had never been taught stalls nor slips and was sketchy on ground school as well. This is quite concerning, as Oliver has already soloed! Alan Hobson volunteered to teach the stalls and slips in the remaining four days left to the scholarship, was limited to only two days due to aircraft maintenance, and still was able to pass on these vital skills to Oliver in time for him to pass his check ride! Congratulations to Oliver and kudos to Alan. This is what Chapter 81 is all about. Scholarships director Alan LaFever has stated that the flight school that Oliver used will not receive any more students from Chapter 81 and that he will personally supervise the flight education of our scholarship recipients. He is continuing to push for a dual Ray Scholarship where cost is shared, with national EAA paying 75% and Chapter 81 paying the remaining 25%; he is still waiting to hear the result. Tito Sanchez informed us that Southern Arizona Teen Aviation (SATA) will also begin to award aviation training scholarships, independent of Chapter 81. Scholarship application essays for the Chapter 81 scholarships will be due by the end of January. Scholarship information may be obtained from our website eaa81.org, and Alan LaFever (310) 200-8039 may be contacted about becoming a candidate.

President Puckett announced that we have purchased a printer and an iPad for the Young Eagles program so that all information may be electronically filed and sent to EAA.

ASAG (Aviation Safety Advisory Group) is working to stop the use of ADS-B (Automatic Direct Surveillance - Broadcast) for calculating landing fees, something that was specifically addressed and rejected during the discussion period before the proposition was passed. ASAG will be submitting a bill to the State of Arizona to prevent this abuse of ADS-B for profiteering. This practice would decrease safety for students, as flight schools would be forced to direct students to uncontrolled airfields.

Erik Fjerstad reported a dangerous situation in the Ryan Field pattern. He was downwind and was asked by ATC to acknowledge seeing an approaching aircraft in the pattern. He saw the wrong aircraft and acknowledged and only by his own vigilance avoid collision with the second airplane on final approach. Erik stated that, once a pilot acknowledges another aircraft in sight to ATC, ATC is no longer responsible for maintaining separation of aircraft in the pattern. His advice to pilots is to deny sighting, forcing ATC to do its job.

EAA Service Awards were, er, awarded to the Officers, the newsletter editor, the technical counsellors, the IMC Club coordinator, and the Young Eagles coordinator. There is also an award for Most Valuable Participant; the Board of Directors will meet to decide on the recipient.

Jim Keown suggested meeting at the back of the room after the meeting for those interested in Chapter Camping at Airventure Oshkosh 2026. He can provide transportation for some equipment for those flying in.

Milton Ames inquired as to access to our simulator, which is currently still at the SATA build hanger in Oro Valley. Apparently there are some complications to be ironed out regarding the use of the Civil Air Patrol building at Tucson International Airport. Currently, Chapter 81 members may use the simulator during SATA build hours of Sundays 3-6 PM and Mondays 5:30-8:30 and other arrangements can be made by contacting SATA. Milton also reminded us that EAA Homebuilders Week starts January 26 with 2-3 Zoom presentations per day. If you are unable to attend, the meetings are also archived.

Alexander Kocksch reported on the IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) Club meeting last Thursday; they are trying to get started with a VMC (Visual Meteorological Conditions) Club as well. Initially, the two clubs will be combined and there will be an open discussion. The next meeting will be on February 5 (first Thursdays) at the La Cholla Airpark Clubhouse. Food is at 6 PM and the meeting from 6:30-8.

Alan Hobson is trying to get an Eagle Flight program going. This is aimed at adults interested in aviation careers or training. He seeks volunteers to participate in the program.

George Jenson has watched the Mike Busch Aviation Masters video. It is information-dense and George recommends it.

We received an email from retired Air Force Colonel Timothy Tarris: he is building a Curtiss JN-4 "Jenny" replica with the intention of flying it around the U.S., 48 states in 22 days, to celebrate its 250th anniversary.

Finally, the end-of-year EAA Chapter Video was played, despite several technical issues, including inadequate sound volume. President Puckett stepped in by holding a microphone to the speaker and using our PA system to amplify the feeble sound output. The subject of the Chapter Video was what national EAA did in the past year and proposes to do in 2026.

Meeting was adjourned at 1210. The next meeting will be held at the Ryan Field conference room on Saturday, February 14 at 1100, presumably preceded by a Young Eagles event and a Pancake Breakfast.

Respectfully Submitted by
Secretary Bob Miller