

Minutes of Chapter Meeting 6/13/26

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EAA Chapter 81 Meeting Minutes June 13, 2026

Meeting was called to order at 1100 by President Ray Puckett in the Ryan Field conference room. Dave Schiffman took a count: 38 attending today!

Secretary's Report: A motion was made and passed not to read the Minutes of the May 9 meeting.

Treasurer's Report: A motion was made and passed not to read the Treasurer's Report, which is available at our website eaa81.org.

Visitors:

Mark Mech is an aero engineer and has a small aerospace business. He has 3,500 hours of flying unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), also known as drones. He is also 33 hours into attaining his gyroplane certificate.

Josue Peralta has started ground school.

Ken Reed is a member of the Chandler EAA Chapter 1445 and has an RV-8A at La Cholla Airpark. He recently joined Chapter 81.

Project Updates:

Chris Wellborn is installing a Rotax 582 in his Kitfox. He attended a 2-day Rotax maintenance class and states that he is "completely satisfied" with what he learned.

Jose Flores is performing a condition inspection on his Aero Designs Pulsar.

Eric Witherspoon has the wings on and the ailerons rigged on his plans-built Bruce King BK-1 project, and the parts that he showed us have been welded by Cooper Aerospace at a very reasonable price.

Bob Miller has finished his fuel tank sight gauges and is installing a new aluminum header tank, as the plastic type that came with the kit is known to leak.

Ray Puckett has just installed a new prop seal on his Cessna 140 and will reinstall the prop and hopefully fly it tomorrow.

Other Stuff:

Tim Tarris is on his way cross-country in his Curtiss Jenny replica. He was in Montana 5 days ago and is currently tearing up the sky at a blazing 60 MPH in the vicinity of Rapid City, North Dakota. He intends to arrive at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia (where the original Jenny was used as a WW I trainer) on July 4, then go on to Airventure in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. We briefly viewed a promotional video showing the intended route of N522VT.

The IMC/VMC Club had a very successful meeting on Thursday June 4, with 29 attending (2 online). The food was reported to be excellent (food at 6, meeting at 6:30). There will be no July nor August meetings.

We flew 13 Young Eagles this morning, including 3 walk-ins and not including 4 no-shows. YE Coordinator Martin Thomas reported that Chapter 81 bought the required iPad and printer, but a laptop computer is still needed. We can use \$300 of YE Credit toward buying a laptop.

Eagle Flights Coordinator Alan Hobson reported only one Eagle Flight since last month's event.

President Puckett asked attendees today whether we wanted to have a July meeting this year; traditionally we do not, rather encouraging members to attend Airventure instead. However, a motion was made and passed to have a July meeting this year. He also reminded us that last year we were awarded EAA Silver Chapter status and, according to the requirement list, we are only one point away from qualifying for Gold status this year. Go Chapter 81!

Jim Keown informed us that Camp Registration for Airventure is closed. He invites you to call him (520) 299-6232 and stop by when you get there. Also, WoodCraft went out of business on May 31; Jim has many tools available for sale.

Steve Hulland informed us that they need parking volunteers for the North Forty at Airventure. Or, if you volunteer in the sign shop before Airventure starts, you get a week pass! Also, the Consolidated PB4Y-2 Privateer that hangars at Casa Grande airport will be there.

WomenVenture is also seeking volunteers.

Pancake Breakfast Coordinator Natalie Butts pulled off another successful indoor event, starting at 0700 today.

Bill Foraker, who works for Airventure Air Show OPS, provided an airshow update: The Rockwell B-1B Lancer supersonic bomber and Thunderbird 8 (2-seater F-16 advance pilot and narrator) will do a low-level pass at Airventure and this year will be the last U.S. performance for the RAF Red Arrows. The Canadian Snowbirds will also make its last U.S. performance in Sacramento this year. Back to Airventure, this year there will be only one Goodyear Blimp (2 last year); he got a ride and found it to be boring! There will be three P-51 Mustang formation teams. He met Jessica Cox, flew with her, and can witness that she flies well. If you can remember back that far, Chapter 81 helped Jessica, who was born without arms, to attain her Private Pilot Certificate and to purchase an Ercoup to fly.

Bob Holliday: The Safford Air Show will be held on November 7. They are looking for vintage airplanes to display. So far, we can fly in an Ercoup, a Champ, a Cessna 140, a Stinson 108, and a Bellanca Cruisair. Avgas, meals, and hotel are provided to participants.

Next was the monthly EAA Chapter Video Magazine presentation by Charlie Becker:

The United Kingdom's Red Arrows Aerobatic Team will be performing at Airventure this July. (Secretary's Note: Rumors of the team's retirement are premature; although it has reduced its display formation from the "Diamond Nine" to seven aircraft for most events, the full nine will be present at Airventure. The aging Hawk T1 jets' engines are no longer in production and the aircraft are scheduled to be officially retired in 2030.)

On June 17 there will be a Webinar: Tips for Flying into Airventure.

Camp Scholler opens on June 26. The Chapter Stake-Out will be in early July (Secretary's Note: I believe that this has more to do with camping than with vampires or ant hills).

June 13 is Young Eagles Day. 98% of YE flights are done by local chapters. Currently we are 15K flights short of the 2.5M goal for 2026.

Tuesday morning at 9 AM at Airventure will be the Chapters meeting; Charlie recommends that we make and bring our individual Chapter signs for the Blue Barn. President Puckett will look into making a Chapter 81 sign. Also, EAA is seeking Blue Barn volunteers; you can sign up at, er, Signup Genius.

Airventure will feature many forums and a Cleco Contest. (Secretary's Note: Contrary to popular belief, the word cleco does not mean that they were invented by Herman Cleco; rather, it is an acronym for the Cleveland Pneumatic Tool Company, which developed this temporary fastener: Cle....Co, get it?)

There will be a forum on how to write a Chapter Newsletter. EAA would like to see them and invites chapters to put him on their mailing list.

And now for the Main Event: Ray Puckett's presentation on Density Altitude and Summer Flying in Tucson:

During monsoon season, increased humidity can increase the density altitude; Ryan Field is at 2,419 feet MSL (above Mean Sea Level). At 100° F. and humid, the density altitude can be 6,000 feet! Other factors that contribute to hazardous summer flying include: thermals, dust devils, turbulence, wind shear, mountain waves, and overheating of the instruments, the engine, and the pilot. The minimum recommended horizontal distance from a dust devil is 200 feet; we recommend 1,000 feet. Ask John Dale what happened when he deliberately flew into one in, of all things, a Cub!

Mitigation of risk: fly in the early morning or at night if you are appropriately trained, equipped, and current. Know your aircraft. Reduce takeoff weight. Use the full runway. Lean your engine(s) properly. Stay hydrated. Use weather resources. Avoid late afternoon or evening flights (monsoon risk).

The presentation was well-received, as shown by a near-total lack of overripe fruit hurled at our chapter president. Way to go, Ray!

Meeting was adjourned at 1210. The next meeting will be on Saturday, July 11 at 1100 at the Ryan Field conference room.

Respectfully Submitted by
Secretary Bob Miller