

EAA Chapter 81 SkyWriter

Our Newsletter for January 2026

Chapter Officers

President – Ray Puckett (815) 751-1751
president81@eaa81.org

Vice President – Steve Zigelstein (308) 383-9786
vp81@eaa81.org

Secretary - Bob Miller (520) 322-0677
sec81@eaa81.org

Treasurer - Kevin Byers (810) 543-0791
treas81@eaa81.org

Director and Hangar Manager - George Snyder (520)
661-2127 hangar81@eaa81.org

Director - Lynn Wesley (520) 883-8588
lwesley7@hughes.net

Director – James Keown (520) 334-7662
vtuq@yahoo.com

Director - Erik Fjerstad (520) 345-6621
web81@eaa81.org

Website: EAA Chapter 81

Facebook: facebook.com/eaa81.org

It's Chapter Dues Time!

Dues are \$20 per year. Visit [join-or-renew](#) to see how to pay electronically. If by check, made payable to "EAA Chapter 81" and bring it to a chapter meeting or mail it to the Treasurer at:

Kevin Byers
3721 W El Moraga Pl, Tucson, AZ 85745

Please make sure to include your contact information on your check or electronic payment!
Do not send payment to the newsletter editor.



Our January Chapter Meeting at 11:00 AM

Our next meeting will be Saturday, 10 January 2026 and will be held in the Ryan Field Administration building meeting room at **11:00 AM**. We are also having a Young Eagles Event and Pancake Breakfast which will run concurrently from 8:00 to 10:30 AM.

George Jenson has offered to hold an AvareX tutorial session in his hangar after the Jan meeting. President Ray Puckett offered to have a tutorial session on ForeFlight, also in George's hangar. Watch the website for further information [here](#).

For directions to the meeting location, click [here](#).

Meeting Minutes for December can be viewed [here](#).

The latest Chapter 81 financial statement is [here](#).

Past chapter and board meeting minutes can be viewed [here](#).

Our December Chapter Meeting

The December meeting was held on Saturday the 13th in the usual location.

For every Young Eagle the Chapter volunteers fly the Chapter earns credits from the EAA. For 2025 EAA81 earned \$245 in Young Eagle credits. After a brief discussion at the meeting it was decided to look into acquiring a printer in order to use a Windows laptop to fill out and then print the various forms and certificates needed to get Young Eagles into the air.

The EAA developed app, needed to be able to go totally paperless, at this point is only for iPads.

It was announced that the **January IMC Club** meeting will be on **8 January 2025** at the normal location. The normal meeting time is the 1st Thursday of the month, but as the 1st is New Years Day..... The normal meeting time will resume in February.

EAA81 Eagle Flights Program

In the coming months, our chapter will be doing the EAA Eagle Flights program. It is similar to the Young Eagles program, but is for adults. EAA and our chapter want to help and encourage adults to get into aviation by providing free introductory flights and guidance through mentoring. Information on the program, including becoming a Chapter volunteer for this program is on the EAA website [here](#), you will need to be logged into the EAA website to access it. If you are interested in volunteering to be an Eagle Flights pilot, mentor, or ground crew, please contact our chapter's Eagle Flights coordinator, Alan Hobson, at 480-560-7506 or alanjhobson@yahoo.com.

Pancake Breakfast Trailer

The Chapter is asking for a volunteer to store the Pancake Breakfast Trailer inside when not in use. The trailer is 17 feet long and 8 feet wide. If anyone has room in their hangar to house the trailer, please contact Steve Hulland at aztaildragger@gmail.com.

Airventure 2026 Camping

Jim Keown is gathering names of EAA81 members interested in attending and having a dedicated Chapter 81 camping area at AirVenture 2026. Contact Jim at vtuq@yahoo.com.

The complete meeting minutes can be viewed [here](#).

EAA81 December Pancake Breakfast Event

Steve Hulland and crew (I counted five) served up a pancake breakfast for EAA81 members, Young Eagles and guests, as well as the folks participating in the

Wright Flight activities. A very busy ramp at Ryan Field.

EAA81 December 2025 Young Eagles Event

Martin Thomas held a Young Eagles event preceding the December meeting. His team of volunteers (eight pilots and four ground crew) flew 18 Young Eagles from both the Tucson and Phoenix area. Thank-you to all the volunteers who made it happen!

Our next Young Eagles Event

Our next Young Eagles event is planned for **Saturday, 10 Jan 2026!** The flights will run from 8:00-10:00. Martin needs pilots and ground crew to pull it off. Contact Martin to volunteer [here](#), or call/text him at (520) 977-7054.

Our next Pancake Breakfast

There will be a pancake breakfast **Saturday, 10 Jan 26** along with the YE event. While the breakfast is free to all, donations are accepted. Potential diners can utilize cash or Zelle to make a donation. Zelle donations should be made to president81@eaa81.org. Please be sure to note what the donation is for in the Zelle notes. Steve Hulland will need volunteers so contact him at aztaildragger@gmail.com. Please do not wait until the last few days to volunteer.

At the December Chapter Meeting, we heard feedback that some folks had trouble finding the breakfast location. Below is the location on the Ryan Field transient ramp where Steve and his volunteers set up.



Access the site from our meeting location by walking along the west side of the ramp to the northwest corner of the ramp. Stay clear of the aircraft movement area.

Update on Falcon Field Proposing Landing Fees to the Mesa City Council

The Arizona Pilots Association (APA) reports that the Falcon Field Management presentation on implementing landing fees has been delayed until 9 February 2026. The APA met with city council representatives and requested to be on the City of Mesa convened stakeholders committee that prepared the proposal, but were denied. The Stakeholders Committee was formed earlier in 2025 without informing users of the airport, to “evaluate the issues surrounding training flights, including noise impacts, safety concerns, fuel emissions and potential mitigation strategies – landing fees among them. Falcon Field management announced in November that they would propose the implementation of landing fees to start in March 2026.

The Falcon Field pilot community has started a [Change.org](https://www.change.org/p/stop-the-city-of-mesa-proposed-landing-fees-at-falcon-field-airport) petition opposing the landing fee proposal which has over 4,300 signatures so far. The APA asks for the aviation community to please consider signing the petition and let them know if you are a tenant or GA user of the airport or its businesses in the comments. Click [here](https://www.change.org/p/stop-the-city-of-mesa-proposed-landing-fees-at-falcon-field-airport) to go to the petition site.

EAA Homebuilders Week Online Event Starts January 26

Free week-long online series on building your own aircraft

By Charlie Becker, EAA Homebuilt Community Manager
EAA Homebuilders Week 2026 offers 30 free virtual presentations for anyone interested in building an aircraft. Registration is required, and space is limited. The event runs Monday, January 26, through Friday, January 30, 2026. Each day features six live, back-to-back webinars starting at 11:30 a.m. Central Time and continuing every 90 minutes until the final session at 7:00 p.m. All sessions are live and include time for Q&A. To sign up, visit www.EAA.org/HomebuildersWeek.

Whether you’re just beginning to explore the idea of building, are deep into a project, or preparing for test flying, you’ll find sessions addressing your needs. We are also excited to have EAA President Jack Pelton joining us on January 26 to discuss EAA’s advocacy efforts on behalf of our homebuilt community.

EAA Homebuilders Week celebrates the anniversary of the Experimental Aircraft Association’s founding on January 26, 1953. It’s a great opportunity to carry on our mission by expanding your homebuilding knowledge with five straight days of learning about building and flying homebuilt aircraft. EAA Homebuilders Week is made possible thanks to the generous support of Aircraft Spruce & Specialty Co., Dynon, Scheme Designers, and Van’s Aircraft.

Time CST	Monday 1/26/2026	Tuesday 1/27/2026	Wednesday 1/28/2026	Thursday 1/29/2026	Friday 1/30/2026
11:30-12:45	Building an Aircraft: What You Need to Know - Charlie Becker	Wing Basics - Dick Koehler	Flight Testing 101 - Paul Dye	Amateur-Built Aircraft Certification Process - Joe Norris	Staying Alive: ADA Demystified - Analysis of Homebuilt Fatal Accidents - Dan Berry
1:00-2:15	Composite Construction Basics - Scott VanderVeen	Fabric Covering Basics - Austin Jones	TIG Welding - Charlie Becker & Shaun Walker	Insuring Your Homebuilt - Jim Stewart	Fly the Wing: ADA Demystified - Mike Wicarro
2:30-3:45	EAA Advocacy Update - Jack J. Pelton, Sean Elliott & Rob Hackman	Sheet Metal Basics - Mike Dooley	Hardware for Homebuilts - Dick Koehler	Sonex Aircraft Update - Mark Schablie	Zenith Aircraft Kits & Plans - Sebastian Heintz
4:00-5:15	Getting Your Project Finished and Flying - Vic Syracuse	Dynon Avionics - Michael Schofield	Advanced Flight Systems - Rob Hickman	Gammix Experimental Avionics Solutions - Brad Brensing	Weight & Balance - Joe Norris
5:30-6:45	Panel Planning and Wiring - Marc Ausman	Painting Your Plane: DIT or Use an Expert? - Craig Barnett & Ken Reese	Condition Inspections: Who & How - Brian Carpenter	Buying a Used Homebuilt - Vic Syracuse	Can Homebuilt Accidents Rates Be Fairly Compared? - Ron Wanttaja
7:00-8:15	Van's Aircraft 80-15 Update - Marc Cook & Ryan Johnson	Propeller Selection for Homebuilts - Steve Bosser	Lessons From 200,000 Borepage Images - Mike Busch	Typing Engine Installation - Judson Rupert	Common Builder & Maintenance Errors - Vic Syracuse

Sponsored by: Aircraft Spruce & Specialty Co., DYNON, SCHEME DESIGNERS, VAN'S AIRCRAFT

Visit www.EAA.org/HomebuildersWeek to register and see a schedule you can actually read.

The Green Dot is the home of EAA podcasts. It features EAA news, general aviation topics, history, personal experiences from

the hosts and a variety of guests, and anything fun, interesting, or cool in and around the world of flight.

Click on the link below for a listing of available podcasts, they are great for long drives. <https://inspire.eaa.org/eaas-green-dot-podcast/>

You can listen to the podcasts on your computer, or on your phone by downloading the EAA podcast application for Android or Apple phones [here](#).

EAA Webinars

These live, informative, and interactive webinars, allow you to easily attend a session from anywhere, anytime, using a compatible computer or mobile device! Registration is required, and space is limited.

[9,000 Exhaust Valves](#) | Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit and AMT credit

Wednesday, January 7th, 2026, 7:00 p.m. CST with Mike Busch

Do Continental engines really burn more exhaust valves than Lycoming engines? Does turbocharging really make things worse? Mike Busch reports on his company's analysis of 8,995 borescope images of exhaust valves and the lessons learned about how often and how badly they burn. Interesting stuff. Qualifies for FAA WINGS and AMT credit.

[Sport Pilot 2.0 and Pilot Training: A Game Changer for Flight Instructors and Flight Schools](#)

Thursday, January 8th, 2026, 7:00 p.m. CST with Sean Elliott and Jeremy Desruisseaux
EAA's Sean Elliott and Jeremy Desruisseaux will share the positive impacts of the new MOSAIC rule and how Sport Pilot 2.0 can benefit both flight schools and flight instructors. New opportunities include lower costs for a pilot certificate, improved student retention and completion rates, and ways to thread together sport pilot training in both a stepping-stone approach as well as an option for students with limited funding. Also hear the latest on insurance, eligible aircraft, and the potential benefits of the sport pilot instructor for flight schools.

[A Look Into EAA's Museum Collections Storage](#)

Tuesday, January 13th, 2026, 7:00 p.m. CST with Hope Stropes

Did you know that when you walk into a museum's galleries, you are typically seeing less than 5 percent of the museum's collection? Have you ever wondered what happens to the other 95 percent? Join Hope Stropes, EAA's collections curator, to learn how the collections staff curates, documents, and cares for the museum's collection.

[Stepping Stones — From Student to Sport to Private](#) | Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit

Wednesday, January 14th, 2026, 7:00 p.m. CST with Prof. H. Paul Shuch

For two decades, the sport pilot certificate has proved not just a worthy goal, but a stepping stone to higher ratings. The recent adoption of the new Sport Pilot 2.0 rules (otherwise known as MOSAIC) gives flight schools an excellent opportunity for updating their curricula. In this webinar, we will explore new approaches to improving student completion rates through integrated flight training. Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.

[Avoiding the Base to Final Spin Accident](#) | Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit

EAA's 1,000th Webinar!

Wednesday, January 21st, 2026, 7:00 p.m. CST with Gordon Penner

This webinar is an essential session for pilots of all experience levels, focusing on a critical and common aviation safety issue. Presented by Gordon Penner, a renowned master CFI-Aerobatics and FAA Gold Seal instructor, this presentation offers more than just a theoretical overview; it provides practical, lifesaving knowledge. Penner uses his expertise to deliver a simple and clear explanation of the flight dynamics and pilot actions that lead to a stall/spin accident on the turn from base to final. The session is meticulously structured to help pilots not only understand the "how" and "why" behind these incidents but, to equip them with the skills to recognize the precursors to a spin. Attendees will learn to identify key indicators and apply proactive,

timely corrective measures to prevent the accident before it ever occurs. This webinar is designed to sharpen your aeronautical decision-making and enhance your proficiency in critical phases of flight, ultimately making you a safer and more confident pilot. Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.

[EAA Homebuilders Week](#)

Monday, January 26 - Friday, January 30, 2026
Join us for EAA Homebuilders Week. Experts from every corner of the homebuilt aircraft community will bring their knowledge and information to builders everywhere through free and interactive webinars. Homebuilders Week is a tremendous learning opportunity that celebrates the legacy of EAA founder Paul Poberezny. As he often said, using hand and mind to create aircraft that allow us to enjoy the personal freedom of flight!



FAA Wings Program Webinars & Courses -

There are many, and are often the same webinar as listed above in the EAA section, only jointly hosted with the EAA and FAA, see:

<https://www.faasafety.gov/spans/events/eventlist.aspx>

Volunteer Opportunities!

Volunteers are what make our chapter function. Without you volunteering we cannot accomplish anything. Please volunteer to help!

VFR Club – Need a volunteer to organize and host a chapter VMC club, with monthly meetings. The meetings use real-world scenarios to engage members, and allow a free exchange of information that improves awareness and skills. For more info click [here](#).

Chapter Teams

Educational Development - Eric Witherspoon lead. This team identifies and plans means of furthering members knowledge in aviation, construction, and maintenance skills. Applications for scholarships are available. Contact Eric. Scholarship application information is [here](#).

Pancake Breakfast Team – Steve Hulland lead. If you would like to volunteer for our next breakfast contact Steve at aztaildragger@gmail.com.

Resource Planning – Milt Ames is lead with Lynn Wesley as deputy. This team is developing financial plans and manages the planning of chapter funds and expenditures.

Membership Development – Erik Fjerstad lead. This team identifies, and plan means of acquiring new members.

Facebook – Ken Ballenger manages the chapter's Facebook page (facebook.com/ea81.org). Please support him in his efforts by providing him with material and useful feedback. He can be contacted at KenandKatietoo@gmail.com

Young Eagles - Martin Thomas lead. Information on how to become a YE pilot or ground volunteer and to complete the required training is [here](#). To register for a YE flight for your young eagle, click [here](#). Contact Martin to volunteer [here](#), or call/text him at (520) 977-7054.

Eagle Flight Program – Alan Hobson lead. This is the program to provide orientation flights for adults. Contact Alan at alanjhobson@yahoo.com.

Webmaster - Jose Flores lead. Contact Jose with material and useful feedback at josefflo@gmail.com.

Open House - Bill Grahn, lead. This team focuses on execution of open houses.

IFR Club – Alexander Kocksch lead. The IMC Club’s purpose is to promote instrument flying, proficiency, and safety. Click [here](#) for more info and if you want to become involved.

Destinations

This a list of local places to fly to, mostly for that \$100 \$200 pancake you’ve been craving. It’s best to check the event website and your bank account before departure to make sure the trip has not been canceled by them or your spouse.

Coolidge Monthly Fly-in Breakfast- First Saturday of the month, Nov-Apr, 7:30-10:00. Get there early is better than later, they tend to start closeing down about 9:30. Click [here](#) for info.

Casa Grande (CGZ) Monthly Fly-in Breakfast – Last Saturday of the month (26 Oct 25), 7-10 AM, in the air-conditioned terminal building. Click [here](#) for more info.

Up-Coming Airshows/Fly-Ins/Events

It’s best to check the event website before departure to make sure the event has not been canceled.

Copperstate Fly-in is in the process of rebuilding it’s organization and are looking for volunteers to help bring the fly-in back. At this time nothing is scheduled for 2026. <https://copperstateflyin.com/>

Monthly EAA IMC Club meeting is normally held every 1st Thursday at 6:30 PM (except for July and August) at the La Cholla Airpark Clubhouse (57AZ) 1777 W Cessna Way, Oro Valley, AZ, however the **January meeting will be on the 2nd Thursday (8 January),** same location

<https://chapters.eaa.org/ea81/ea81-sponsored-clubs/imc-club>



Wickenburg Fly-in & Classic Car Show 17 Jan 2026 9:00-12:00 (E25) [Wickenburg Fly-in](#)

Buckeye Air Fair – 14-15 Feb 2026 (BXK) <https://www.buckeyeaz.gov/community/residents/events-in-buckeye/buckeye-air-fair/air-show>

Cactus Fly-in - 7-8 Mar 2026, Casa Grande Airport (CGZ)

Yuma Airshow, 14 Mar 2026, MCAS Yuma, AZ <https://www.yumaairshow.com/>

Luke AFB Airshow, Glendale AZ. 21-22 Mar 2026. <https://www.lukedays.com/>

Sun N Fun 2025 – 14-19 April 2026 Lakeland FL (LAL) <https://flsynf.org/#>

EAA AirVenture 2026 (OSH) – 20 – 26 July 2026. <https://www.eaa.org/airventure>

Classified Ads

Classified Ads are also located at the Chapter 81 website [useful-information-for-members](#). Ads run for three months unless renewed.

For Sale: Zenith CH750 STOL Kit



It is an edition 1 (1320 lb gross weight) that I purchased from the original builder and have been going through doing the structural updates to edition 2/3, so gross weight will be 1440 lbs utility. Fuselage still needs updated cabin frame. New firewall parts need assembled and installed to complete fuselage structure. Wings and tail built by original owner were shipped to him after edition 2 was available but unable to verify with Zenith if they are edition 1 or 2. So they will need to be opened up to verify some parts in the spars are indeed the edition 2 structural updates from Zenith. Dual stick option, dual brake cylinders, redesigned brake pedals to achieve the correct mechanical ratio specified by Matco. 406 elt, altimeter, 20-140 mph airspeed, vertical card compass, Dynon D180 with new super bright screen. Com and transponder antennas. 8" Matco wheels. I have both the edition 1 and edition 3 drawings with it's serial number issued from Zenith to do the build to edition 3 specs. No firewall forward parts. Asking \$25K, this kit new from Zenith as optioned is \$40,124.50. It's at my home near KRYN just west of Tucson, AZ. (Sep)

Greg Duncan
520-331-9180
gduncan6000@gmail.com

For Sale Vans RV7A

Located in Bisbee, advertised for \$160,000.

Owner – Max Mirot



Contact – 520.236.9644 or titansmoons@yahoo.com

Here is a link to Trade-A-Plane https://www.trade-a-plane.com/search?category_level1=Single+Engine+Piston&make=VAN S&model=RV-7A&listing_id=2451386&s-type=aircraft

Chapter Points of Contact

Chapter 81 Youth Programs

- Young Eagles – EAA Young Eagles Program - Martin Thomas (520) 977-7054 mgthomas007@gmail.com
- Eagle Flights - EAA Eagle Flights Program Erik Fjerstad (520) 345-6621- erikfjer@gmail.com

Hangar Manager - George Snyder 520-661-2127 azflyboy01@yahoo.com For information on using the chapter hangar click here: [Hangar Use Policy](#).

Technical Counselors

- Eric Witherspoon Phone: 520-2895353 Email: eric626m@yahoo.com
- Charles Valade Phone: 586-7074032 Email: bd4flyer@netzero.net

EAA Chapter 81 Skywriter Please send items of interest, classified ads, photos of chapter events, etc. to: Bill Grahn – Newsletter Editor newsletter81@eaa81.org Remember to put EAA81 in the subject line of the email so it won't get discarded.

Chapter Website Information

The Chapter Website (www.eaa81.org) provides a lot of information. Here are the links from the main page for you to check out.

[About Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Membership - Join or Renew](#)

[Donate to Chapter 81](#)

[Event Calendar](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[Useful Information for Members](#)

[Youth Programs](#)

[Member Builder Support](#)

[EAA Sponsored Clubs](#)

[Member Projects and Photos](#)



Here is an expansion of the “Useful Information for Members” link, including info on the hangar, classifieds, directions, and how to order a name tag.

Classified - Equipment, Airplanes, Services, wanted or available [Classified Listings](#)

Directions to Ryan Airfield Admin Building (regular meeting location) [Meeting Room Location](#)

Directions to Chapter Hangar at Ryan Airfield [Hangar Directions](#)

Hangar Utilization Form, to work on a project in the Chapter's Hangar [Hangar Use Form](#)

Chapter Promotional handout - [Tri-Fold handout](#)

Collection of Presentations made on aviation topics for builders and enthusiasts [Presentations](#)

Corporate Documents (Articles and Bylaws) [Corporate Docs](#)

Order your Official Chapter Name Tag / Badge <https://www.eaachapter1095store.com>