

EAA Chapter 81 SkyWriter

Our Newsletter for April 2026

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Chapter Dues

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 April Chapter Meeting

Our next meeting will be Saturday, 11 April 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 which will run from 8:00 to 10:30 AM.

Watch the website for further information [here](#).

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

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

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

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

Our March Chapter Meeting

The March meeting was held on Saturday the 14th in the Ryan Field Administration building meeting room.

The Chapter simulator is likely back to needing a home. The planing being done with the Tucson CAP revealed that their proposed location for our simulator was not going to work for us. Steve has a meeting scheduled with the CAP and will let us know the results. In the mean time, the simulator is still available at the Southern Arizona Teen Aviation hangar in Oro Valley during build hours of 3-6 PM on Sundays and 5:30-8:30 PM on Mondays.

At the last Chapter Board meeting our by-laws were updated. The minutes from the meeting can be seen here. The chapter bylaws can be seen [here](#).

Our first Eagle Flight occurred on 11 March. EAA81 Treasurer Kevin Byers flew Eagle Rikki Mailer in his RV-10. If you know of an adult who might benefit from an introductory flight that is much like our Young Eagles program flights, contact our chapter Eagles Flight program lead Alan Hobson at alanjhobson@yahoo.com.

Tim Tarris updated us on his “Curtiss Jenny” replica build: The wings are covered and in yellow. He is planning on moving to an airport in 2-3 weeks. Tim invited us to visit his Oro Valley build site at 9291 N. Calle Buena Vista on Saturday, March 28 at noon.

Eric Wheatherspoon did a brief show and tell on parts he had fabricated for his BK13 project. He used an on-line service at sendcutsend.com. He sent them a file, and four days later had the parts in hand. Sendcutsend works with 2D [vector files](#) (.dxf, .dwg, .ai, or .eps format) and [3D files](#) (.step and .stp format). These files need to be in 1:1 scale. There should only be one part per file, and only the cut paths and [bends](#) for the part you wish them to produce. Eric reported that a cost was estimated when he submitted his file and the bill matched the estimate.

Bill Foraker, an assistant Air Operations manager at Airventure Oshkosh. Provided a very entertaining presentation, accompanied by a wonderful slide show. The briefing was on how air show planning is done for Oshkosh. Typically there are 13 air shows in 7 days. There are five air shows planned already for this summers Airventure.

Pancake Breakfast Coordinator

We need one! We really need a volunteer to step up and pick up the reigns from Steve Hulland and run our pancake breakfasts. There does not need to be a PB connected to each Young Eagles event; 3 or 4 per year per year would be enough and they do not need to

correspond with YE events. If you would like to volunteer contact Ray at president81@eaa81.org

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

EAA81 14 March 2026 Young Eagles Event

Our EAA 81 volunteers flew 16 Young Eagles on a beautiful-for-flying Saturday morning. Our first attempt at using EAA’s web-based tool was, ...umm a learning experience! Once we get adept with the tool we should be able to eliminate all the paper we typically generate.

Our next Young Eagles Event

Our next Young Eagles event is planned for **Saturday, 11 April 2026!** The flights will start at 8:00 AM and end when we run out of Young Eagles, usually around 10:30. We currently have 18 registered and one on the wait list. Martin needs pilots and ground crew to pull it off. Contact Martin to volunteer [here](#), or call/text him at (520) 977-7054.

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

The Mesa City Council decision on the Falcon Field landing fee proposal was delayed to allow more time for public comment. Scheduled originally for Jan, then Feb, then Mar...

The AZ Pilots Association reported that the subject will be on the agendas of the City Council Study Session on March 12, 2026, and the City Council Meeting for a vote on March 23, 2026. The APA encouraged the City Council to delay a vote until several on-going studies were completed. The agenda for the 23 March Mesa City Council did not show any mention of considering the proposal, and the draft minutes show no mention of the proposal either. More to come. The draft minutes can be viewed [here](#).

AZ Legislation HB.2210 - Prohibition on ADS-B-Based Fees

AZ legislation HB.2210 to prohibit the use of ADS-B to calculate, generate, or collect fees from aircraft owners or operators while operating in Arizona airspace. The bill continues to successfully work it’s

way through the legislature. No date has been set for a vote by the full senate at this point.

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.

[Cognitive Bias in Aviation](#) | Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit

Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Ken Solosky

This presentation explores how cognitive biases influence pilot decision-making in general aviation. Using real-world scenarios and accident case studies, Ken Solosky will explain how experienced pilots can still fall into predictable thinking traps. Additionally, Ken will offer practical cockpit strategies to recognize and counter these biases before they lead to errors. Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.

[How to Care for Your Home Collection](#)

Tuesday, April 14, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Hope Stropes
EAA Aviation Museum Collections Curator Hope

Stropes will give advice about how to take care of collections and preserve your own artifacts that you may have at home. By clicking the button, you submit your information to the webinar organizer, who will use it to communicate with you regarding EAA Webinars

[Inside the Checkride: What CFIs Need to Know From a DPE's Perspective](#) | Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit

Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Catherine Cavagnaro

Join us for an in-depth session designed to bridge the gap between training and testing. In this webinar, Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE) Catherine Cavagnaro will share practical insights to help certificated flight instructors better prepare their students for FAA practical tests across various pilot certificates. We'll cover common areas of misunderstanding, effective training strategies, examiner expectations, and best practices for developing confident, well prepared applicants. Whether you're a new CFI or an experienced instructor looking to sharpen your checkride preparation approach, this session will provide actionable guidance you can put to work immediately. Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.

[Flying With Broken Flight Controls](#) | Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit

Wednesday, April 22, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Gordon Penner

Aerobatic instructor and IAC member Gordon Penner talks about how to handle jammed or broken flight controls and get safely to the ground. Discussion of strategies for flying with jammed or broken flight controls in accordance with Rich Stowell's Emergency Maneuver Training program. Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.

[Flying to AirVenture Made Easy](#)

Wednesday, April 29, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Phil Lightstone
The World's Greatest Aviation Celebration,

AirVenture, or just Oshkosh for short, is an opportunity for aviators, aviation enthusiasts, manufacturers, and more, to come together to learn new things and be part of the aviation family. Flying into Wittman Regional Airport during AirVenture must be on every pilot's bucket list, but for some may be daunting. Join Canadian pilot Phil Lightstone as he shares his experiences flying to Oshkosh for the event. In this webinar, we will be delivering a practical and demystifying guide on flying into AirVenture 2026 to make your experience easier and safer while maximizing the fun factor that AirVenture delivers.

[Multifaceted Crisis](#) | Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit

Wednesday, May 6, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Mike Busch

Personal aviation is suffering from a mechanic shortage so severe that it represents an existential crisis to owner-flown aviation as we know it. As Mike Busch explains in this webinar, this crisis will worsen before it improves. The solution is multifaceted, involving addressing the problem from both the supply side — increasing the number of personal aviation mechanics — and the demand side — using the mechanics we already have more efficiently by reducing unnecessary maintenance. Qualifies for FAA WINGS and AMT credit.



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.faa.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 on any of our chapter teams.

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 – We really need a volunteer to step up and pick up the reigns from Steve Hulland and run our pancake breakfasts. If you would like to volunteer to organize and run our Pancake Breakfast team or just to volunteer to help at our next breakfast contact Ray at president81@eaa81.org

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/eaa81.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 EAA 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 and VFR 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. Alexander is also in the process of setting up a VFR Club.

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 closing down about 9:30. Click [here](#) for info. (Note: Due to the conflict with the Cactus Fly-in on the same date, the Mar 26 event may be canceled, so check before flight.)

Casa Grande (CGZ) Monthly Fly-in Breakfast – Last Saturday of the month, 7-10 AM, in the air-conditioned terminal building. Click [here](#) for more info. Note: Sometimes the fly-in does not get added to the City of Casa Grande calendar until just before the event, so check before flight.

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 (and now VMC too) Club meeting is 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, same location <https://chapters.eaa.org/eaa81/eaa-sponsored-clubs/imc-club>

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



The Great Sedona Fly-In ‘26 - 1st-3rd of May 2026 Sedona Airport (SEZ).

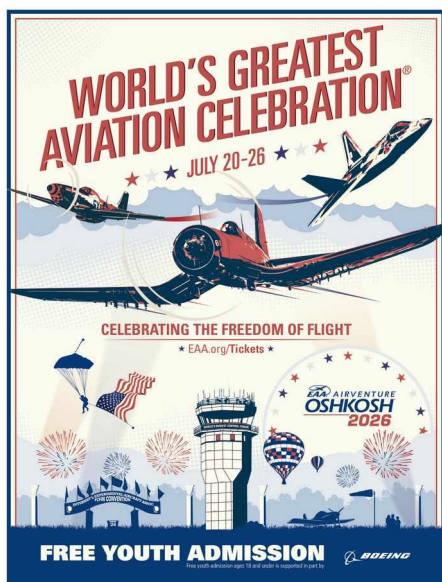
<https://sedonaairport.org/upcoming-events>



Planes of Fame Air Museum -Wings, Tracks & Wheels '26. Chino Airport CA. 2-3 May 2026
<https://planesoffame.org/events/wings-tracks-and-wheels-26>



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



National Championship Air Races & Airshow – 16-20 Sep 2026 Rosewell NM <https://airrace.org/>

Apple Valley Air and Car Show - Saturday, October 10, 2026 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Apple Valley Airport (APV), CA <https://applevalleyairshow.com/>

Sky Fiesta Air Races & Airshow Las Cruces International Airport NM – 17 Oct 2026, 9 AM – 3 PM.



Classified Ads

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

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 Nothing this month. Time to do some spring hangar cleaning and send us some items for sale.

Chapter Points of Contact

Young Eagles – EAA Young Eagles Program - Martin Thomas (520) 977-7054 or mghthomas007@gmail.com

Eagles - EAA program to provide orientation flights for adults. Contact Alan Hobson at 480-560-7506 or alanjhobson@yahoo.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>

