

EAA Chapter 81 SkyWriter

Our Newsletter for May 2026

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Facebook: facebook.com/eaa81.org

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 May Chapter Meeting

Our next meeting will be Saturday, 9 May 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 7:30 to ~10:30 AM.

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

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

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

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

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

Our April Chapter Meeting

The April meeting was held on Saturday the 11th in the Ryan Field Administration building meeting room. Treasurer Kevin Byers has created a Zelle® tag for Chapter 81. This means that the chapter treasury will receive payments directly without sharing personal phone numbers or email addresses. Money will go directly into the EAA81 bank account. The EAA 81 website will be updated with the new Zelle tag soon.

We viewed a completely successful showing of the EAA Monthly Chapter video featuring EAA Director of Communities Charlie Becker.

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

FAA Wings Program Meeting at Ryan

There will be a "Hybrid Ryan Field (KRYN) Local Runway Safety Action Team Meeting" on Wednesday, May 6, 2026 at 1PM - 3PM

Location: Airport Administration Conference Room
9698 W. Tucson-Ajo Highway Tucson, AZ

Description: Runway incursions remain a serious concern nationally. One important component of our ongoing efforts to improve surface safety at RYN Airport involves conducting a Runway Safety Action Team (RSAT) meeting at least once each year, held in conjunction with airport management. Attending this meeting can count towards the FAA WINGS program. For more information and to register click [here](#).

Pancake Breakfast Coordinator

New Chapter Member Natalie Butts has volunteered to pick up the reins for the PBC role. She has some new ideas for running the breakfasts, particularly during our warmer summer months. More to come as Natalie settles into the role. She will still need volunteers to help. Thank-you Natalie!

EAA81 11 April 2026 Young Eagles Event

Our EAA 81 volunteers (including 6 pilots, 5 ground crew) flew 17 Young Eagles on Saturday morning. It did start to get hot and bumpy later in the morning, but all the Young Eagles seemed to enjoy their experience with no "clean-up on isle 3" needed. With Jose Flores' technical acumen, it was EAA 81's first paperless Young Eagles event. Thank-you Jose!

Our next Young Eagles Event

Our next Young Eagles event is planned for **Saturday, 9 May 2026**. The flights will start at 7:30 AM and end when we run out of Young Eagles, usually around 10:30. As of this writing we have 18 registered and 4 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.

www.eaachapters.org/event-details/YE3178NIO

EAA is pushing for 2.5 million Young Eagles to have flown by the end of July. EAA is also providing a \$25 credit allowance (for EAA merchandise) for each new YE pilot recruited. EAA81 used our 2025 credits towards buying an iPad to get us to paperless Young Eagles events.

If you plan on flying to Falcon Field, bring an extra \$20!

At the Mesa City Council meeting on 23 Mar 26, by a unanimous vote, landing fees at Falcon Field were approved. Aircraft based at the field will get 10 free landing per month. Fees begin 1 May 2026. For more information click [here](#).

Mesa Gateway Too!

According to AVWeb, Mesa Gateway Airport Authority (MGAA) will implement a landing fee of \$24.35/landing for transient aircraft weighing less than 12,500 lbs MGLW beginning May 1st. Based aircraft will be exempt from landing fees.

<https://avweb.com/aviation-news/mesa-gateway-landing-fees-coming-in-may/>

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.

[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.

[Stop Dreaming and Start Flying — Flight Training First Steps](#)

Monday, May 11, 2026, 5 p.m. CDT with David Leiting

So, you're ready to jump in and begin flight training, but where do you start? Join EAA staff members as they cover all you need to know to jump-start your flight training journey.

[Quality Flight Training: Selecting Your Flight School](#)

Monday, May 11, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Loren French

This session is designed to empower flight students at any level to think critically about their training experience and provide guidance to help maximize the value of their training. We'll talk extensively about how to extract more value for your training dollar, attributes of quality training, and how to spot ineffective training.

[How to Pass the Private Pilot FAA Written Test in Less Time](#)

Tuesday, May 12, 2026, 5 p.m. CDT with Bret Koebbe

It's something all pilots have to do during training for a private pilot certificate — pass the FAA Knowledge Test. While this test has gotten a bad rap over the years from some, the reality is it's a nonevent when you approach it with the proper mindset and use the right study tools. In this webinar, we'll show how to use tried-and-true study methods using Sporty's Learn to Fly Course to make the process an engaging and meaningful learning experience, and not just another exercise in rote memorization.

[How to Save Time and Money in Flight Training](#)

Tuesday, May 12, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Larry Bothe
Learn what it really takes to learn to fly. Is it difficult? Do I have to deal with higher math? How much testing must I undergo? What is the real total cost of learning to fly? Are there "hidden costs"? How can I save money along the way? All this and more in this comprehensive look at flight training.

[Learning to Fly With a Flight Simulator](#)

Wednesday, May 13, 2026, 5 p.m. CDT with Chris McGonegle

Flight simulators have exploded in popularity recently. With new software options, impressive flight controls, and EFB app integration, it has never been easier to use a home flight simulator for real training (in addition to fun). In this fast-paced webinar, Chris McGonegle, a commercial pilot and Sporty's flight simulator expert, will discuss how to use simulators as an effective flight training tool.

[So You Want To Be a Sport Pilot CFI?](#)

Wednesday, May 13, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Prof. H. Paul Shuch

Recent adoption of the MOSAIC rules has made the sport pilot rating more attractive, creating an increased demand for instructors specializing in this entry level rating. In this FAA Safety Team WINGS webinar, a longtime flight instructor and early sport pilot advocate talks about what it takes to become a sport CFI, as well as the rating's utility, privileges, and limitations.

[FAA Medical Certification and You](#)

Thursday, May 14, 2026, 5 p.m. CDT with Tom Charpentier

Join EAA Government Relations Director Tom Charpentier as he covers all things aeromedical related and addresses all your burning FAA medical questions.

[Conquer the Checkride: Strategies for a Successful Practical Test](#)

Thursday, May 14, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Loren French

In this session we'll discuss the structure of a checkride (practical test), and share examiner, instructor, and student perspectives on the process. We will talk through some strategies to help you, or your student, prepare for and conquer any FAA Practical Test. The session will include interactive Q&A following the presentation.

[Main and Backup Lithium Batteries in Your Aircraft](#)

Wednesday, May 20, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Reginald Nicoson

Learn how the advanced technology of lithium batteries can be applied to your airplane and offer clear advantages for both the certified and experimental aircraft applications including improved performance, reduced weight, and longer life as a few benefits to replace the antiquated lead acid battery. As aircraft electrical requirements evolve, lithium technology is positioned to become the dominant power source across both experimental and certified aviation sectors. Join Reg Nicoson from EarthX batteries as he explains this battery technology.

[Protecting Ourselves From an Inadvertent Stall](#) | Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit

Wednesday, May 27, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Brian Sagi

Inadvertent stalls remain a leading contributor to fatal aviation accidents. Unfortunately, real world inadvertent stalls present in ways that look vastly

different than the stalls we practice for FAA checkrides. In this talk, Brian Sagi will deepen our knowledge of aerodynamic stalls, what they really are, and what causes them. We will also learn how to recognize when we are approaching a stall and how to protect ourselves from inadvertent stalls. Qualifies for FAA WINGS credit.

[DIY Parts](#)

Wednesday, June 03, 2026, 7 p.m. CDT with Mike Busch

The majority of the GA fleet is now more than 40 years old. Most of us fly vintage aircraft for which repair parts are becoming unobtainable or absurdly expensive. Our salvation lies in owner-produced parts or mechanic-produced parts. In this webinar, Mike Busch reviews the latest regulations and legal interpretations on this subject, and offers some real-world examples of how these rules help keep vintage aircraft flying.



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 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 – Natalie Butts is our new coordinator for the team. Please support Natalie by volunteering. Contact Natalie at Buttsnat123@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/aaa81.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, is over for the season, see you in November!

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.

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/aaa81/aaa-sponsored-clubs/imc-club>

The Great Sedona Fly-In '26 - 1st-3rd of May 2026 Sedona Airport (SEZ). <https://sedonaairport.org/great-sedona-fly-in>



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



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>

Palm Springs Museum Memorial Day Flower Drop and Air Fair. 25 May 1016. Starts at 10AM. Located at 745 N Gene Autry Trail Palm Springs, California 92262
<https://palm Springsairmuseum.org/memorial-day-flower-drop/>



National Championship Air Races & Airshow – 16-20 Sep 2026 Rosewell NM
<https://airrace.org/attending-the-races/plan-your-trip/>



Sedona Wings and Wheels, 10 Oct 2026 Sedona Airport (SEZ)
<https://sedonaairport.org/upcoming-events>

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.



Sun-N-Fun 2027 – 6-11 April 2027 Lakeland FL (LAL) <https://flsynf.org/#>

Classified Ads

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

Wanted

In search of:

- KRYN Hangar or Hangar Space
- KRYN Office or Classroom Space
- Cessna 172

If you have any of these or know of someone who does, please contact, or have that person get in contact with chapter member Alan Hobson at 480-560-7506. Alan is a CFII who has been working with many students including some of our chapter's EAA Ray Scholarship recipients, and is need of some dedicated space and airplane.

For Sale

McCauley Prop for Sale. Model 1C160 DTM 7557 M1, Serial Number 81635. Zero hours SOH on April 18, 1988 by Sensenich w/ yellow tag, in dry storage ever since. Was purchased for a C172N and never used. Fits 172s w/ O-320-D2J,-E2D,-D2G Lycomings. \$4,000. Contact Bill Grahn at bs7128m@netscape.net

Chapter Points of Contact

Young Eagles – EAA Young Eagles Program - Martin Thomas (520) 977-7054 or mgthomas007@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>

