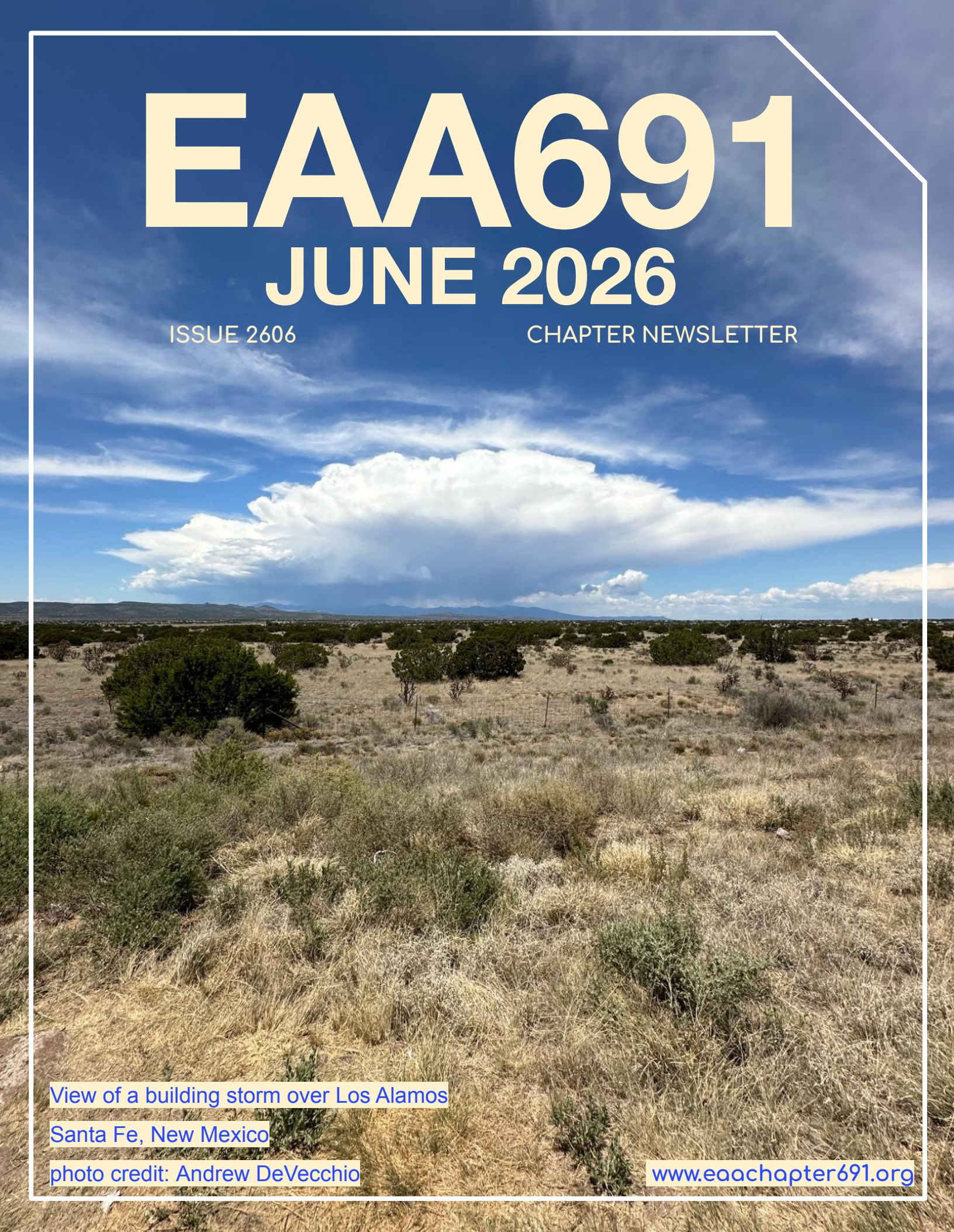
EAA691

JUNE 2026

ISSUE 2606 CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



View of a building storm over Los Alamos

Santa Fe, New Mexico

photo credit: Andrew DeVecchio

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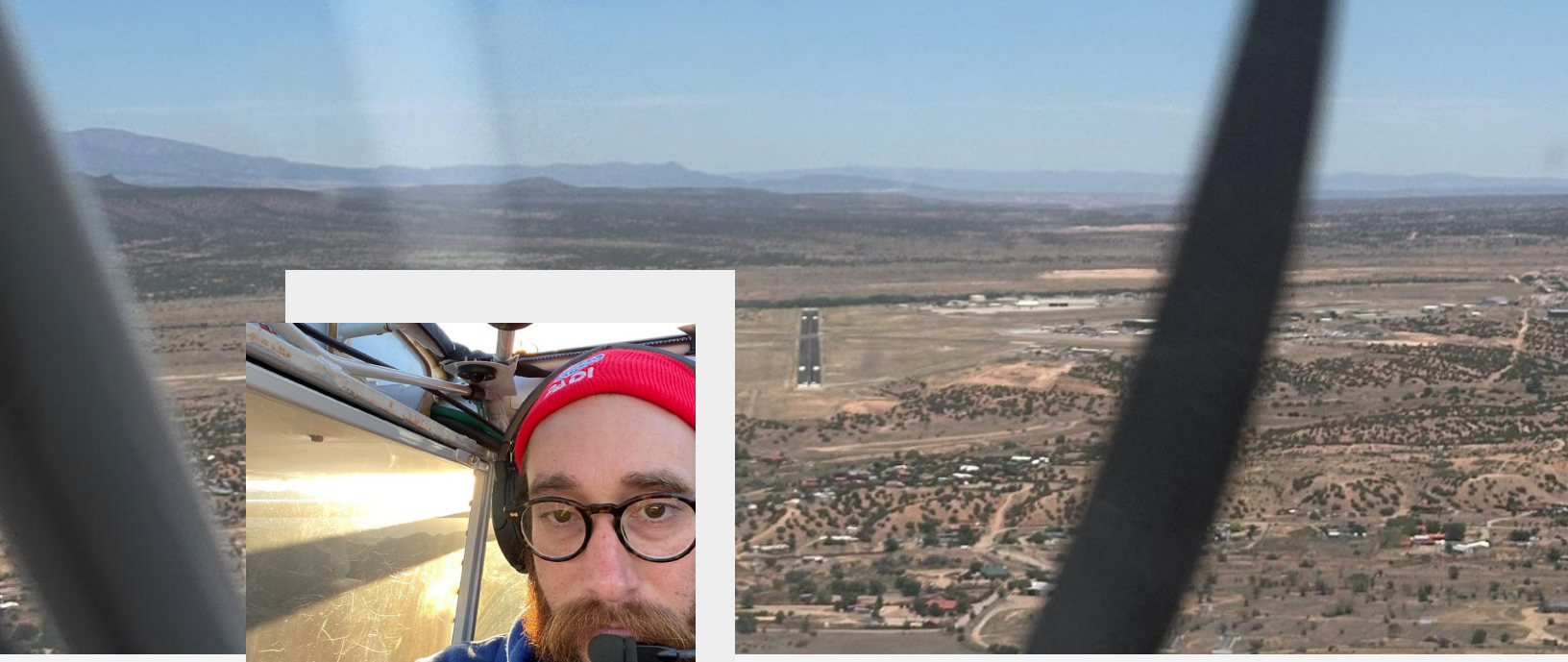


Letter from the Editor

by Andrew DeVecchio

It's been a month of getting some work done on the plane and getting a little bit of flying in. I can't tell if the ATIS is saying "Check Density Altitude" or "✓ Density Altitude" as if it's just a guarantee to have a slow climb out. I guess as I write that, I feel it might be the complacency starting to talk. So all jokes aside, respect these hot days as you get out flying.

Will Fox sent me an interesting email from a gentleman at Intrepid Aircraft about courses they are offering in Denver for Light Sport Repairman (Inspection).https://intrepidaircraft.com/light-sport-repairman-course They have two summer courses up as of now. One at the end of this month and another in August.

I went through this program with Rainbow Aviation late last year and I feel it's well worth it. They did mention that if a chapter was willing to host a workshop, they could set something up. So if you're ambitious enough to take that on I can put you in contact with Carol. I imagine this could pull a lot of folks from Albuquerque and beyond.

The image at the top of the page is one I took from Peter Tamblyn's RV-7A on our flight today where I got to scratch the surface of testing my skills at autopilot. He's a new member of the chapter now based out of KSAF, so make him feel at home as we do.

Got something to tell the chapter? Send it to: **helloeditor691@gmail.com**

– Andrew

Upcoming Events

Saturday June 20th

Happy 2025! Or Not
Presenter: Omar Wooten

Time:	9:30 AM Donuts and Coffee, 10:15 Presentation
Place:	Terminal Building, Los Alamos Airport 1040 Airport Rd, Los Alamos, NM 87544
Questions:	helloeditor691@gmail.com

EAA Chapter 691 will host a presentation by Omar Wooten on Saturday, June 20th, at the Los Alamos Airport Terminal Building.

On New Year's Eve 2024, Omar experienced a loss-of-control accident while landing at Los Alamos on a windy day. Fortunately, he was not injured, although the Cessna 182 he was flying was substantially damaged and ultimately declared a total loss.

Upcoming Events

(cont’d)

What makes this presentation particularly valuable is Omar’s willingness to openly share his experience with fellow pilots. Aviation has long advanced through the honest examination of accidents and incidents, allowing all of us to learn from situations that could happen to any pilot. Omar will discuss the conditions leading up to the accident, the decisions that were made, how the event unfolded, and the lessons he took away from it.

Los Alamos is known for its challenging wind conditions, and every pilot who flies in Northern New Mexico can benefit from a deeper understanding of the risks associated with gusty and shifting winds. Whether you are a student pilot or have thousands of hours in your logbook, this presentation offers an opportunity to gain practical insights into **aeronautical decision-making**, **risk management**, and the importance of maintaining **personal limits**.

The most valuable lessons in aviation are often learned through experience. Our own experience, when we're fortunate, and the experiences shared by others when we're wise enough to listen.

Please join us for what promises to be an informative and thought-provoking presentation. The social gathering will begin at 9:30 AM with coffee and donuts, followed by Omar’s presentation at approximately 10:15 AM.

Bio: Omar learned to fly in the early 2000's as a graduate student, fulfilling a lifelong dream. After earning his private pilots license in 2005, work and life obligations resulted in a long hiatus from flying until joining a C182 partnership in 2019.

Upcoming Events

Saturday July 18th

Member Fly Day

Time: TBA
Place: Terminal Building, Los Alamos Airport
1040 Airport Rd, Los Alamos, NM 87544
Questions: helloeditor691@gmail.com

Saturday August 15th

Los Alamos Young Eagles Rally

Time: TBA
Place: Terminal Building, Los Alamos Airport
1040 Airport Rd, Los Alamos, NM 87544
Questions: helloeditor691@gmail.com

Saturday August 22nd

Mystic Bluffs Fly In (NM56)

Time: 7AM - noon, optional camping all weekend
Place: Mystic Bluffs Airstrip (NM56)
Questions: https://www.nmpilots.org/content.aspx?page_id=4002&club_id=264824&item_id=2889091
Notes: RSVP requested, please see NMPA website for more info

President's Report

by Will Fox

The Winds of Los Alamos

This coming Saturday, Omar Wooten will share his experience of landing in a gusty crosswind at Los Alamos that resulted in an accident about a year and a half ago.

Fortunately, Omar was not injured, but unfortunately his Cessna 182 was totaled. Omar's accident is not unusual when considering wind-related accidents at the Los Alamos airport. Of the ten reported accidents in the NTSB Accident Database involving the airport, wind was a contributing factor in eight of them. Omar will describe the accident, how it affected him, and the lessons he learned as a result.

The meeting will begin at 9:30 AM with our social gathering, coffee, and donuts. Omar's presentation will begin around 10:15 AM. I'm sure it will be an enlightening experience from which we can all learn.

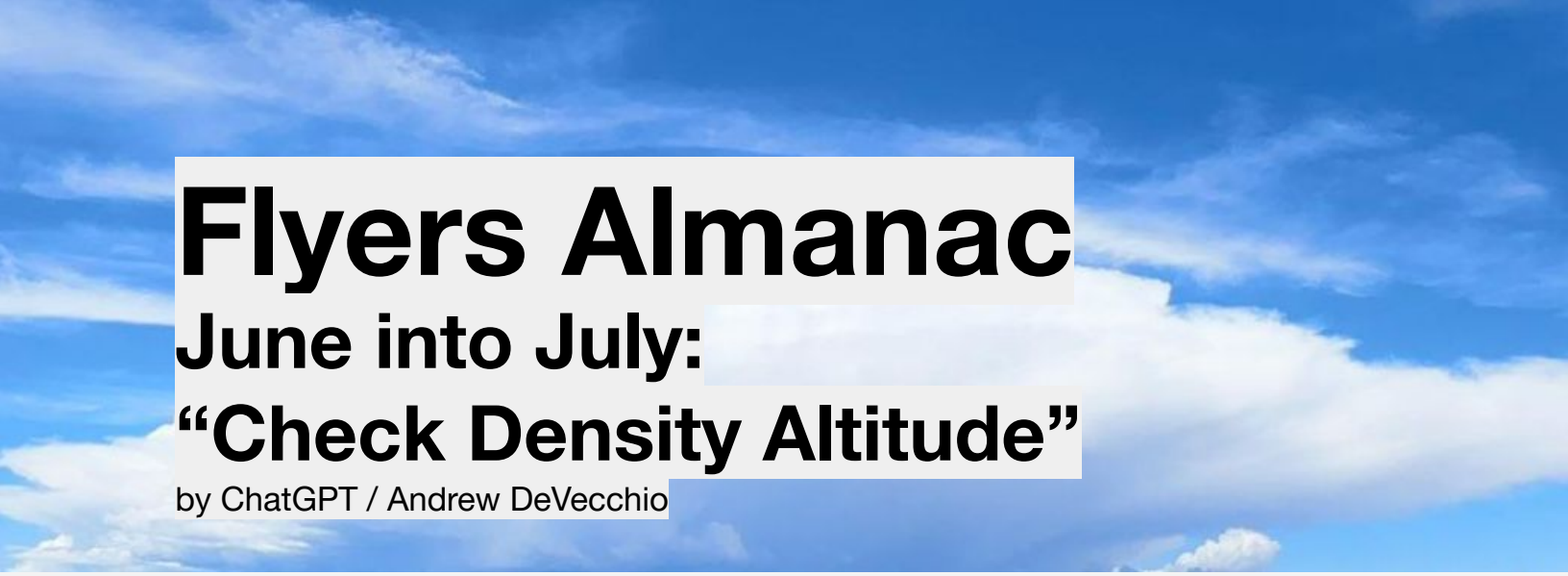
Some of our former Young Eagles, now in high school, have expressed an interest in exchanging chores around the airport for flying time. Remember back in the day when kids who were eager to learn to fly would wash airplanes, sweep hangars, and do odd jobs around the airport in exchange for airplane rides? That's exactly what we're talking about here.

If you are a pilot with some chores that need to be done and an airplane that needs to be flown, and you would like to help these young people pursue their dreams of flying, please give me a call.

These flights can certainly be done informally, but we recommend conducting them as official Young Eagle flights with signed registration and waiver forms. This approach provides benefits and protections for both the youth participants and the pilots.

Omar Wooten experienced a runway loss-of-control accident when he was hit by a gusty crosswind as he was landing in Los Alamos. He will share his experience and lessons learned with other pilots at the EAA Chapter 691 meeting on Saturday, June 20th, 2026 at the Los Alamos terminal building.

Check out our Chapter YouTube channel for the latest videos at
https://www.youtube.com/@eaachapter691
For a schedule of upcoming events, go to the Chapter website at
https://www.eaachapter691.org/upcoming-events/



Flyers Almanac

June into July: “Check Density Altitude”

by ChatGPT / Andrew DeVecchio

By late June, summer has fully arrived in northern New Mexico.

The atmosphere begins transitioning from dry-season heat toward the early stages of the monsoon. The days grow hotter, moisture slowly increases, and the sky becomes more active. While widespread rain may still be limited, virga has already become a familiar sight across the region, reminding pilots that weather doesn't need to reach the ground to affect a flight.

Heat and Performance

Heat now becomes the dominant factor in daily flying operations.

Density altitude rises quickly through the morning and can reach surprisingly high values by mid-afternoon. Aircraft performance suffers accordingly, with longer takeoff rolls, reduced climb rates, and narrower margins during high-elevation operations.

Expect:

- Density altitude to become a daily consideration
- Reduced climb performance during afternoon departures
- Greater performance differences between morning and afternoon flying

Summer flying rewards pilots who plan ahead.

Virga and Convective Activity

The atmosphere is becoming more energetic.

Afternoon cumulus build-ups are increasingly common over the mountains, and with them comes virga, localized downdrafts, and shifting winds. Many days may appear benign from a distance, yet significant turbulence and outflow winds can develop beneath seemingly harmless clouds.

Expect:

- Frequent virga over higher terrain
- Afternoon buildups and isolated thunderstorms
- Localized turbulence and downdrafts
- Wind shifts well away from visible precipitation

The rain isn't always the hazard. Often it's the air moving beneath it.

Wind and Timing

Spring's relentless winds are mostly behind us, but that doesn't mean calm conditions.

Morning hours typically offer the smoothest air and lightest winds. By afternoon, thermals, terrain effects, and convective activity create a far more dynamic environment. Outflow boundaries can arrive unexpectedly, changing runway conditions in a matter of minutes.

A calm departure can still become a challenging arrival.

The Seasonal Transition

July marks the beginning of the monsoon season, but the transition rarely happens all at once. Instead, conditions gradually evolve as moisture increases and afternoon weather becomes a more regular part of daily flying.

The challenge this time of year is not usually obvious weather. It is the accumulation of heat, altitude, turbulence, and changing winds throughout the day. Pilots who pay attention to those subtle changes are often rewarded with safer and more enjoyable flights.

Pilot Takeaway

June into July is a season of growing atmospheric energy.

More heat. More lift. More moisture. More variability.

The best flying is often found in the morning hours before the atmosphere fully wakes up. As the day progresses, density altitude, thermals, virga, and developing convection demand greater attention and planning.

Expect:
Temp: 88–92°F / 50–58°F
Wind: Light mornings, variable afternoons, gusty outflows near virga and thunderstorms
Sunshine: 10–11 hrs/day
Precipitation: Increasing chance of afternoon showers and thunderstorms
Key Factor: Density altitude, virga-induced wind shifts, and developing monsoon activity

Tech Corner : Crosswinds

by Will Fox

The American Aerolites Eagle Ultralight

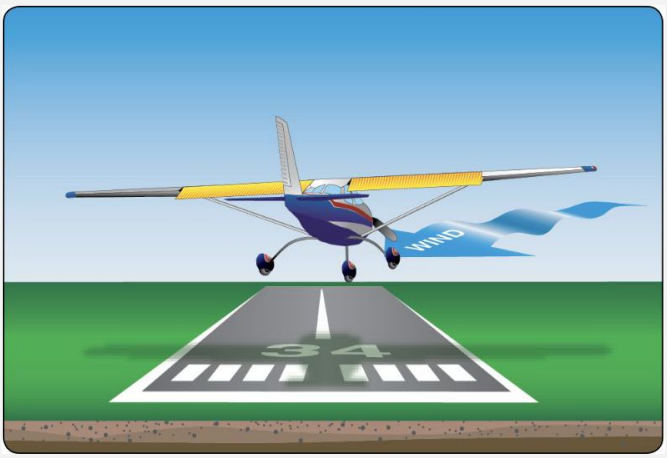
I have learned a lot about wind since becoming a pilot. It all started with my very first solo flight in an ultralight. I was learning to fly a single-seat, weight-shift ultralight on a calm morning in 1983 at Coronado Airport in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The aircraft was built by American Aerolites, an Albuquerque manufacturer, and was called the Eagle. The Eagle used a two-axis control system for pitch and roll. You sat in a harness and maneuvered the aircraft by moving a control bar fore and aft to shift your weight for pitch control and up and down to activate tip rudders for roll control.

My instructor communicated with me using a walkie-talkie clipped to my harness while he towed the Eagle down the runway with the engine off. After a couple of hours, I was able to lift off, climb to about 15 feet, release the tow rope, and land back on the runway. My instructor said, "Looks like you've got the hang of it. Do you want to try it for real?" Full of confidence, and a healthy dose of youthful immortality, I said, "Absolutely!"

He showed me how to start the two-stroke engine by pulling the starter rope located above my head and told me to stay close to the airport and have some fun. I twisted the throttle, rolled about a hundred feet, and lifted off. After a couple of pilot-induced oscillations, I settled down and began circling the airport while climbing to a few hundred feet above the ground. It was exhilarating! Forgetting my instructor's guidance to stay close to the airport, I headed east to explore the mesa. The walkie-talkie started crackling, but I couldn't understand a thing he was saying over the noise of the engine. I flew low over the mesa, following arroyos and hopping over little hills for half an hour or so before deciding I should head back to the airport and attempt a landing.

The radio was crackling again—I swear I couldn't understand a word—and my instructor was emphatically waving for me to land as I flew over him a couple hundred feet above the ground. I really had no idea how high I was because the Eagle didn't have an altimeter or even an airspeed indicator, for that matter. We hadn't really talked about flying a landing pattern, so I simply flew a circle around the airport until I was pointed north and roughly lined up with the runway I'd used for takeoff. I reduced power and started descending. For some reason though, I couldn't stay lined up with the runway. Every time I got over it, the ultralight would drift off to the east.

A light wind had come up out of the west and was blowing me off course. The subject of crabbing into the wind had never come up during my two hours of training because we'd flown in calm conditions. Since the Eagle only had two-axis control, I couldn't slip the aircraft or kick it out of a crab just before touchdown because I couldn't counter the roll. To be honest, I hadn't given much thought to landing in a crosswind. To add to my confusion, my instructor was now giving me the cut-throat signal, which I interpreted as what he was going to do to me for ignoring his instructions to remain near the airport.



One method used to land in a crosswind is for the pilot to aim the aircraft into the wind slightly to keep from drifting downwind during the approach. This is called a “crab”. In order to touch down aligned with the runway, the pilot must use the rudder to straighten the aircraft out just before the wheels touch the ground to avoid skidding the tires or jerking the plane sideways.

As it turned out, he was trying to warn me that I was getting low on fuel and that the engine was going to quit before long. After a couple more passes, he realized my dilemma and began giving me the

rarely used Land-Across-the-Runway signal. It took me a moment to figure out what he wanted, but then I realized he was telling me to land at an angle to the runway that would neutralize the crosswind component and line up with the slashing arm motion he was making. It looked like I would be approaching at about a 30-degree angle to the runway. The Eagle would land at around 25 mph, and I would have little more than the 60-foot width of the runway to get stopped. I hoped I could touch down near the east side and stop before running off the west side. But there was this one little thing. The Eagle didn't actually have any brakes other than the soles of my tennis shoes, so that didn't seem especially likely.

I made a very low, slow approach and cut the power just as I crossed the east edge of the runway. The Eagle plopped down and I applied my tennis-shoe brakes as hard as I could. It rolled all the way across the runway off into the weeds and finally came to a stop 20 feet beyond the west edge of the runway. I hit the kill switch, looked up at the plastic fuel tank above my head, and couldn't see any fuel in it. As it turned out, I still had a couple of quarts left—about five more minutes of flying time.

My instructor came running over and, instead of cussing me out for ignoring his instructions and nearly wrecking his ultralight, he grabbed my hand and shook it vigorously while telling me what a great job I'd done. He then announced that I had passed the "Ultralight Pilot Training Program"—which I think he had just invented, since no formal ultralight training program existed at the time. Then he told me I should go buy my own ultralight to practice in. He also advised me to avoid flying in the wind until I had more experience.

Another more common method used to land in a crosswind is for the pilot enter a side slip to keep from drifting downwind during the approach. The aircraft enters a side slip by banking toward the wind while maintaining alignment with the runway by using opposite rudder. Drift is controlled by bank angle and runway alignment is controlled by opposite rudder. The upwind wheel will touch first, followed by the downwind wheel, and finally the nose wheel as the aircraft decelerates. It is desirable to hold the downwind wheel off the ground as long as possible by maintaining the bank as long as possible. This helps prevent the upwind wing from being lifted by a gust.

Looking back, that first ultralight flight taught me far more than using the width of a runway, as well as its length, to help you deal with a crosswind. It taught me

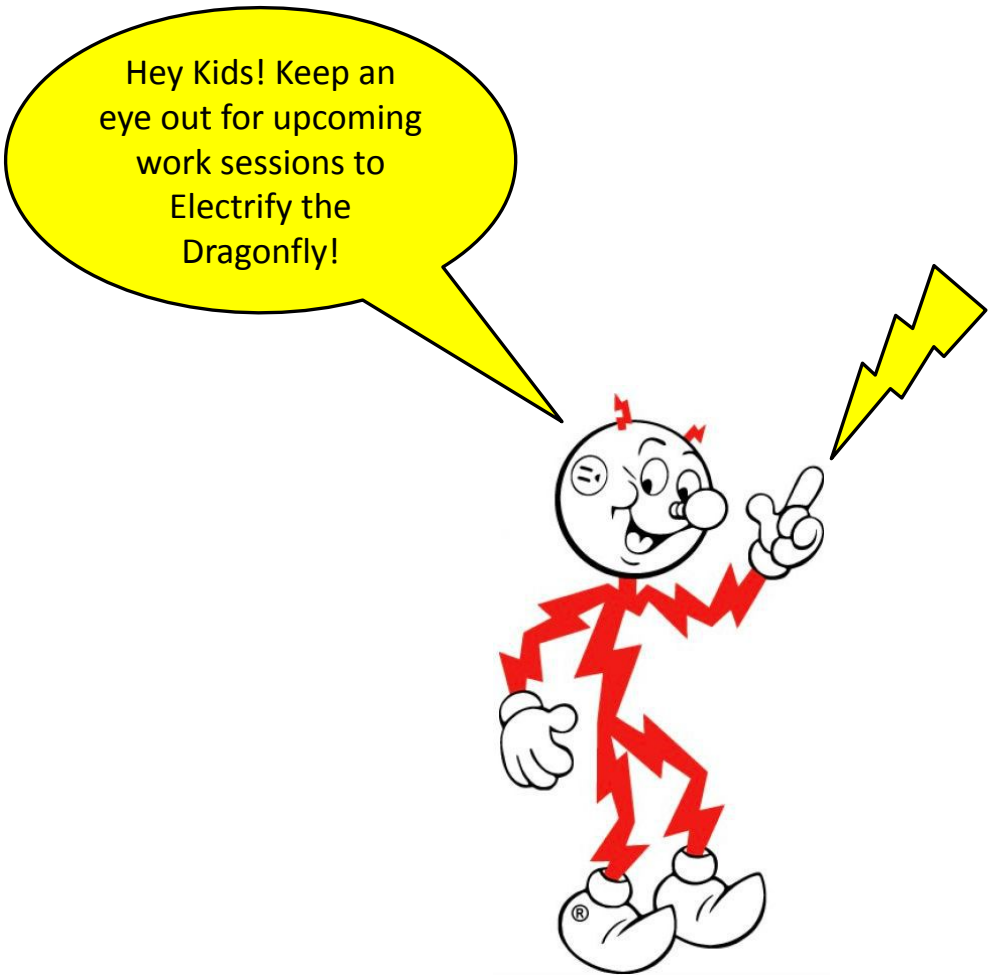
that even a light wind deserves respect. It taught me that carrying more fuel than you think you'll need is just good common sense. And it taught me that if you don't understand, or don't agree with what your instructor is telling you, don't just ignore it. They are usually trying to keep you from learning a lesson the hard way.

More than forty years later, those lessons still ride along with me every time I line up on a runway.

Will Fox taking up a bunch of eager Young Eagles, August 2025, KLAM

Dragonfly Project Update

Stay tuned here. I'll have some updates on the brakes, wheels, fairings, new firewall forward, and new panel and instruments in the following months.



Clickbait!

Helios Horizon Reaches New Milestone With Solid-State Batteries

https://www.flyingmag.com/helios-horizon-reaches-milestone-with-solid-state-batteries

Helios Horizon recently completed what is believed to be the first human-piloted electric aircraft flight powered by solid-state batteries, a significant milestone for electric aviation. Solid-state batteries for electric aircraft can charge from 10% to 80% in just 15 minutes and offer improved safety and thermal stability compared to conventional lithium-ion batteries. Helios Horizon's solid-state batteries provide an energy density of 410 Wh/kg versus 260 Wh/kg for lithium-ion batteries, which could increase range and endurance by as much as 60%. The company believes this technology could help make practical electric aviation and even high-altitude stratospheric flight possible.

Archaeopteryx All-in-one

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3qfW3ydZuY

The Archaeopteryx is a high-end rigid wing hang-glider in sailplane configuration. It is an extremely thermally sensitive aircraft, with which long range flights can be carried out – even with weak up-currents. It has the turning radius of a paraglider and the sink-rate of a high performance sailplane. The Archaeopteryx aircraft is very versatile, simple to rig and to fly and has very safe flight characteristics.

Catching Up

by Claude / Andrew DeVecchio

Over-banking Tendency, the turn you stopped noticing

Somewhere early in training, someone explained overbanking tendency to you. The outside wing travels a longer path than the inside wing, picks up more lift, and the airplane wants to keep rolling deeper into the turn unless you tell it otherwise. You probably nodded, filed it under "things examiners ask about," and moved on.

Here's the part that doesn't get talked about as much: that tendency never went away. It's just as present in your hundredth steep turn as it was in your first. What's changed isn't the airplane — it's you. The correction has become so automatic that you stopped noticing you were making it at all.

That's usually a sign of good hands. But it's also worth checking, because automatic corrections have a way of quietly drifting. A little too much opposite aileron held a little too long, and you're flying a turn that's technically fine but not actually precise. Not enough correction, and the bank creeps past where you meant it to go before you consciously register it. Either way, the airplane is telling you something — you've just stopped listening closely enough to hear it.

The goal isn't to relearn the concept. You know it. The goal is to notice whether your hands still match what you know.

So here's the challenge for this month: next time you roll into a turn — steep turn, traffic pattern, anything beyond a lazy bank — pay attention to the correction itself.

- Am I anticipating the overbanking tendency, or reacting to it after the bank's already drifted?
- Does my correction stay proportional as the bank angle increases, or am I applying the same pressure regardless of how steep I am?
- If I rolled out right now, would I land exactly on the bank angle I intended — not close, exactly?

If you can answer those without hesitation, your hands are doing what your training intended. If you pause, that's not a failure — it's just a turn worth flying a little more deliberately next time.

The airplane isn't doing anything different than it always has. The only question is whether you're still flying it on purpose.

Classifieds

We don’t typically run classified ads here but I have been asked a few times to get the word out about an aircraft someone in the greater community has for sale. This one comes from EAA Chapter 72 up at Meadow Lake Airport, KFLY, just outside Colorado Springs, CO.

If you have something you’d like to sell or in search of, please get in touch at helloeditor691@gmail.com

For Sale Desertfox 01 (Kitfox 2)

N10ZR $20,000 obo

Parts used from a Kitfox model 2 to create and register this home built experimental as the Desertfox 01. Fuselage is 18 inch longer then the Kitfox and vertical stabilizer 10 in higher. Engine is a Continental O200 5600 TT, 25 stoh with factory new cylinders and all new accessories and log book. New Whirlwind adjustable propeller. Conditional certification with need to finish test flight for DAR sign off. In hangar at Colorado Springs Airport (CO49).

Doug Ritter 775-815-0819 doug.ritter@att.net

EAA Chapter 691 Membership Application/ Renewal Form

Please consider making a donation to our 501c(3) non-profit by mailing this form along with $35 to our Chapter Treasurer, Checks can be made out to <u>EAA Chapter 691</u>:

David Young
819 Gonzales Rd
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Name: _____
Spouse/partner's Name: _____
EAA #: _____ Expiration Date (MM/YY) _____ / _____
Address: _____ City: _____
State: _____ ZIP: _____
E-mail: _____
Home phone: _____
Work phone: _____
Cell phone: _____
Please list your currently flying A/C and any finished or in-progress projects:

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