EAA691

August 2026

ISSUE 2608

CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

EAA 691 Chapter Member Fly Day

KLAM Los Alamos, New Mexico

photo credit: Andrew DeVecchio

www.eaachapter691.org

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Letter from the Editor

by Andrew DeVecchio

Well what a summer it's been this year. The heat has really been sticking around and the promise of rain keeps turning up empty, though a few good showers have broken through. I must also mention the Frijoles Fire currently burning its way through the Pecos which, at the moment, stands at 8000 acres and 0% contained. It probably goes without saying in this group but make sure to give our fire fighting crews plenty of space in the skies and don't forget that we can all help report wildfires. Just call Center or the nearest tower, they'll get the info to the right people.

I took a few good photos from last month's Member Fly Day having finally blown the dust off the old DSLR camera I've had for years. Unfortunately, I'm used to having all my photos on my phone and since I'm traveling now, they're all stuck at home. I'll be sure to publish some next month. I was able to get up with Will and my wife Jen. She took the pilot seat and Will talked her through the controls. She had a blast, though probably a little apprehensive at first. I was able to get in some canyon flying with Brian in his Kitfox and I also jumped up with David in his RV. Like I said last month, I've been a professional right-seat or back-seat bum for a couple years now and I appreciate every ride I get.

I hope to see you up at LAM this weekend. A friendly reminder, we can always use more volunteers at these YE events.

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

– Andrew

Upcoming Events

Saturday August 15th

Los Alamos Young Eagles Rally

Time:	8:30AM - 11:30AM
Place:	Terminal Building, Los Alamos Airport 1040 Airport Rd, Los Alamos, NM 87544
Questions:	helloeditor691@gmail.com

The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 691 invites local youth to experience the excitement of flight through the Young Eagles program. Volunteer pilots and ground crews will provide free introductory airplane rides for eligible young people, offering a unique opportunity to see Los Alamos, White Rock, and the Rio Grande from the air.

Since 1992, the Young Eagles program has introduced more than 2.5 million young people to the world of aviation, inspiring future pilots, engineers, mechanics, and aerospace professionals.

The event is free and serves young people from 8 to 17 years of age. Advance registration is strongly encouraged, since the number of available flights is limited. Families are invited to come out, meet local pilots, explore general aviation, and experience the thrill of flight.

Go here to register:
https://www.eaachapters.org/event-details/KY3815DJB

If you would like to participate as ground crew, please show up at 8:00 for briefings. Chapter members are also invited to a cookout at Roger Smith's hangar (at the far west end of the runway) beginning at 11:00.

Upcoming Events

Saturday August 22nd

Mystic Bluffs Fly In (NM56)

Time: 7AM - noon, optional camping all weekend
Place: Mystic Bluffs Airstrip (NM56)
Questions: www.nmpilots.org
Notes: RSVP requested, please see NMPA website for more info

Weekend of September 4th - 6th

Gila Regional Fly In (T16)

Time: 8AM(9/4) - 11AM(9/6)
Place: Reserve Airport (T16)
Questions: www.nmpilots.org
Notes: Registration required, please see NMPA website for more info

Saturday September 12th

KLAM Airport Open House

Time: 9AM - 12PM
Place: Terminal Building, Los Alamos Airport
1040 Airport Rd, Los Alamos, NM 87544
Questions: gary.goddard@losalamosnm.gov

President's Report

by Will Fox

2026 KLAM Young Eagles Rally

Hi Folks. This coming Saturday, August 15th, 2026 we will hold a Young Eagles Rally at the Los Alamos airport in lieu of our normal Chapter meeting. Please feel free to drop on by anyway to see the action and grab some coffee and donuts. We plan to have 6 planes flying so there will be plenty of takeoffs and landings going on. The whole "shebang" kicks of at 8:30 AM.

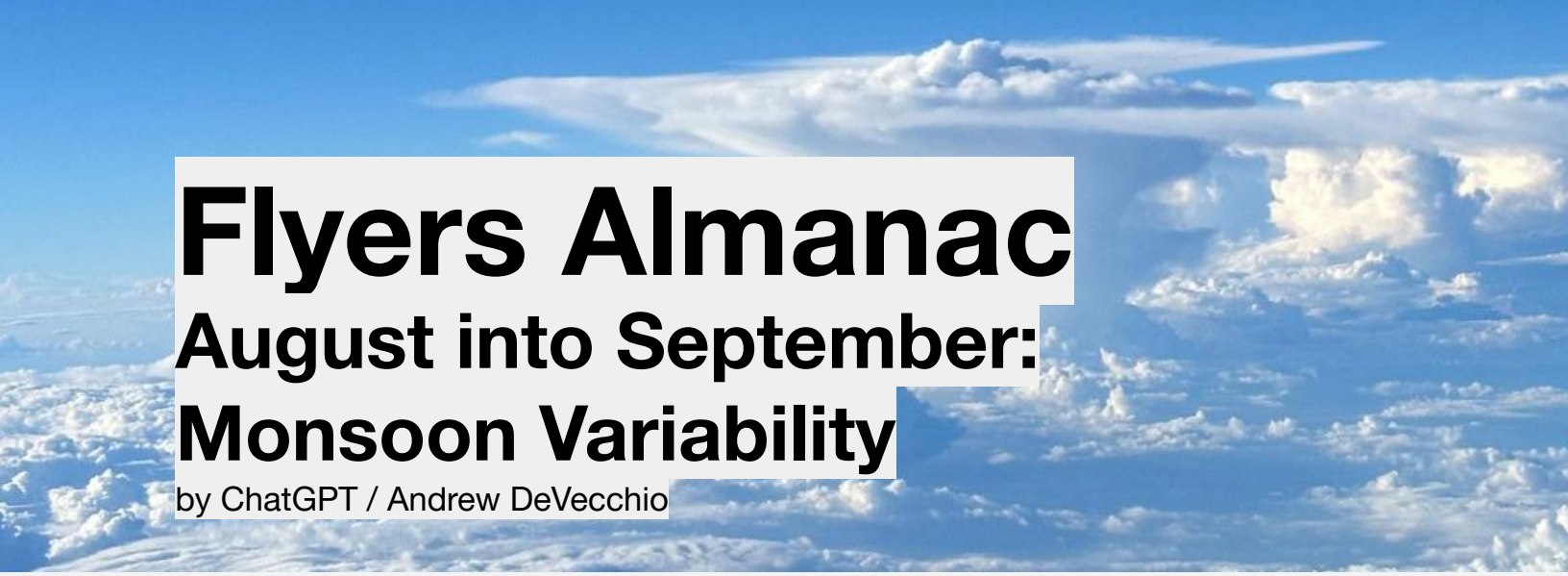
Last month we had a very successful Members Fly Day and at one point had eight of our chapter members giving rides to other members in the Chapter. It was a heck of a lot of fun, and afterwards we had a cookout. We should do this more often.

Earlier in July, we held another STEM program for middle school kids as part of the YESCorps YMCA program. It was a half day affair where the kids learned about aerodynamics, made paper airplanes, learned to fly simulators and quadcopters, and got to sit in Gary's TriPacer and my Bonanza to see how the controls worked. A special treat was a trip down to the Hotpad to see the Skycrane helicopter and talk to the ground crew.

Funny note: One of the kids asked me what the silver knob was next to each passenger seat. I told her you push it in and it gets hot so you can light a cigarette. She said what is that☺️

Kids learning about aerodynamics and firefighting helicopters. Gary Goddard, KLAM airport manager, not only arranged for the tour of the Skycrane helicopter but also was a mentor in the STEM program.

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

August into September: Monsoon Variability

by ChatGPT / Andrew DeVecchio

By August, the summer monsoon is well established across northern New Mexico, but its daily rhythm can begin to become less predictable.

Afternoon thunderstorms remain a regular part of the landscape, with moisture continuing to fuel convection over the mountains and surrounding high terrain. Some days bring widespread storms, while others can remain surprisingly dry and quiet.

Storms and Outflow

Storms can still develop rapidly during the afternoon, bringing gusty outflow winds, turbulence, lightning, and localized heavy rain. Even when storms are scattered, outflow from distant cells can reach an airport under otherwise clear skies.

The first sign of a storm is often the wind—not the rain.

Expect:

- Frequent afternoon and evening thunderstorms
- Strong outflow winds well ahead of precipitation
- Turbulence near developing storms
- Localized heavy rain and reduced visibility
- Lightning remaining a significant hazard

Heat and Performance

High density altitude remains an important consideration through August. Temperatures may begin to moderate as September approaches, but high-elevation airports can still present significant performance challenges during the afternoon.

Morning departures continue to offer the best combination of cooler temperatures, smoother air, and greater aircraft performance.

Timing the Day

The difference between morning and afternoon conditions remains pronounced. Smooth air after sunrise can give way to thermals, towering cumulus, and thunderstorms as the day heats up.

As September approaches, the monsoon gradually begins to lose some of its consistency. Longer dry periods become more common, mornings cool off, and the atmosphere slowly begins transitioning toward the drier fall pattern. But don't put the rain gear away just yet—September can still produce significant thunderstorms.

Pilot Takeaway

August into September is a transition period for New Mexico flying. The monsoon remains an important factor, but the daily pattern becomes less predictable as summer begins giving way to fall. Early starts continue to provide the best conditions, while afternoon flights require careful attention to developing storms, outflow boundaries, and changing winds.

Expect:

- **Temp:** 80–87°F / 50–56°F
- **Wind:** Light mornings; variable afternoons with gusty thunderstorm outflows
- **Sunshine:** 8–10 hrs/day
- **Precipitation:** Scattered afternoon showers and thunderstorms, gradually decreasing into September
- **Key Factor:** Monsoon thunderstorms, outflow winds, lightning, and lingering density altitude

Tech Corner : Airships for Mobil Oil Corporation

by Will Fox

The H2 Clipper is a long-haul hydrogen and freight transport concept

When I was a brand new underutilized engineer at Mobil Oil Corporation, I put together an unsolicited proposal to build giant airships to transport natural gas produced in Saudia Arabia to the US for consumption. At the time the Saudis were just flaring the gas because they had no market for it in the middle east. They flared so much gas that orbiting astronauts could easily identify Saudi Arabia from space at night.

Natural gas is lighter than air, so my plan was to build a massive airship over two times the length of the Hindenburg (a total volume of 2 million cubic meters) to ferry the natural gas across the ocean.

Upon arrival in the US, liquid helium that was stored on board would replace the natural gas being off loaded, to produce sufficient buoyancy for the journey back. The airships would be

five times faster than the LNG ships envisioned at the time and the air route would be much shorter than the ocean route so my proposal would allow very economic transport of the natural gas. In fact, the quarter-billion-dollar project would pay for itself in a few years time. The project had the potential to make Mobil Oil billions of dollars.

I had planned for a fleet of 5 airships initially, but that could easily be expanded over time. The port facilities would be located several miles off the coast so that in the event of a fire there would be no threat to the public. You see, 2 million cubic meters of natural gas has the equivalent energy of an 18-kiloton atomic bomb, so I didn't want to incinerate New York if something went wrong during off loading. I consulted with the British Aerospace industry on the construction of the airships, since at the time, in the 70's, they were the only ones still designing airships. They were helpful but cautious, and probably wondered if this young engineer was totally daft:-) I built a 10 foot long proof of principle model of the airship out of cardboard and aluminum foil to demonstrate the buoyancy of the natural gas and to test the aerodynamics. It worked fine and I concluded that it would be easy to scale it up by a factor of a thousand:-)

I sent my proposal off to corporate headquarters in New York since I knew my own management was far too small minded to see the tremendous potential of this idea. Then I sat back and waited for the accolades to come pouring in. A couple of weeks later my boss came in with my proposal in hand (it had been sent back to him from New York) and told me that Mobil Oil has not, and will not ever, get into the business of building airships, and that since it was clear that I didn't have enough to do he was reassigning me to another job in the field that would keep me working 16 hours a day, for the next three months. A few years later I would leave Mobil Oil and go to work for the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, where thinking outside the box was encouraged☺️

The Airlander (the Flying Bum) is is a British helium airship with a unique design that uses both aerostatic and aerodynamic lift to fly

Dragonfly Project Update

Hi Folks,

I'll bet some of you are wondering about what is going on with the Chapter Dragonfly Project. Well, actually I know some of you are wondering since you have asked me about it. Well, the honest answer is not much since our last report.

The problem has been that the leaders of the project, Skip, Roger, and I have all had a few too many distractions this year that have prevented us from getting much done. That plus the fact that no one else in the Chapter has been jumping up and down to step in to take over means not much has been happening. That's probably good because the weather has been hot and windy and the construction going on in front of the hangar keeps filling it with dust and dirt. All in all, it has not been a great place to be working on the plane anyways.

I expect things will improve towards the end of the year after we get through the next three months of Young Eagle Rallies, the airport Open House, and the completion of the new hangars. So hang in there and keep the faith, because there is going to be a flying Dragonfly in the not so distant future.

Will

Clickbait!

The History Of Daring Aviators Who Shrank the Globe, Restored Rare Footage

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7fuy6GEND0

Before jets, computers, and modern aerodynamics, aviators were pushing fragile-looking airplanes to astonishing speeds for prize money, glory, and the sheer thrill of it. This beautifully restored footage captures the wild golden age of air racing—from Jimmy Doolittle and the Schneider Cup to Steve Wittman, Wiley Post, and the experimental machines that helped shape the fighters of WWII.

Rutan Grizzly

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVhLqThbw0E

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rutan_Grizzly

http://stargazer2006.online.fr/aircraft/pages/grizzly.htm

Before Burt Rutan became famous for aircraft like Voyager and SpaceShipOne, he built the bizarre-looking Model 72 Grizzly to explore the limits of STOL flight. With two wings, a four-seat cabin, and an unmistakably Rutan-esque design, the one-and-only Grizzly proved remarkably capable—and now lives at the EAA AirVenture Museum.

Invisible Drones: A New Flying Robot Spins So Fast It Hides In Plain Sight

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

Engineers at Northwestern University have developed an aerial drone that can spin so fast that it can disappear before your eyes. Known as “Phantom Twist,” the drone consists of a wiry structure and a single propeller that allows it to rotate up to 25 times per second, which is too fast for the human eye to see clearly.

They Turned the GPS Jamming Back On 5 Minutes Before This Crash

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uy5aWPAOI-I

The NTSB’s preliminary report on the May 2026 King Air C90 crash near Ruidoso, New Mexico, details a series of compounding factors, including GPS jamming, loss of destination weather data, unavailable instrument approach information, and a visual approach toward mountainous terrain. All four people aboard the Part 135 air ambulance flight were killed.

Clickbait!

How the First Turbulence-Cancelling Light Aircraft Works | SHARK

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmE1T_jWwwE

Turbulence Solutions founder Andras Galffy explains how the Shark's certified Turbulence Cancelling System works, how it compares to technologies like fly-by-wire and active winglets, and how safe the system is.

GAMI Seeks ASTM Specification for G100UL

https://avbrief.com/gami-seeks-astm-specification-for-g100ul

GAMI is seeking an ASTM specification for its G100UL unleaded avgas, hoping the industry-standard designation will remove a major obstacle to wider acceptance and distribution. The move comes after years of FAA testing and approval, while questions about fuel-system material compatibility continue to be evaluated.

Joby Sets September Start for Texas eIPP Flights

https://avweb.com/recent-updates/evtols-urban-mobility/joby-september-start-texas-eipp-flights/

Joby Aviation plans to begin eVTOL flights in Texas this September as part of the FAA's new eVTOL Integration Pilot Program, with passenger operations targeted before the end of the year. The company is establishing a base at Fort Worth Alliance Airport and plans to use the program to gain real-world experience integrating electric air taxis into the national airspace system while it works toward FAA certification.

Electra Selects Ohio For EL9 Factory

https://avweb.com/aviation-news/electra-selects-ohio-for-el9-factory/

Electra has selected Springfield, Ohio, for an $850 million factory that will eventually produce up to 800 of its nine-passenger hybrid-electric EL9 aircraft per year, with construction planned to begin in 2027.

eVTOL Standouts at AirVenture

https://avbrief.com/evtol-standouts-at-airventure/

AirVenture 2026 showcased a growing lineup of eVTOL aircraft, with AvBrief taking a look at several of the more refined and promising designs from companies including Skyfly, AIR, DTA Aircraft, and Laminar Vector.

Catching Up: Spotting Traffic

by ChatGPT / Andrew DeVecchio

See and Avoid Sounds Simple. Seeing Other Airplanes Is Not.

“See and avoid” is one of those phrases every pilot learns early and rarely thinks much about afterward. We look outside, keep an eye out for traffic, make our radio calls, and move on.

But actually spotting another airplane in time to do something about it is a skill—and like any other flying skill, it can get better with practice.

The FAA specifically recommends developing an effective scanning technique rather than simply staring ahead and hoping traffic appears. The human eye has a surprisingly narrow area of sharp focus, and an airplane can be extremely difficult to pick out against a featureless sky.

The good news is that traffic scanning is something we can practice on almost every flight.

Look, Don't Stare

One of the easiest mistakes is staring continuously at one area of the sky.

Instead, think of your view outside the cockpit as a series of small sections. Move your eyes systematically from one section to the next, allowing a moment for each area to register before moving on. The FAA's recommended technique uses short, regularly spaced eye movements rather than sweeping the entire sky in one glance.

And don't just stare straight ahead.

Traffic can approach from above, below, behind, or from either side. High-wing and low-wing aircraft also create very different blind spots, and turns can temporarily hide areas of the sky behind the aircraft's structure.

A useful habit is to make your scan **deliberate and three-dimensional**:

- Left and right
- High and low
- Ahead and behind
- Inside the cockpit only when necessary

The goal isn't to spend every second frantically looking everywhere. It's to develop a repeatable scan that becomes automatic.

Practice It on Every Flight

Traffic spotting doesn't require a special training flight. In fact, some of the best practice can happen during an otherwise boring cruise.

On your next flight, try picking a section of the sky and deliberately scanning it before moving on. Then repeat the process in another direction.

If you have a passenger, make a game of it. Have them look for traffic while you fly, then switch roles. Don't immediately tell the other person where the airplane is. Instead, give progressively better information:

“Traffic, two o'clock.”

Then:

“Two o'clock, slightly above us.”

Then:

“Two o'clock, same altitude, moving left.”

This is surprisingly good practice. It forces you to translate what you see into a usable mental picture.

You can also practice identifying traffic without relying on the radio. When you hear someone make a position report, try to predict where you should be looking before you actually see the airplane.

Use the Radio Before You Use Your Eyes

Good traffic awareness starts before an airplane ever appears in the windshield.

If you're flying through an area with significant traffic, listen to the frequency before you get there. Build a mental picture of where the other aircraft are going.

If someone reports:

> “Cessna five miles north, inbound for the 02 pattern...”

you already have a reason to be looking in a particular area.

This is particularly useful around non-towered airports. Rather than treating radio calls as something we make because we're supposed to, use them as another source of information for building the traffic picture.

And remember that silence doesn't mean the airspace is empty. Not every aircraft will be transmitting, and not every aircraft will be visible on your ADS-B display.

Don't Let ADS-B Become Your Eyes

Modern traffic displays are an incredible improvement in situational awareness. They can tell us that an airplane is nearby, give us its approximate altitude and direction, and sometimes provide an alert before we've spotted it visually.

But the display should help us **find** the airplane, not replace looking for it.

The FAA specifically cautions that ADS-B In has limitations and that not all aircraft will necessarily appear on the display. It recommends incorporating traffic information into the normal traffic scan while continuing to look outside.

A good exercise is to deliberately practice the sequence:

Traffic alert → look outside → find the airplane → verify its position and movement.

If the screen says traffic is at your two o'clock, don't stare at the screen trying to figure out exactly where it is. Look outside and search the corresponding area.

Practice on the Ground

Traffic awareness doesn't have to begin after startup.

Before leaving the airport, spend a few minutes looking at the sectional or electronic chart and thinking about where you're likely to encounter other aircraft.

Ask yourself:

Where would I expect traffic to be?

Look for:

- Nearby airports
- VFR corridors
- Common practice areas
- Arrival and departure paths
- Highways and landmarks used for navigation
- Published routes and airways
- Areas of concentrated recreational flying
- Parachute operations, glider areas, and other special-use activities

Then think about what those aircraft will be doing.

A pilot flying from Albuquerque toward Santa Fe isn't simply “somewhere south of me.” They have a likely route, likely altitude, and likely destinations. Building that picture before the flight makes it much easier to recognize traffic when it actually appears.

The Most Useful Practice: Call It Before You See It

Here's a simple exercise to try with another pilot.

While sitting in the cockpit on the ground, pick a nearby airport or familiar route. Without looking at a traffic display, predict where you would expect other aircraft to be.

During the flight, periodically ask:

“If there were traffic here, where would I expect it?”

Then scan that area.

This changes traffic spotting from a passive activity—waiting for an airplane to appear—into an active search.

The same technique works when approaching an airport. Before entering the area, visualize the traffic pattern. Where would arriving traffic be? Where would departing traffic be? Where would someone practicing maneuvers likely be?

Then look there.

When You Find Traffic, Keep Watching

Spotting an airplane is only the first step.

Once you find traffic, don't immediately move on. Determine:

- Where is it relative to me?
- Is it above or below?
- Is it moving toward or away from me?
- Is its position changing relative to the windshield?
- What is it likely to do next?

A particularly useful question is:

“Is the traffic moving across my windshield, or staying in the same spot?”

An airplane that remains nearly stationary relative to your aircraft while getting larger deserves immediate attention. Conversely, an airplane that is moving rapidly across your field of view may be much less likely to conflict with your flight path.

Don't rely on a single observation, either. Keep checking the traffic to confirm that your mental picture matches reality.

Build the Habit

The best traffic scan is the one you actually use consistently.

Try incorporating a few simple habits into normal flying:

Before departure: Identify the likely traffic hotspots around your route.

After takeoff: Spend less time heads-down and deliberately scan the departure area.

In cruise: Periodically perform a complete outside scan rather than staring straight ahead.

Before changing altitude or heading: Look carefully in the direction you're going and check the surrounding airspace.

Near airports: Build a mental picture from the radio, chart, and known traffic flows before entering the area.

When ADS-B shows traffic: Use it to help locate the airplane visually.

After spotting traffic: Keep watching it long enough to understand its movement.

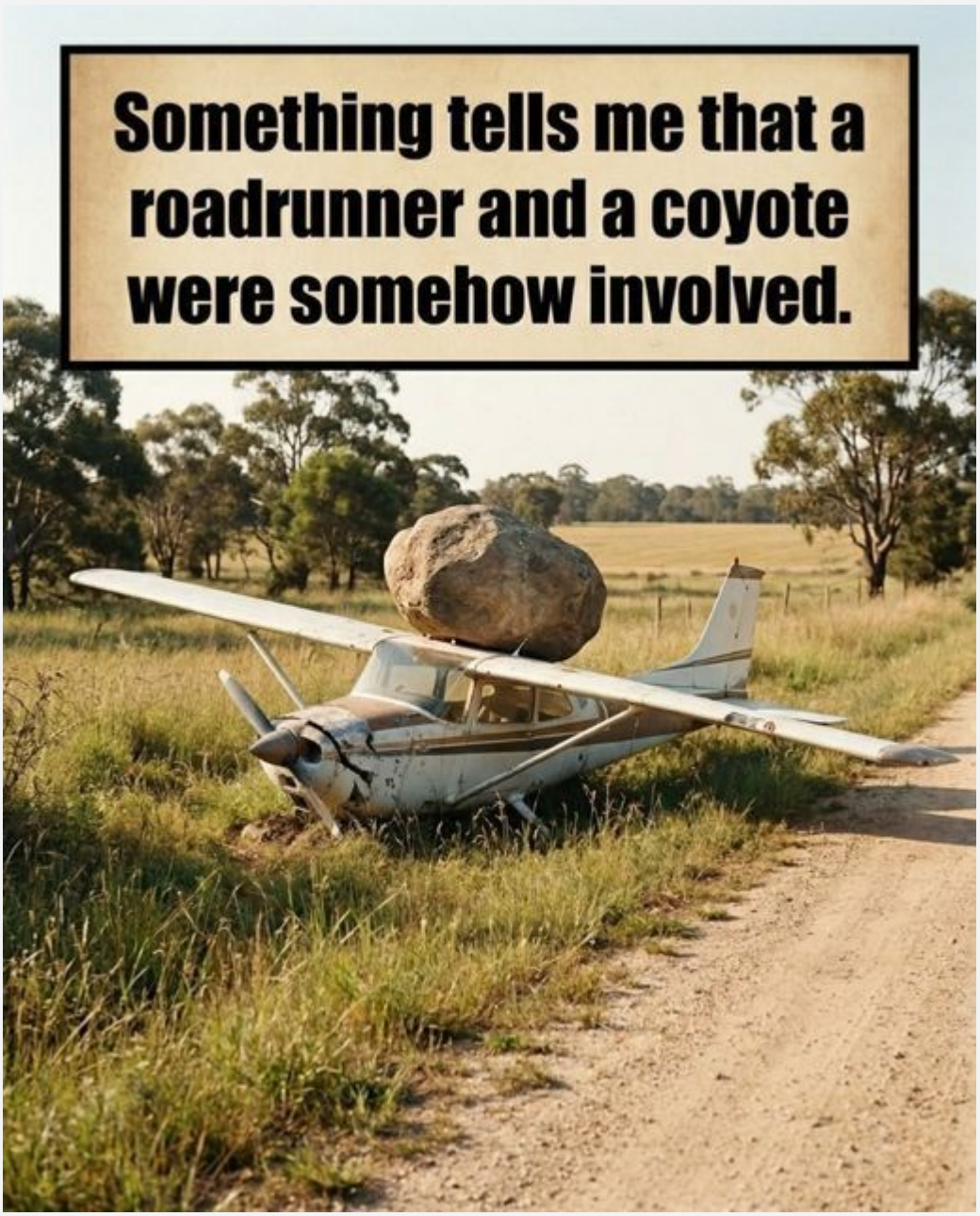
The FAA's guidance is straightforward: when weather conditions permit, pilots remain responsible for seeing and avoiding other aircraft—even when receiving traffic information or operating under ATC services.

That responsibility doesn't have to mean constantly worrying about a midair collision. It can simply mean becoming better at one of the most fundamental skills in flying.

The next time you're up, don't just look outside. Practice looking.

Further information in **AC 90-48E, Pilots' Role in Collision Avoidance**

And finally…
Time for a laugh



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:

www.eaachapter691.org